Building patient-level predictive models

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1 Introduction

Observational healthcare data, such as administrative claims and electronic health records, are increasingly used for clinical characterization of disease progression, quality improvement, and population-level effect estimation for medical product safety surveillance and comparative effectiveness. Advances in machine learning for large dataset analysis have led to increased interest in applying patient-level prediction on this type of data. Patient-level prediction offers the potential for medical practice to move beyond average treatment effects and to consider personalized risks as part of clinical decision-making. Many published efforts in patient-level-prediction do not follow the model development guidelines, fail to perform extensive external validation, or provide insufficient model details that limits the ability of independent researchers to reproduce

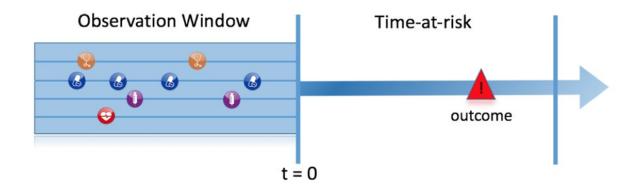


Figure 1: The prediction problem

the models and perform external validation. This makes it hard to fairly evaluate the predictive performance of the models and reduces the likelihood of the model being used appropriately in clinical practice. To improve standards, several papers have been written detailing guidelines for best practices in developing and reporting prediction models.

The Transparent Reporting of a multivariable prediction model for Individual Prognosis Or Diagnosis (TRIPOD) statement (link) provides clear recommendations for reporting prediction model development and validation5 and addresses some of the concerns related to transparency. However, data structure heterogeneity and inconsistent terminologies still make collaboration and model sharing difficult as different researchers are often required to write new code to extract the data from their databases and may define variables differently.

In our paper (link), we propose a standardised framework for patient-level prediction that utilizes the OMOP CDM and standardized vocabularies, and describe the open-source software that we developed implementing the framework's pipeline. The framework is the first to support existing best practice guidelines and will enable open dissemination of models that can be extensively validated across the network of OHDSI collaborators.

Figure 1, illustrates the prediction problem we address. Among a population at risk, we aim to predict which patients at a defined moment in time (t = 0) will experience some outcome during a time-at-risk. Prediction is done using only information about the patients in an observation window prior to that moment in time.

As shown in Figure 2, to define a prediction problem we have to define t=0 by a Target Cohort (T), the outcome we like to predict by an outcome cohort (O), and the time at risk (TAR). Furthermore, we have to make design choices for the model we like to develop.

This framework works for all type of prediction problems, for example those presented in Figure 3.

This vignette describes how you can use the PatientLevelPrediction package to build patient-level predictive models. The package enables data extraction, model building, and model evaluation using data from databases that are translated into the Observational Medical Outcomes Partnership Common Data Model (OMOP CDM). In this vignette we assume you have installed the package correctly using the InstallationGuide.

To guide you through the process of model building and validation we will use the "Disease onset and progression" type as an example.

2 Definition of the Prediction Problem

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Input parameter	Design choice
Target cohort (T)	
Outcome cohort (O)	
Time-at-risk	
Model specification -which model(s)? -which parameters? -which covariates?	

We extract data for the patients in the Target Cohort (T) and we select all patients that experience the outcome (O) in T

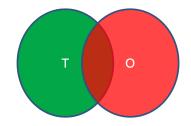


Figure 2: Design choices

Туре	Structure	Example
Disease onset and progression	Amongst patients who are newly diagnosed with <insert disease="" favorite="" your="">, which patients will go on to have <another complication="" disease="" or="" related=""> within <time diagnosis="" from="" horizon="">?</time></another></insert>	Among newly diagnosed AFib patients, which will go onto to have ischemic stroke in next 3 years?
Treatment choice	Amongst patients with <indicated disease=""> who are treated with either <treatment 1=""> or <treatment 2="">, which patients were treated with <treatment 1=""> (on day 0)?</treatment></treatment></treatment></indicated>	Among AFib patients who took either warfarin or rivaroxaban, which patients got warfarin? (as defined for propensity score model)
Treatment response	Amongst patients who are new users of <insert chronically-used="" drug="" favorite="" your="">, which patients will <insert desired="" effect=""> in <time window="">?</time></insert></insert>	Which patients with T2DM who start on metformin stay on metformin after 3 years?
Treatment safety	Amongst patients who are new users of <insert drug="" favorite="" your="">, which patients will experience <insert adverse="" drug="" event="" favorite="" from="" known="" profile="" the="" your=""> within <time exposure="" following="" horizon="" start="">?</time></insert></insert>	Among new users of warfarin, which patients will have GI bleed in 1 year?
Treatment adherence	Amongst patients who are new users of <insert chronically-used="" drug="" favorite="" your="">, which patients will achieve <adherence metric="" threshold=""> at <time horizon="">?</time></adherence></insert>	Which patients with T2DM who start on metformin achieve >=80% proportion of days covered at 1 year?

Figure 3: Examples of prediction problems

3 Data extraction

The PatientLevelPrediction package requires longitudinal observational healthcare data in the OMOP Common Data Model format. We will now explain how to connect to the server and how the generate the Target (T=Atrial Fibrillation) and outcome cohort (O=Stroke).

3.1 Configuring the connection to the server

First we need to tell R how to connect to the server. PatientLevelPrediction uses the DatabaseConnector package, which provides the createConnectionDetails function. Type ?createConnectionDetails for the specific settings required for the various database management systems (DBMS). For example, one might connect to a PostgreSQL database using this code:

The last three lines define the cdmDatabaseSchema and cohortsDatabaseSchema variables, as well as the CDM version. We will use these later to tell R where the data in CDM format live, where we want to create the cohorts of interest, and what version CDM is used. Note that for Microsoft SQL Server, databaseschemas need to specify both the database and the schema, so for example cdmDatabaseSchema <- "my_cdm_data.dbo".

3.2 Preparing the cohort and outcome of interest

First we need to define the cohort of persons for which we want to perform the prediction and we need to define the outcome we want to predict. These cohorts are provided as data in a table on the server that has the same structure as the 'cohort' table in the OMOP CDM, meaning it should have the following columns:

- cohort_definition_id, a unique identifier for distinguishing between different types of cohorts, e.g. cohorts of interest and outcome cohorts.
- subject_id, a unique identifier corresponding to the person_id in the CDM.
- cohort_start_date, the start of the time period where we wish to predict the occurrence of the outcome.
- cohort_end_date, which can be used to determine the end of the prediction window. Can be set equal to the cohort_start_date for outcomes.

The observational and health data sciences & informatics (OHDSI) community has developed a tool named ATLAS which can be used to create cohorts based on inclusion criteria. We can also write custom SQL statements against the CDM. Both methods are described below.

3.2.1 Cohort creation using ATLAS

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ATLAS as shown in Figure 2 allows you to define cohorts interactively by specifying cohort entry and cohort exit criteria. Cohort entry criteria involce selecting one or more initial events, which determine the start date for cohort entry, and optionally specifying additional inclusion criteria which filter to the qualifying events. Cohort exit criteria are applied to each cohort entry record to determine the end date when the person's

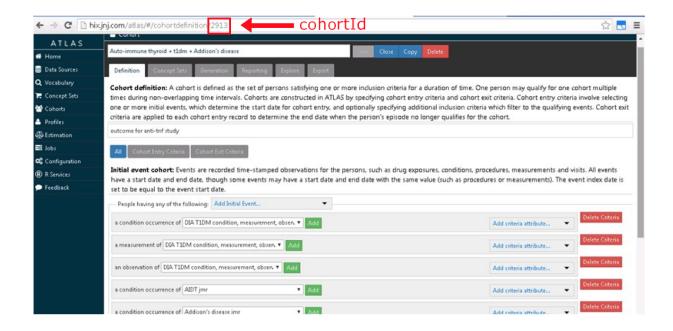


Figure 4: Cohort creation using ATLAS

episode no longer qualifies for the cohort. For the outcome cohort the end date is less relevant. More details on the use of ATLAS can be found on the OHDSI wiki pages.

When a cohort is created in ATLAS the cohortid is needed to extract the data in R. The cohortid can be found in the link as shown in Figure 2.

3.2.2 Custom cohort creation

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It is also possible to create cohorts without the use of ATLAS. Using custom cohort code (SQL) you can make more advanced cohorts if needed.

For our example study, we need to create the cohort of diabetics that have been hospitalized and have a minimum amount of observation time available before and after the hospitalization. We also need to define re-hospitalizations, which we define as any hospitalizations occurring after the original hospitalization.

For this purpose we have created a file called HospitalizationCohorts.sql with the following contents:

```
ON visit_occurrence.person_id = observation_period.person_id
INNER JOIN @cdmDatabaseSchema.condition_occurrence
ON condition_occurrence.person_id = visit_occurrence.person_id
WHERE visit concept id IN (9201, 9203)
AND DATEDIFF(DAY, observation_period_start_date, visit_start_date) > @pre_time
AND visit_start_date > observation_period_start_date
AND DATEDIFF(DAY, visit_start_date, observation_period_end_date) > @post_time
AND visit_start_date < observation_period_end_date</pre>
AND DATEDIFF(DAY, condition_start_date, visit_start_date) > @pre_time
AND condition_start_date <= visit_start_date</pre>
AND condition_concept_id IN (
SELECT descendant_concept_id
FROM @cdmDatabaseSchema.concept_ancestor
WHERE ancestor_concept_id = 201826) /* Type 2 DM */
GROUP BY visit_occurrence.person_id;
INSERT INTO @resultsDatabaseSchema.rehospitalization
SELECT visit_occurrence.person_id AS subject_id,
visit_start_date AS cohort_start_date,
visit_end_date AS cohort_end_date,
2 AS cohort definition id
FROM @resultsDatabaseSchema.rehospitalization
INNER JOIN @cdmDatabaseSchema.visit_occurrence
ON visit_occurrence.person_id = rehospitalization.subject_id
WHERE visit_concept_id IN (9201, 9203)
AND visit_start_date > cohort_start_date
AND visit_start_date <= cohort_end_date
AND cohort_definition_id = 1;
```

This is parameterized SQL which can be used by the SqlRender package. We use parameterized SQL so we do not have to pre-specify the names of the CDM and result schemas. That way, if we want to run the SQL on a different schema, we only need to change the parameter values; we do not have to change the SQL code. By also making use of translation functionality in SqlRender, we can make sure the SQL code can be run in many different environments.

```
library(SqlRender)
sql <- readSql("HospitalizationCohorts.sql")
sql <- renderSql(sql,
cdmDatabaseSchema = cdmDatabaseSchema,
cohortsDatabaseSchema = cohortsDatabaseSchema,
post_time = 30,
pre_time = 365)$sql
sql <- translateSql(sql, targetDialect = connectionDetails$dbms)$sql
connection <- connect(connectionDetails)
executeSql(connection, sql)</pre>
```

In this code, we first read the SQL from the file into memory. In the next line, we replace four parameter names with the actual values. We then translate the SQL into the dialect appropriate for the DBMS we already specified in the connectionDetails. Next, we connect to the server, and submit the rendered and translated SQL.

If all went well, we now have a table with the events of interest. We can see how many events per type:

3.3 Extracting the data from the server

Now we can tell PatientLevelPrediction to extract all necessary data for our analysis. This is done using the FeatureExtractionPackage available at https://github.com/OHDSI/FeatureExtration. In short the FeatureExtractionPackage allows you to specify which features (covariates) need to be extracted, e.g. all conditions and drug exposures. It also supports the creation of custom covariates. For more detailed information on the FeatureExtraction package see its vignettes.

```
covariateSettings <- createCovariateSettings(useDemographicsGender = TRUE,
useDemographicsAge = TRUE, useDemographicsAgeGroup = TRUE,
useDemographicsRace = TRUE, useDemographicsEthnicity = TRUE,
useConditionOccurrenceLongTerm = TRUE,
useDrugExposureLongTerm = TRUE,
useProcedureOccurrenceLongTerm = TRUE,
useMeasurementLongTerm = TRUE,
useObservationLongTerm = TRUE,
useDistinctConditionCountLongTerm = TRUE,
useVisitCountLongTerm = TRUE,
longTermStartDays = -365,
endDays = -1)</pre>
```

The final step for extracting the data is to run the getPlpData function and input the connection details, the database schema where the cohorts are stored, the cohort definition ids for the cohort and outcome, and the washoutPeriod which is the minimum number of days prior to cohort index date that the person must have been observed to be included into the data, and finally input the previously constructed covariate settings.

Note that if the cohorts are created in ATLAS its corresponding cohort database schema needs to be selected. There are many additional parameters for the getPlpData function which are all documented in the PatientLevelPrediction manual. The resulting plpData object uses the package ff to store information

in a way that ensures R does not run out of memory, even when the data are large.

3.4 Saving the data to file

Creating the plpData object can take considerable computing time, and it is probably a good idea to save it for future sessions. Because plpData uses ff, we cannot use R's regular save function. Instead, we'll have to use the savePlpData() function:

```
savePlpData(plpData, "stroke_in_af_data")
```

We can use the loadPlpData() function to load the data in a future session.

4 Applying additional inclusion criteria

To completely define the prediction problem the final study population is obtained by applying additional constraints on the two earlier defined cohorts, e.g., a minumim time at risk can be enforced (requireTimeAtRisk, minTimeAtRisk). In this step it is also possible to redefine the risk window based on the at-risk cohort. For example, if we like the risk window to start 30 days after the at-risk cohort start and end a year later we can set riskWindowStart = 30 and riskWindowEnd = 365. In some cases the risk window needs to start at the cohort end date. This can be achieved by setting addExposureToStart = TRUE which adds the cohort (exposure) time to the start date.

In the example below a final population is created using an additional constraint on the washout period, removal of patients with prior outcomes in the year before, and a time at risk definition.

```
population <- createStudyPopulation(plpData,
  outcomeId = 2,
  includeAllOutcomes = TRUE,
  firstExposureOnly = TRUE,
  washoutPeriod = 365,
  removeSubjectsWithPriorOutcome = TRUE,
  priorOutcomeLookback = 365,
  riskWindowStart = 1,
  requireTimeAtRisk = FALSE,
  riskWindowEnd = 365)</pre>
```

Note that some of these constraints could also already be applied in the cohort creation step, however, the createStudyPopulation function allows you do sensitivity analyses more easily on the already extracted plpData from the database.

5 Model Development

5.1 Defining the model settings

Models	Python	Parameters
Logistic regression with regularization	No	var (starting variance), seed
Gradient boosting machines	No	ntree (number of trees), max depth (max levels in tree), min rows (minimum data points in in node), learning rate, seed
Random forest	Yes	mtry (number of features in each tree),ntree (number of trees), maxDepth (max levels in tree), minRows (minimum data points in in node),balance (balance class labels), seed
K-nearest neighbors	No	k (number of neighbours), weighted (weight by inverse frequency)
Naive Bayes	Yes	none
AdaBoost	Yes	nEstimators (the maximum number of estimators at which boosting is terminated), learningRate (learning rate shrinks the contribution of each classifier by learning_rate. There is a trade-off between learningRate and nEstimators)
Decision Tree	Yes	maxDepth (the maximum depth of the tree), minSamplesSplit,minSamplesLeaf, minImpuritySplit (threshold for early stopping in tree growth. A node will split if its impurity is above the threshold, otherwise it is a leaf.), seed,classWeight ("Balance"" or "None")
Multilayer Perception	Yes	size (the number of hidden nodes), alpha (the l2 regularisation), seed
Deep Learning	Yes	in the BuildingDeepLearningModels vignette we describe these models and hyper-parameters in more detail.

The table shows the currently implemented algorithms and their hyper-parameters. In the settings function of the algorithms the user can specify a list of eligible values for each hyper-parameter. All possible combinations of the hyper-parameters are included in a so-called grid search using cross-validation on the training set. If a user does not specify any value then the default value is used instead.

For example, if we use the following settings for the gradientBoostingMachine: ntrees=c(100,200), maxDepth=4 the grid search will apply the gradient boosting machine algorithm with ntrees=100 and maxDepth=4 plus the default settings for other hyper-parameters and ntrees=200 and maxDepth=4 plus the default settings for other hyper-parameters. The hyper-parameters that lead to the bestcross-validation performance will then be chosen for the final model. For our problem we choose to build a logistic regression model with the default hyper-parameters.

lrModel <- setLassoLogisticRegression()</pre>

5.2 Model training

The runPlP function uses the population, plpData, and model settings to train and evaluate the model. Because evaluation using the same data on which the model was built can lead to overfitting, one uses a

train-test split of the data or cross-validation. This functionaity is build in the runP1P function. We can use the testSplit (person/time) and testFraction parameters to split the data in a 75%-25% split and run the patient-level prediction pipeline:

```
lrResults <- runPlp(population,plpData, modelSettings = lrModel, testSplit = 'person',
testFraction = 0.25, nfold = 2)</pre>
```

Under the hood the package will now use the Cyclops package to fit a large-scale regularized regression using 75% of the data and will evaluate the model on the remaining 25%. A results data structure is returned containing information about the model, its performance etc.

5.3 Saving and loading

You can save and load the model using:

```
savePlpModel(lrResults$model, dirPath = file.path(getwd(), "model"))
plpModel <- loadPlpModel(getwd(), "model")</pre>
```

You can save and load the full results structure using:

```
savePlpResult(lrResults, location = file.path(getwd(), "lr"))
lrResults <- loadPlpResult(file.path(getwd(), "lr"))</pre>
```

6 Model Evaluation

The runPlp() function returns the trained model and the evaluation of the model on the train/test sets.

You can also interactively view the results by running: viewPlp(runPlp=lrResults). This will generate a Shiny App in which you can view all plots and performance measure created by the framework as shown in the Figure below.

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To generate and save all the evaluation plots run the following code:

plotPlp(lrResults, dirPath = getwd())

The plots that are generated are described in more detail in the next sections.

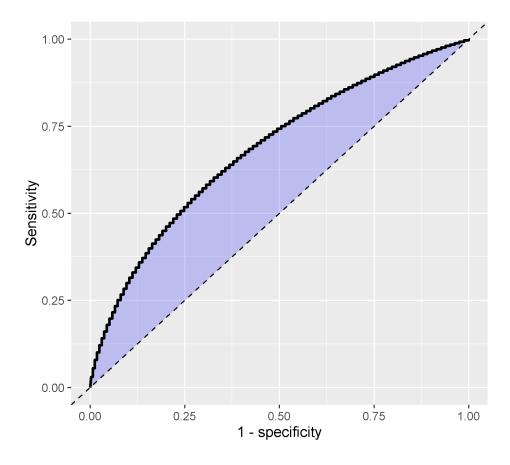


Figure 5: Receiver Operator Plot

6.1 ROC plot

The ROC plot plots the sensitivity against 1-specificity on the test set. The plot shows how well the model is able to discriminate between the people with the outcome and those without. The dashed diagonal line is the performance of a model that randomly assigns predictions. The higher the area under the ROC plot the better the discrimination of the model.

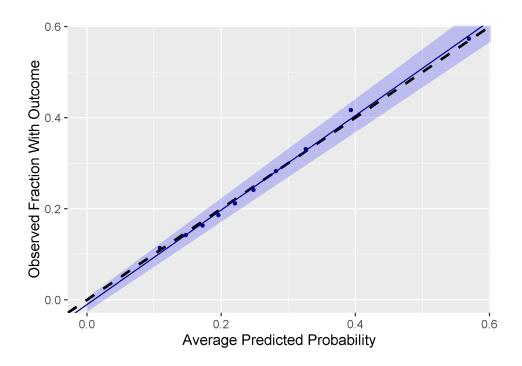


Figure 6: Calibration Plot

6.2 Calibration plot

The calibration plot shows how close the predicted risk is to the observed risk. The diagonal dashed line thus indicates a perfectly calibrated model. The ten (or fewer) dots represent the mean predicted values for each quantile plotted against the observed fraction of people in that quantile who had the outcome (observed fraction). The straight black line is the linear regression using these 10 plotted quantile mean predicted vs observed fraction points. The two blue straight lines represented the 95% lower and upper confidence intervals of the slope of the fitted line.

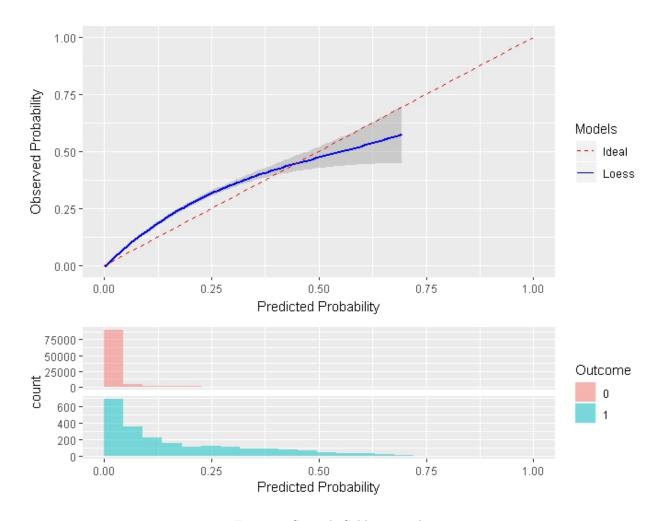


Figure 7: Smooth Calibration plot

6.3 Smooth Calibration plot

Similar to the traditional calibration shown above the Smooth Calibration plot shows the relationship between predicted and observed risk. the major difference is that the smooth fit allows for a more fine grained examination of this. Whereas the traditional plot will be heavily influenced by the areas with the highest density of data the smooth plot will provide the same information for this region as well as a more accurate interpretation of areas with lower density. the plot also contains information on the distribution of the outcomes relative to predicted risk.

However the increased information game comes at a computational cost. It is recommended to use the traditional plot for examination and then to produce the smooth plot for final versions.

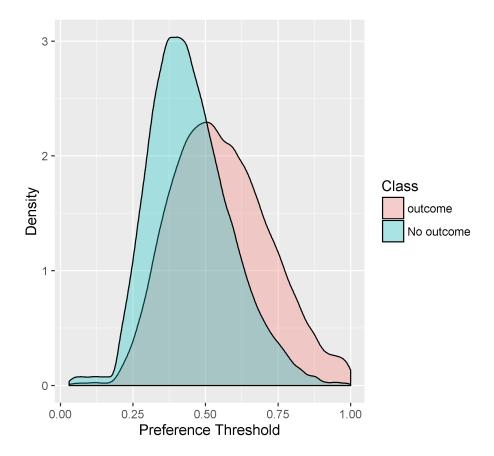


Figure 8: Preference Plot

6.4 Preference distribution plots

The preference distribution plots are the preference score distributions corresponding to i) people in the test set with the outcome (red) and ii) people in the test set without the outcome (blue).

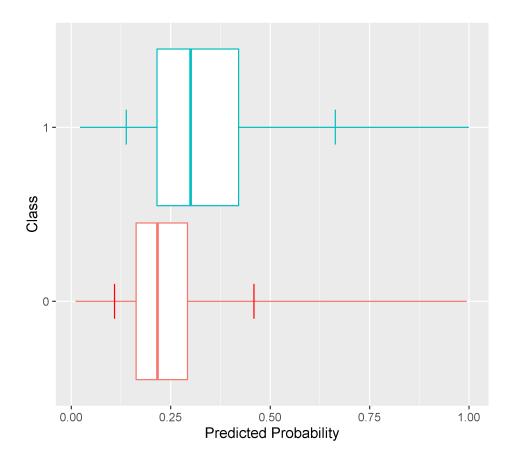


Figure 9: Prediction Distribution Box Plot

6.5 Box plots

The prediction distribution boxplots are box plots for the predicted risks of the people in the test set with the outcome (class 1: blue) and without the outcome (class 0: red).

The box plots in the Figure above show that the predicted probability of the outcome is indeed higher for those with the outcome but there is also overlap between the two distribution which lead to an imperfect discrimination.

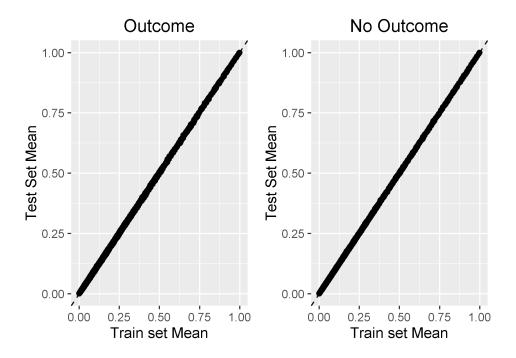


Figure 10: Similarity plots of train and test set

6.6 Test-Train similarity plot

The test-train similarity is presented by plotting the mean covariate values in the train set against those in the test set for people with and without the outcome.

The results for our example of re-hospitalization look very promising since the mean values of the covariates are on the diagonal.

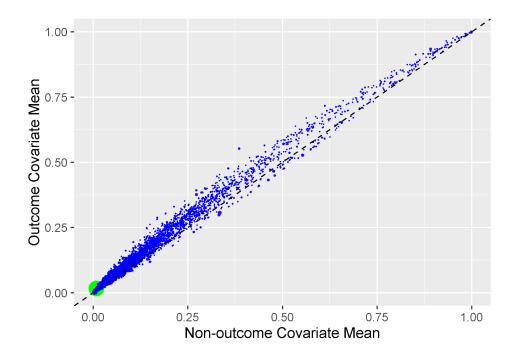


Figure 11: Variabel scatter Plot

6.7 Variable scatter plot

The variable scatter plot shows the mean covariate value for the people with the outcome against the mean covariate value for the people without the outcome. The size and color of the dots correspond to the importance of the covariates in the trained model (size of beta) and its direction (sign of beta with green meaning positive and red meaning negative), respectively.

The plot shows that the mean of most of the covariates is higher for subjects with the outcome compared to those without. Also there seem to be a very predictive, but rare covariate with a high beta.

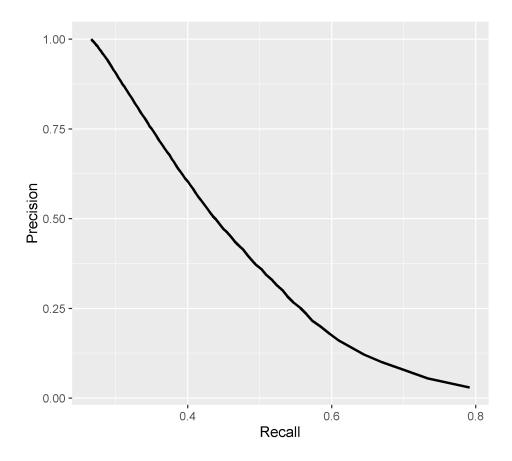


Figure 12: Precision Recall Plot

6.8 Plot Precision Recall

Precision (P) is defined as the number of true positives (Tp) over the number of true positives plus the number of false positives (Fp).

$$P \leftarrow Tp/(Tp + Fp)$$

Recall (R) is defined as the number of true positives (Tp) over the number of true positives plus the number of false negatives (Fn).

$$R \leftarrow Tp/(Tp + Fn)$$

These quantities are also related to the (F1) score, which is defined as the harmonic mean of precision and recall.

$$F1 \leftarrow 2 * P * R/(P + R)$$

Note that the precision can either decrease or increase if the threshold is lowered. Lowering the threshold of a classifier may increase the denominator, by increasing the number of results returned. If the threshold was previously set too high, the new results may all be true positives, which will increase precision. If the previous threshold was about right or too low, further lowering the threshold will introduce false positives, decreasing precision.

For Recall the demoninator does not depend on the classifier threshold (Tp+Fn is a constant). This means that lowering the classifier threshold may increase recall, by increasing the number of true positive results. It is also possible that lowering the threshold may leave recall unchanged, while the precision fluctuates.

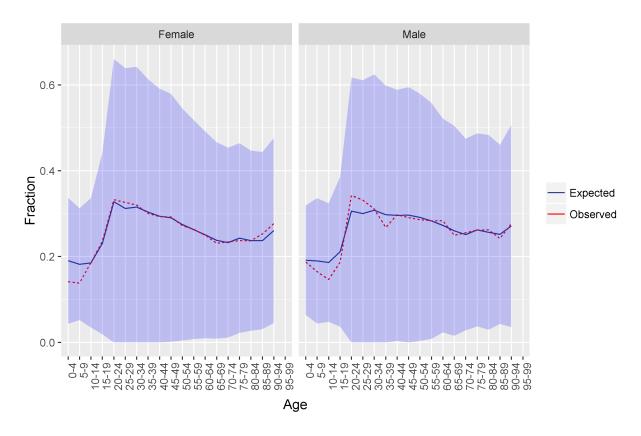


Figure 13: Demographic Summary Plot

6.9 Demographic Summary plot

This plot shows for females and males the expected and observed risk in different age groups together with a confidence area.

7 External validation

We recommend to always perform external validation, i.e. apply the final model on as much new datasets as feasible and evaluate its performance.

```
# load the trained model
plpModel <- loadPlpModel(getwd(), "model")

# load the new plpData and create the population
plpData <- loadPlpData(getwd(), "data")
population <- createStudyPopulation(plpData, outcomeId = 2, includeAllOutcomes = TRUE,
    firstExposureOnly = TRUE, washoutPeriod = 365, removeSubjectsWithPriorOutcome = TRUE,
    priorOutcomeLookback = 365, riskWindowStart = 1, requireTimeAtRisk = FALSE,
    riskWindowEnd = 365)

# apply the trained model on the new data
validationResults <- applyModel(population, plpData, plpModel)</pre>
```

To make things easier we also provide a function for performing external validation of a model across one or multiple datasets:

```
# load the trained model
plpResult <- loadPlpResult(getwd(), "plpResult")

connectionDetails <- createConnectionDetails(dbms = "postgresql", server = "localhost/ohdsi",
    user = "joe", password = "supersecret")

validation <- externalValidatePlp(plpResult = plpResult, connectionDetails = connectionDetails,
    validationSchemaTarget = "new_cohort_schema", validationSchemaOutcome = "new_cohort_schema",
    validationSchemaCdm = "new_cdm_schema", validationTableTarget = "cohort_table",
    validationTableOutcome = "cohort_table", validationIdTarget = "cohort_id",
    validationIdOutcome = "outcome_id", keepPrediction = T)</pre>
```

This will run extract the new plpData from the specified schemas and cohort tables with the target cohort id of cohort id and outcome cohort id of outcome id. It will then apply the same population settings and the trained plp model. Finally, it will evaluate the performance and return the standard output as validation\$performance and if keepPrediction is TRUE then it will also return the prediction on the population as validation\$prediction. The can be inserted into the shiny app for viewing the model and validation by running: viewPlp(runPlp=plpResult, validatePlp=validation).

If you want to validate on multiple databases available you can insert the new schemas and cohort tables as a list:

8 Demos

We have added several demos in the package that run on simulated data:

```
# Show all demos in our package:
   demo(package = "PatientLevelPrediction")

# To run the SingleModelDemo for example use this call
   demo("SingleModelDemo", package = "PatientLevelPrediction")
```

9 Acknowledgments

Considerable work has been dedicated to provide the PatientLevelPrediction package.

```
citation("PatientLevelPrediction")
```

```
##
##
     Jenna Reps, Martijn J. Schuemie, Marc A. Suchard, Patrick B.
     Ryan and Peter R. Rijnbeek (2018). PatientLevelPrediction:
##
##
     Package for patient level prediction using data in the OMOP
##
     Common Data Model. R package version 2.0.5.
##
## A BibTeX entry for LaTeX users is
##
##
     @Manual{,
##
       title = {PatientLevelPrediction: Package for patient level prediction using data in the OMOP Com
## Model},
##
       author = {Jenna Reps and Martijn J. Schuemie and Marc A. Suchard and Patrick B. Ryan and Peter R
##
       year = \{2018\},\
       note = {R package version 2.0.5},
##
```

Further, PatientLevelPrediction makes extensive use of the Cyclops package.

```
citation("Cyclops")
```

```
##
## To cite Cyclops in publications use:
##
## Suchard MA, Simpson SE, Zorych I, Ryan P, Madigan D (2013).
## "Massive parallelization of serial inference algorithms for
## complex generalized linear models." _ACM Transactions on Modeling
## and Computer Simulation_, *23*, 10. <URL:
## http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2414791>.
## A BibTeX entry for LaTeX users is
##
##
     @Article{,
       author = {M. A. Suchard and S. E. Simpson and I. Zorych and P. Ryan and D. Madigan},
##
       title = {Massive parallelization of serial inference algorithms for complex generalized linear m
##
       journal = {ACM Transactions on Modeling and Computer Simulation},
##
       volume = \{23\},
##
       pages = \{10\},
##
       year = {2013},
##
##
       url = {http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=2414791},
##
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Please reference this paper if you use the PLP Package in your work:

Reps JM, Schuemie MJ, Suchard MA, Ryan PB, Rijnbeek PR. Design and implementation of a standardized framework to generate and evaluate patient-level prediction models using observational healthcare data. J Am Med Inform Assoc. 2018;25(8):969-975.

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