

# Methoden voor het omgaan met ontbrekende gegevens bij de beoordeling van gezondheidstechnologie

(Thanks/blame to Google Translate)

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HTA research seminar series, VU, Amsterdam

Friday 17 June 2022

- 1 Introduction to modelling in HTA
- 2 Missing data
- 3 A longitudinal missingness model in HTA
- 4 Application to the PBS study
- 5 Conclusions

# Part 1

## Introduction to modelling in HTA

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- So I probably will be very annoying throughout the presentation <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>But luckily no non-Statistician has been harmed in the making of this slides



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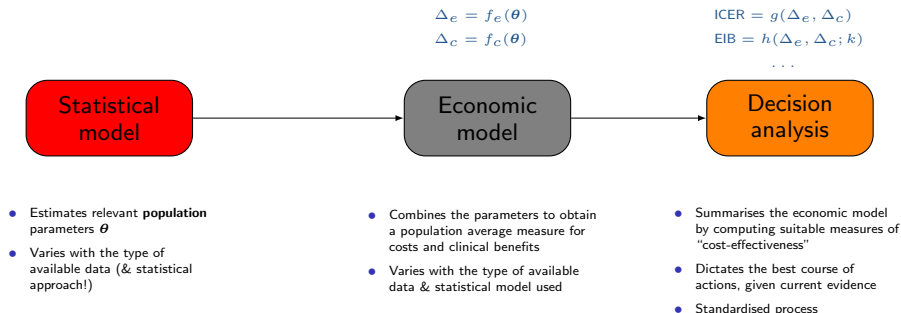
Statistical  
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Economic  
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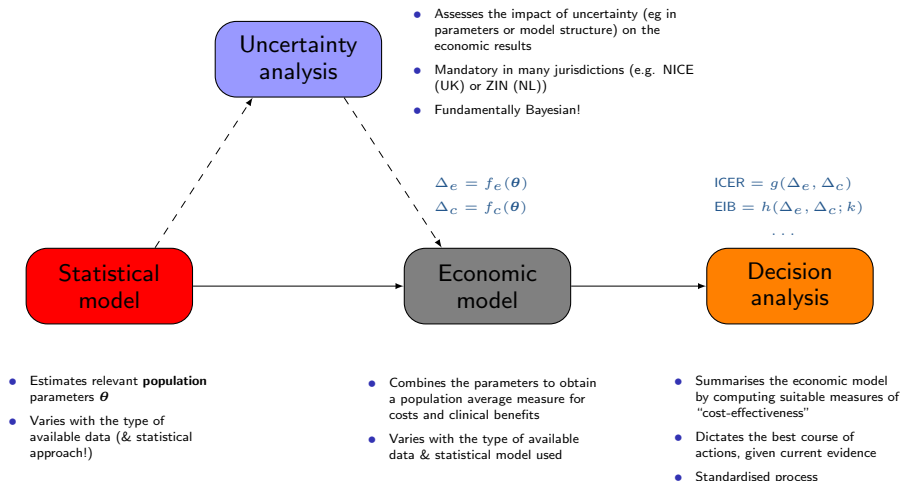
- Combines the parameters to obtain a population average measure for costs and clinical benefits
- Varies with the type of available data & statistical model used

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# Health technology assessment (HTA)

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# 1. ("Standard") Statistical modelling

Individual level data

ID	Trt	Demographics			HRQL data				Resource use data				Clinical outcome			
		Sex	Age	...	$u_0$	$u_1$	...	$u_J$	$c_0$	$c_1$	...	$c_J$	$y_0$	$y_1$	...	$y_J$
1	1	M	23	...	0.32	0.66	...	0.44	103	241	...	80	$y_{10}$	$y_{11}$	...	$y_{1J}$
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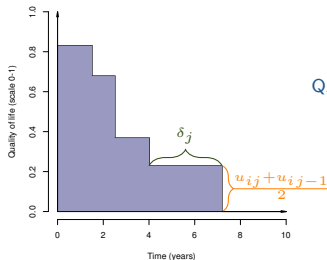
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① Compute individual QALYs and total costs as

$$e_i = \sum_{j=1}^J (u_{ij} + u_{i,j-1}) \frac{\delta_j}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad c_i = \sum_{j=1}^J c_{ij}, \quad \left[ \text{with: } \delta_j = \frac{\text{Time}_j - \text{Time}_{j-1}}{\text{Unit of time}} \right]$$



$\text{QALY}_i = \text{“Area under the curve”}$

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- ② (Often implicitly) assume normality and linearity and model **independently** individual QALYs and total costs by controlling for baseline values

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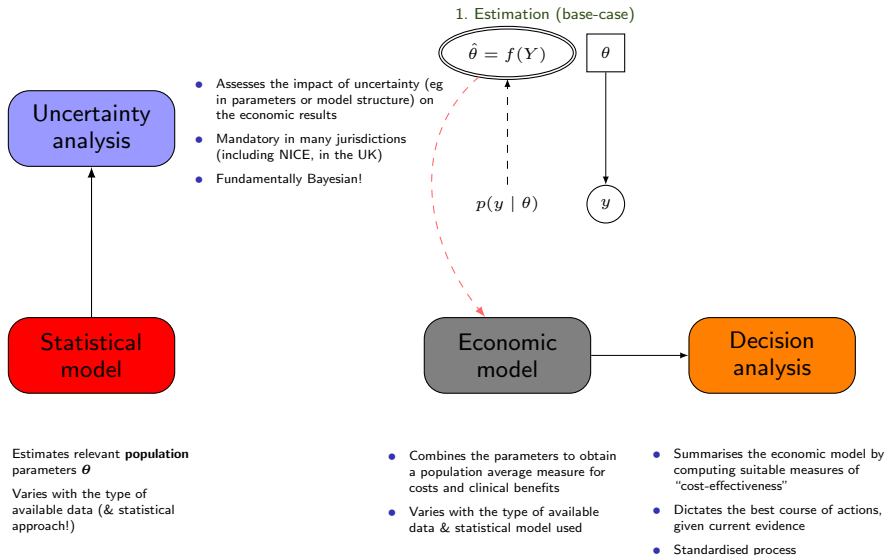
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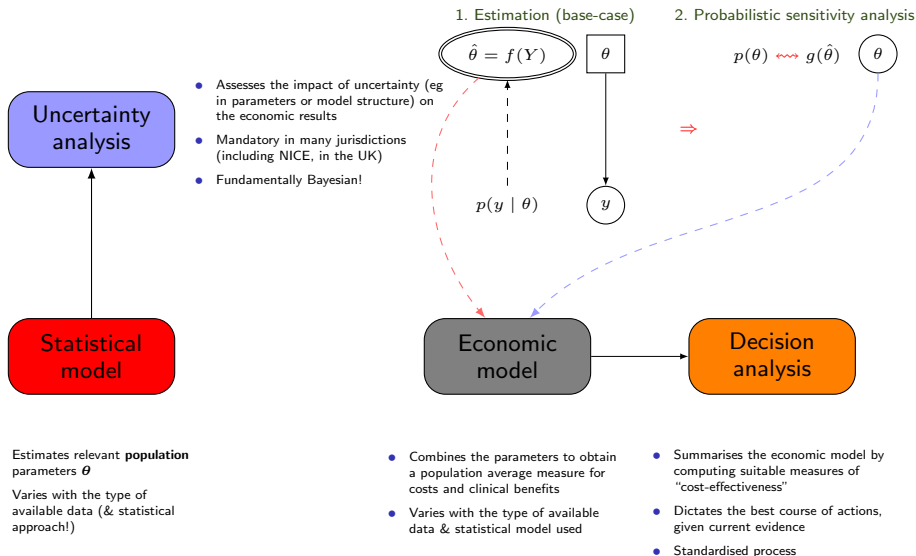
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- 3 Estimate population average cost and effectiveness differentials and use bootstrap to quantify uncertainty

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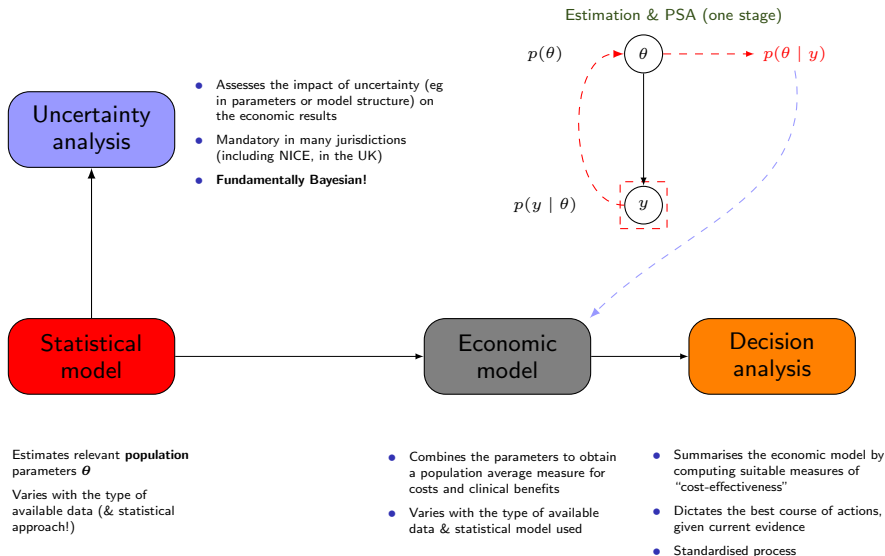


"Two-stage approach" (Spiegelhalter, Abrams & Myles, 2004)

# The Sherlock conundrum...



# Bayesian approach to HTA



*"Integrated approach" Spiegelhalter, Abrams & Myles (2004)  
Baio, Berardi & Heath (2017)*

- Potential correlation between costs & clinical benefits
  - Strong positive correlation — effective treatments are innovative and result from intensive and lengthy research  $\Rightarrow$  are associated with higher unit costs
  - Negative correlation — more effective treatments may reduce total care pathway costs e.g. by reducing hospitalisations, side effects, etc.
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- ... and of course **Partially Observed** data
  - Can have item and/or unit non-response
  - Missingness may occur in either or both benefits/costs
  - The missingness mechanisms may also be correlated
  - Focus in decision-making, not inference — **Bayesian approach particularly suited for this!**



# Bayesians do it better...



## Part 2

# Missing data

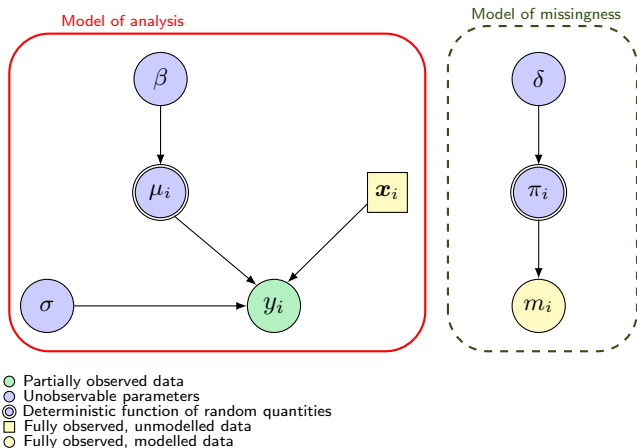
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The problems with missing data...

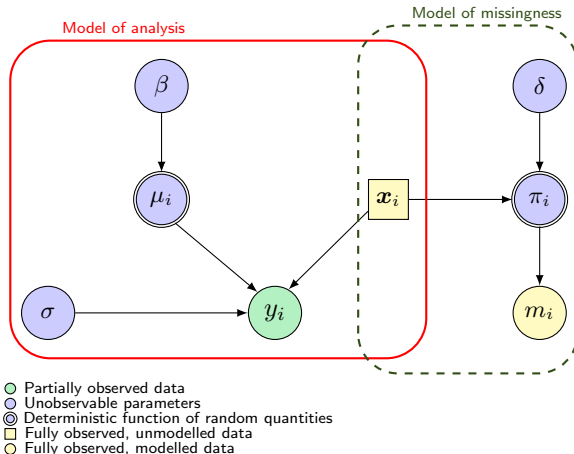
- We plan to observe  $n_{\text{planned}}$  data points, but end up with a (much) lower number of observations  $n_{\text{observed}}$ 
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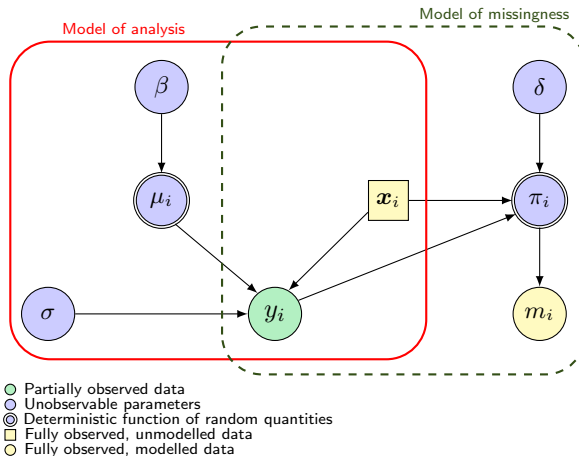
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- We typically don't know **why** the unobserved points are missing and **what** their value might have been
  - Missingness can be differential in treatment/exposure groups
- ... Basically, not very very much we can do about it!
  - Any modelling based on at least some **untestable** assumptions
  - Cannot check model fit to unobserved data
  - Have to accept inherent uncertainty in our analysis!



- $y_i$  = Outcome subject to missingness
- $m_i = 1$  if  $y_i$  missing or 0 if  $y_i$  observed (“missingness indicator”)
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- Effectively, need to model a bivariate outcome  $(y, m)$ , depending on the model parameters

$$\begin{aligned} p(y, m \mid \theta) &= p(y \mid m, \theta^{\text{MoA}}) p(m \mid \theta^{\text{MoM}}) && \text{(Pattern mixture model)} \\ &= p(m \mid y, \theta^{\text{MoM}}) p(y \mid \theta^{\text{MoA}}) && \text{(Selection model)} \end{aligned}$$

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- Common assumption: the two blocks of model parameters are independent (at least a priori)
- Pattern mixture models**
  - Needs to model the full possible missingness “patterns”  $m$  using a marginal distribution
  - Models for data more natural
- Selection models**
  - Models directly the marginal distribution of the observable data
  - Needs to figure out how the missingness model may be affected by it

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  - Alternative approaches (e.g. **MI**) have become more popular among practitioners
- Guidelines on missing data handling in CEA have started to appear in the literature
  - The analysis should be based on **plausible** assumption for the missing data mechanism
  - The choice of the method should **fit** with the assumed mechanism
  - **Sensitivity analysis** should be conducted to assess the robustness of the conclusions to alternative assumptions

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- Seemingly unrelated regression or proper joint modelling allow to capture the **correlation** between the outcomes (Willan et al. (2004). *Health economics*, 13(5), 461-475)
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These methods are almost exclusively implemented at the level of QALYs/total costs to simplify the model specification. However, this strategy:

- Is **inefficient** as information from incomplete cases is lost
- Is potentially **biased**, unless the observed cases are representative of the study population (MAR)

## Part 3

# A longitudinal missingness model in HTA

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- ILD are subject to some **complexities** that are typically ignored by the “standard” approach, which could lead to biased results
- A Bayesian approach allows to increase model complexity to **jointly account** for these with relatively little expansion to the basic model
- **MAR** can be used as reference assumption but plausible **MNAR** departures should be explored in sensitivity analysis
- Possible to expand the modelling framework to a **longitudinal** setting to handle missingness more efficiently

- Let  $\mathbf{Y}_{ij} = (U_{ij}, C_{ij})$  be the vector of utility and cost variables available for the  $i$ -th person at the  $j$ -th time in the study
- Let  $\mathbf{R}_{ij} = (R_{ij}^u, R_{ij}^c)$  be the corresponding vector of missingness indicators, e.g.  $R_{ij}^u = \mathbb{I}(U_{ij} \text{ is obs})$ , and let
  - $\mathbf{Y}_{\mathbf{r}} = (Y_{ij} : R_{ij} = 1)$  denote the observed responses
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  - An intuitive choice for  $d(\mathbf{r})$  is the **dropout time**, i.e. time of the last observed response for each individual

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  - If we use an individual summary function of  $\mathbf{r}$ , e.g.  $d(\mathbf{r})$ , such that  $p(\mathbf{r} \mid \mathbf{y}, d(\mathbf{r}), \kappa) = p(\mathbf{r} \mid \mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{r}}, d(\mathbf{r}), \kappa)$ , then this defines a **Partial MAR** assumption, with  $\kappa \in \psi$
  - An intuitive choice for  $d(\mathbf{r})$  is the **dropout time**, i.e. time of the last observed response for each individual
  - If **intermittent** missingness is not informative, then inferences only require a model for  $p(\mathbf{y}, d(\mathbf{r}))$



- To allow a MNAR analysis we use a PMM specification and rely on a PMAR assumption, conditional on dropout time  $d(\mathbf{r})$ , to express the joint model as

$$p(\mathbf{y}, d(\mathbf{r}) \mid \boldsymbol{\omega}) = p(\mathbf{y}_{\bar{\mathbf{r}}} \mid \mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{r}}, d(\mathbf{r}), \boldsymbol{\omega}_E) p(\mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{r}}, d(\mathbf{r}) \mid \boldsymbol{\omega}_O)$$

- $p(\mathbf{y}_{\bar{\mathbf{r}}} \mid \mathbf{y}_{\mathbf{r}}, d(\mathbf{r}), \boldsymbol{\omega}_E)$  is the **extrapolation distribution** (not identified)
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- **Solution:** Define two new dropout indicators for each individual
  - $d^{min} = \min(d(\mathbf{r}^u), d(\mathbf{r}^c))$  – minimum of the two indicators
  - $d^{max} = \max(d(\mathbf{r}^u), d(\mathbf{r}^c))$  – maximum of the two indicators
- Use these in the model to specify PMAR conditional on two aggregated patterns: 1)  $d^{min} = d^{max}$ ; 2)  $d^{min} \neq d^{max}$

- The joint model  $p(\mathbf{y}, d(\mathbf{r}) \mid \boldsymbol{\omega})$  can be split into five components:

- 1 The model for the patterns and for the completers:

$$p(d(\mathbf{r}) \mid \boldsymbol{\pi}) [p(\mathbf{y} \mid \mathbf{r} = \mathbf{1}, \boldsymbol{\lambda})]^{\mathbb{I}(d^{min}=d^{max}=J)}$$

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- This representation is used to define the identification strategy of  $p(\mathbf{y}_{\bar{r}} \mid \mathbf{y}_r, d(\mathbf{r}))$  through **identifying restrictions** and **sensitivity parameters**

- Model  $\mathbf{D}_i = (D_i^{min}, D_i^{max})$  using a multinomial distribution with dropout probabilities  $\pi_{t_i}$  defined on  $\{1, \dots, J^2\}$ , where  $J^2 = \text{number of dropout patterns}$

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$$\pi_{t_i} \sim \text{Dirichlet} \left( 1 - x, \frac{x/2}{J-1}, \dots, \frac{x/2}{J-1}, \frac{x/2}{(J^2-J)}, \dots, \frac{x/2}{(J^2-J)} \right),$$

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- Alternative: a noninformative  $\text{Dirichlet}(1, \dots, 1)$

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  - weaken **distributional assumptions**
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  - weaken **distributional assumptions**
  - account for more complex **functional forms** (e.g. non-linearity)
- We model the observed responses  $\mathbf{y}_{ij} = (u_{ij}, c_{ij})$  through a **Dirichlet process mixture of normals** (Escobar et al., 1995)

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbf{y}_i &\sim \text{Normal}(\boldsymbol{\mu}_i, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_i), \\ (\boldsymbol{\mu}_i, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_i) &\sim G, \\ G &\sim DP(\alpha, G_0).\end{aligned}$$

- $G$  is an uncountable set of Dirichlet processes, indexed by the baseline distribution  $G_0$  and the concentration parameter  $\alpha$

- Dependence is introduced using the **stick-breaking representation** of each element in this set (Rasmussen, 2000), which allows to re-write and approximate the model as a finite mixture of  $k = 1, \dots, K$  normals

$$\mathbf{y}_i \sim \sum_{k=1}^K \nu^{(k)} \text{Normal} \left( \boldsymbol{\mu}^{(k)}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}^{(k)} \right),$$

Where  $\nu^{(k)} = V^{(k)} \prod_{j < k} (1 - V^{(j)})$  and  $V^{(k)} \sim \text{Beta}(1, \alpha)$

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- When  $K$  large, the approximation to  $G$  is improved.
- Can be reparameterised using the **generalised autoregressive coefficients** (GARP) and **innovation variances** (IV) decomposition of MVN within each mixture component  $k$  (Taddy, 2008)

- Express the joint normal distribution of  $\mathbf{y}_i$  as the product of a sequence of normal distributions

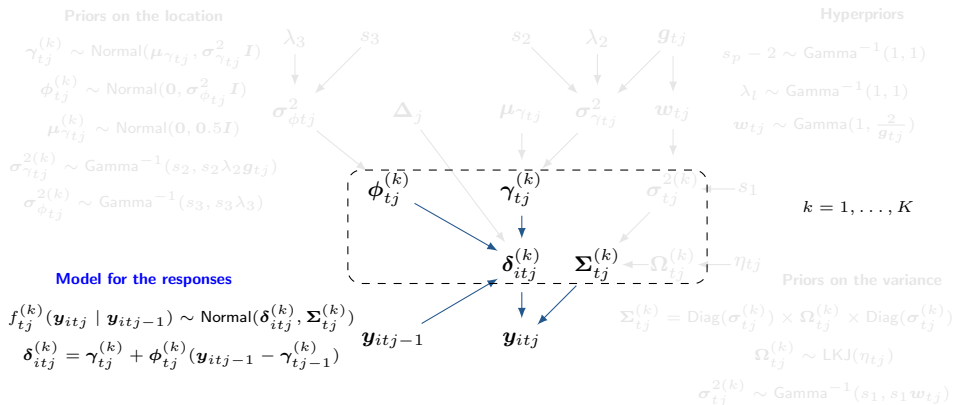
- Express the joint normal distribution of  $\mathbf{y}_i$  as the product of a sequence of normal distributions
- Assuming a **first-order Markov dependence structure**

$$p(\mathbf{y}_i) = f^{(k)}(\mathbf{y}_i) = f_1^{(k)}(\mathbf{y}_{i1}) \prod_{j=2}^J f_j^{(k)}(\mathbf{y}_{ij} \mid \mathbf{y}_{ij-1}),$$

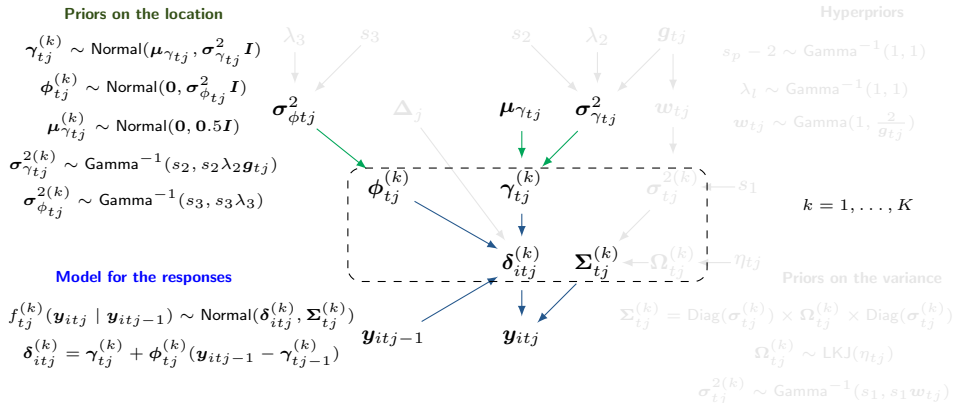
- $f_1^{(k)}(\mathbf{y}_{i1})$  is the density of the bivariate distribution at  $j = 1$  (baseline)
- $f_j^{(k)}(\mathbf{y}_{ij} \mid \mathbf{y}_{ij-1})$  is the density of the bivariate response  $\mathbf{y}_{ij}$  at time  $j$  for subjects who have their responses observed at time  $j - 1$  conditional on  $\mathbf{y}_{ij-1}$

# Modelling framework

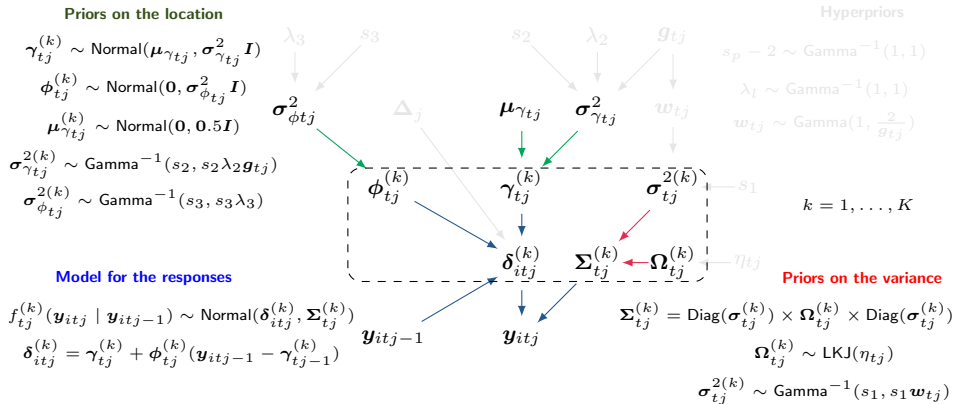
- Consider the pair  $\mathbf{y}_{itj} = (u_{itj}, c_{itj})$  for individual  $i$  at time  $j$  in group  $t$ :



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# Modelling framework

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## Priors on the location

$$\begin{aligned}\gamma_{tj}^{(k)} &\sim \text{Normal}(\mu_{\gamma_{tj}}, \sigma_{\gamma_{tj}}^2 \mathbf{I}) \\ \phi_{tj}^{(k)} &\sim \text{Normal}(\mathbf{0}, \sigma_{\phi_{tj}}^2 \mathbf{I}) \\ \mu_{\gamma_{tj}}^{(k)} &\sim \text{Normal}(\mathbf{0}, 0.5 \mathbf{I}) \\ \sigma_{\gamma_{tj}}^{2(k)} &\sim \text{Gamma}^{-1}(s_2, s_2 \lambda_2 \mathbf{g}_{tj}) \\ \sigma_{\phi_{tj}}^{2(k)} &\sim \text{Gamma}^{-1}(s_3, s_3 \lambda_3)\end{aligned}$$

## Model for the responses

$$\begin{aligned}f_{tj}^{(k)}(\mathbf{y}_{itj} | \mathbf{y}_{itj-1}) &\sim \text{Normal}(\delta_{itj}^{(k)}, \Sigma_{tj}^{(k)}) \\ \delta_{itj}^{(k)} &= \gamma_{tj}^{(k)} + \phi_{tj}^{(k)} (\mathbf{y}_{itj-1} - \gamma_{tj}^{(k)})\end{aligned}$$

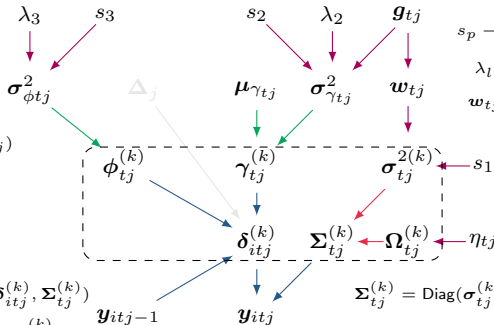
## Hyperpriors

$$\begin{aligned}s_p - 2 &\sim \text{Gamma}^{-1}(1, 1) \\ \lambda_l &\sim \text{Gamma}^{-1}(1, 1) \\ \mathbf{w}_{tj} &\sim \text{Gamma}(1, \frac{2}{\mathbf{g}_{tj}})\end{aligned}$$

$k = 1, \dots, K$

## Priors on the variance

$$\begin{aligned}\Sigma_{tj}^{(k)} &= \text{Diag}(\sigma_{tj}^{(k)}) \times \Omega_{tj}^{(k)} \times \text{Diag}(\sigma_{tj}^{(k)}) \\ \Omega_{tj}^{(k)} &\sim \text{LKJ}(\eta_{tj}) \\ \sigma_{tj}^{2(k)} &\sim \text{Gamma}^{-1}(s_1, s_1 \mathbf{w}_{tj})\end{aligned}$$



## Identification strategy - **benchmark scenario**

- We identify  $p(\mathbf{y}_{\bar{r}} \mid \mathbf{y}_r, d(\mathbf{r}))$  under a benchmark assumption using **identifying restrictions**, from which deviations are explored via **sensitivity parameters** (Daniels et al., 2008)
- We impose different restrictions for each component of  $p(\mathbf{y}_{\bar{r}} \mid \mathbf{y}_r, d(\mathbf{r}))$  conditional on the dropout patterns  $\mathbf{d} = (d^{min}, d^{max})$



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  - For  $d^{min} = d^{max}$ , we impose the MAR restrictions (Molenberghs et al., 2007)
  - For  $d^{min} \neq d^{max}$ , the unidentified distributions at  $d^{min} < j \leq d^{max}$  are identified using all the observed distributions at  $j$  up to  $d^{max}$
  - For  $d^{min} \neq d^{max}$ , the unidentified distributions at time  $j > d^{max}$  are identified using the **MAR** restrictions for  $j, \dots, J$
- The unidentified distributions at  $j > d^{max}$  for the patterns  $d^{min} = d^{max}$  and  $d^{min} \neq d^{max}$ , and those at  $d^{min} < j < d^{max}$  for the patterns  $d^{min} \neq d^{max}$  are identified using a mixture over the distributions at the same time for all the identified patterns  $s = j, \dots, J$  and  $s = j, \dots, d^{max}$ , respectively.

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  - $\Delta_j$  represent expected deviations of mean  $\mathbf{y} = (\mathbf{u}, \mathbf{c})$  values at time  $j = 2, 3, \dots$  after dropout compared to estimates obtained from observed data
  - Thanks to identification strategy, it is possible to elicit different values of  $\Delta_j$  for each dropout pattern  $\mathbf{d} = (d^{min}, d^{max})$

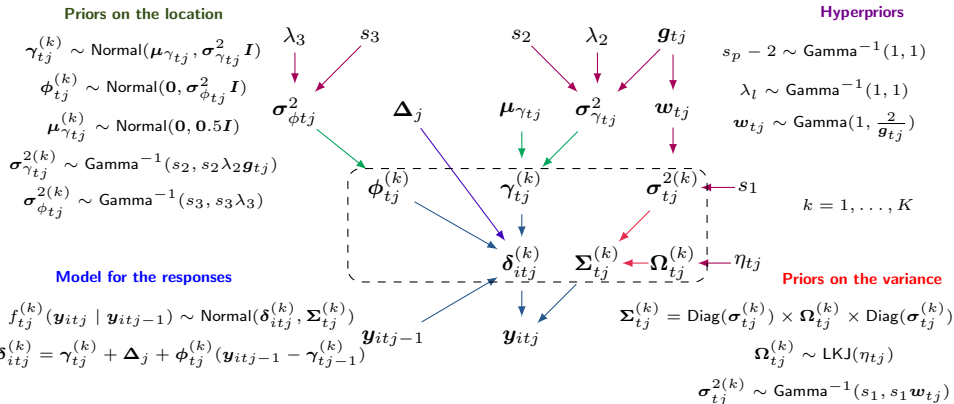


# Sensitivity analysis

- For  $d^{min} = d^{max}$  at  $j > d^{max}$ :

$$f_{d,j}(\mathbf{y}_{ij} \mid \mathbf{y}_{ij-1}, d^{min}, d^{max}) \equiv \tilde{f}_{d,j}(\mathbf{y}_{ij} + \Delta_j \mid \mathbf{y}_{ij-1}, d^{min}, d^{max}),$$

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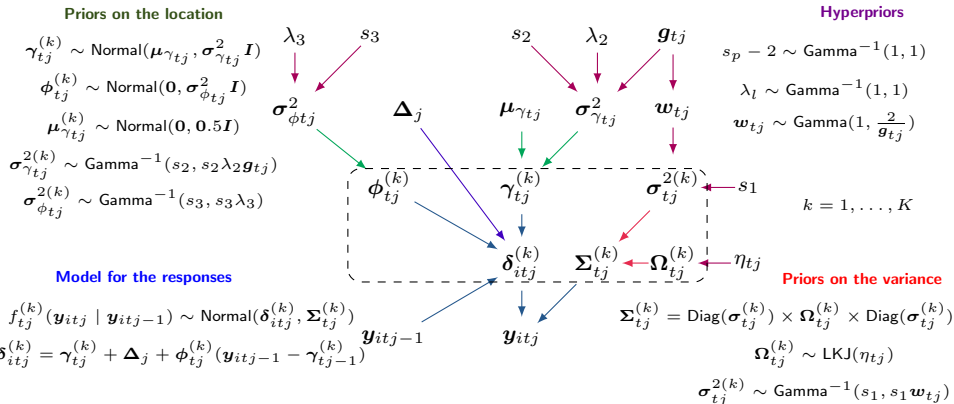


# Sensitivity analysis

- For  $d^{min} \neq d^{max}$  at  $d^{min} < j \leq d^{max}$  and  $j > d^{max}$ :

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- $\Delta_j = (\Delta_j^u, 0)$  if  $(d^{min} = d^u, d^{max} = d^c)$ ;  $\Delta_j = (0, \Delta_j^c)$  if  $(d^{min} = d^c, d^{max} = d^u)$



- Posterior computation is carried out at each iteration of the posterior distribution
  - 1 We draw samples  $(\boldsymbol{\pi}, \boldsymbol{\theta})$  from the posterior given the observed data  $(\mathbf{y}_r, d(\mathbf{r}))$  and augmenting the missing data  $\mathbf{y}_{\bar{r}}$
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$$\mathbb{E}[\mathcal{T}(\mathbf{Y}) \mid \omega] = \int \mathcal{T}(\mathbf{y})p(\mathbf{y} \mid \omega)d\mathbf{y},$$

where  $\mathcal{T}(\mathbf{Y})$  is some transformation such that  $\mathcal{T}_j(\mathbf{Y}_j) = \mathcal{T}_j(\mathbf{Y}_j \mid \overline{\mathbf{Y}}_{j-1}, \Delta_j)$  at the  $j$ -th time in the study. For example,

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- If  $\mathcal{T}_j(\mathbf{Y}_j \mid \bar{\mathbf{Y}}_{j-1}, \mathbf{0}) = \mathbf{Y}_j$ , then deviations of  $\Delta_j$  from  $\mathbf{0}$  represent deviations of the assumed model from MAR
- Although  $\mathbb{E}[\mathcal{T}(\mathbf{Y}) \mid \omega]$  are not directly available, we can derive them by **Monte Carlo integration**

- Priors on  $\Delta_j = (\Delta_j^u, \Delta_j^c)$  are calibrated using information on the scale of the data as an intuitive starting point (Linero et al., 2015) – e.g. residual standard deviations for  $u$  and  $c$  pulled across time

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  - **Assumption:** It is thought unlikely that deviations from the benchmark would exceed a standard deviation for both outcomes
- We marginally specify the prior distributions of each sensitivity parameter  $\Delta_j$  using normal distributions based on a linear AR(1) or **first order mean autocorrelation structure**:

$$\Delta_j \sim \text{Normal}(\Delta_0 + \rho \Delta_{j-1}, \sigma_{\Delta_j}),$$

- $\rho = (\rho^u, \rho^c)$  is the two-vector of autoregressive coefficients capturing the temporal dependence between the shifts after dropout
- $\sigma_{\Delta_j} = (\sigma_{\Delta_j}^u, \sigma_{\Delta_j}^c)$  is set to  $\text{sd}(\mathbf{y})$ , obtained from the observed  $u$  and  $c$
- Set  $|\rho| < 1$  and start the process at  $\Delta_j = 0$  (dropout time)



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  - **Assumption**: individuals are associated with a progressive increase in their mean utility decrement/cost increment

## Part 4

### Application to the PBS study

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- Multi-centre RCT that evaluates the cost-effectiveness of a new multicomponent intervention (PBS) relative to TAU for individuals suffering from intellectual disability and challenging behaviour

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Time	Control ( $n_1=136$ )		Intervention ( $n_2=108$ )	
	observed (%)		observed (%)	
	utilities	costs	utilities	costs
Baseline	127 (93%)	136 (100%)	103 (95%)	108 (100%)
6 months	119 (86%)	128 (94%)	102 (94%)	103 (95%)
12 months	125 (92%)	130 (96%)	103 (95%)	104 (96%)
<b>complete cases</b>	108 (79%)		96 (89%)	



- We implement our nonparametric framework to the PBS data and:
  - we compare the fit of the proposed model to alternative parametric choices from the literature via **information criteria**
  - we assess the fit of the proposed model to the observed data under the benchmark scenario via **posterior predictive checks**
- We compare the results and CEA conclusions obtained across 6 alternative missingness assumptions
- **MAR**: fit model without PMM (ignorable MAR)
- **IR MAR**: fit model with PMM using  $d = d^{min}$  (MAR restrictions)
- **IR PMAR**: benchmark scenario (partial MAR restrictions)
- **MNAR**: benchmark +  $\Delta_j \neq 0$  under 3 scenarios
  - low temporal correlation:  $\rho = 0.1$  (**MNAR L**)
  - medium temporal correlation:  $\rho = 0.5$  (**MNAR M**)
  - high temporal correlation:  $\rho = 0.9$  (**MNAR H**)

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  - 1 A multivariate Normal fitted jointly to all variables (MVN)
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  - 3 A similar model to 2 but replacing Gammas with LogNormals for the costs (BLN)

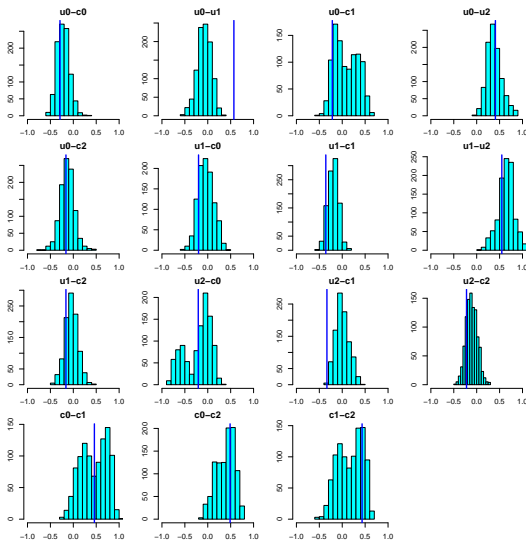
# The PBS study – model assessment (PIC)

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Model	WAIC (lpd; $p_{waic}$ )	LOOIC (lpd; $p_{loo}$ )	LPML
MVN	13513 (-6757; 150)	13327 (-6664; 138)	-6663
BG	12696 (-6348, 198)	12518 (-6259; 156)	-6260
BLN	11850 (-5925, 346)	10918 (-5459; 258)	-5460
DPM	8154 (-4077, 361)	8155 (-4077; 361)	-4077

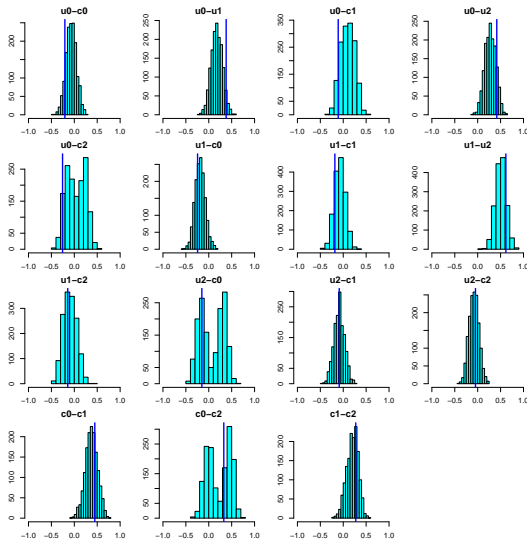
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- We also assess the absolute fit of the model using **posterior predictive checks** based on data replications from the posterior predictive  $p(\tilde{y}, \tilde{r} \mid y_r, r, \omega)$ .

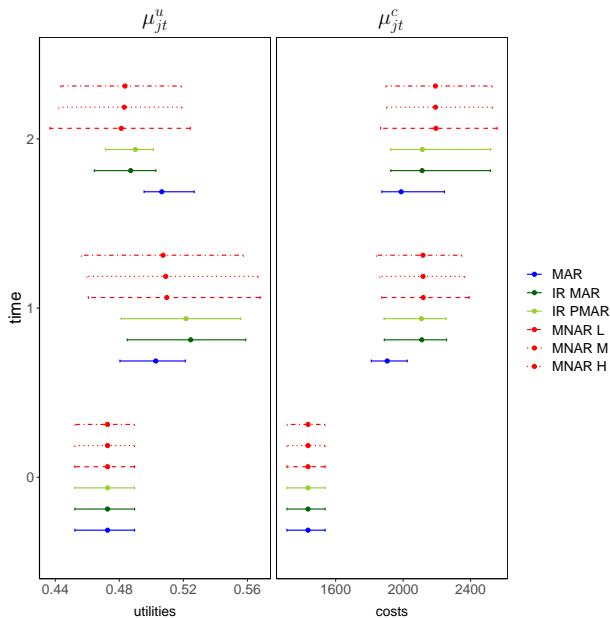


# The PBS study – model assessment (PPC - intervention)

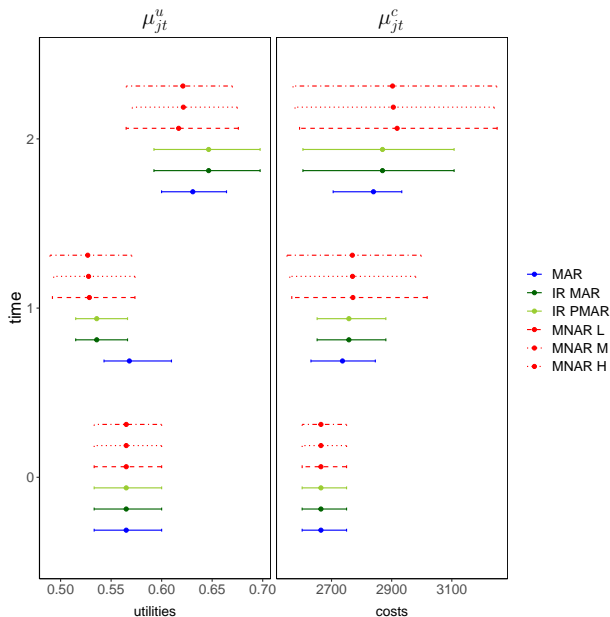
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# The PBS study – posterior means and 95% HPD (control)



# The PBS study – posterior means and 95% HPD (intervention)





# The PBS study – posterior aggregated means and 95% HPD

- Using the posterior of  $\mu_{jt}^u$  and  $\mu_{jt}^c$ , we can then calculate the aggregated QALY and total cost means  $\mu_{et}$  and  $\mu_{ct}$  over the study period through the formulae:

$$\mu_{et} = \sum_{j=1}^J (\mu_{jt}^u + \mu_{j-1t}^u) \frac{\delta_j}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad \mu_{ct} = \sum_{j=1}^J \mu_{cjt}$$

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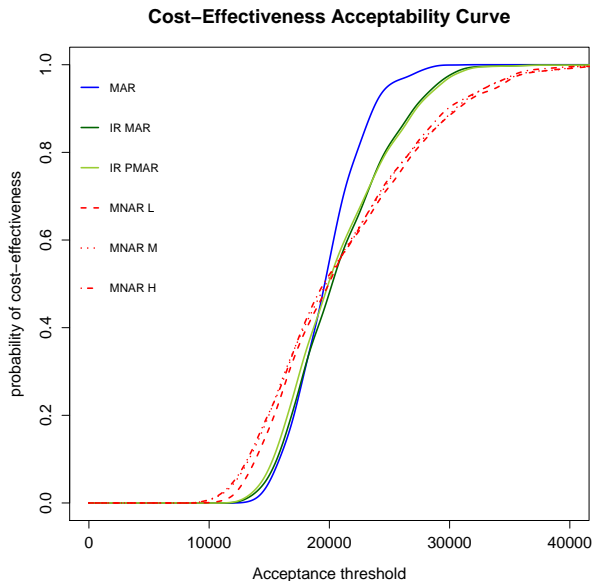
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Scenario	$\mu_{e1}$		$\mu_{e2}$		$\mu_{c1}$		$\mu_{c2}$	
	mean	95% CI	mean	95% CI	mean	95% CI	mean	95% CI
<b>MAR</b>	0.50	(0.49;0.50)	0.58	(0.56;0.60)	3894	(3685;4254)	5575	(5351;5742)
<b>IR MAR</b>	0.50	(0.49;0.52)	0.57	(0.55;0.60)	4223	(3972;4591)	5627	(5288;5944)
<b>IR PMAR</b>	0.50	(0.48;0.52)	0.57	(0.55;0.60)	4222	(3973;4592)	5627	(5288;5944)
<b>MNAR L</b>	0.49	(0.47;0.52)	0.56	(0.53;0.58)	4313	(3850;4722)	5689	(5225;6135)
<b>MNAR M</b>	0.49	(0.47;0.52)	0.56	(0.53;0.59)	4311	(3863;4692)	5675	(5188;6143)
<b>MNAR H</b>	0.49	(0.47;0.52)	0.56	(0.53;0.59)	4309	(3875;4695)	5672	(5183;6156)



## Part 5

# Conclusions

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## ④ **Flexibility** of the modelling framework

- Naturally allows the propagation of uncertainty to the economic model
- Uses a nonparametric approach to account for complexities that otherwise may bias inferences and mislead the economic assessment
- Can be used to specify complex models in a "relatively easy way"

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## 2 **Extension** of standard "imputation methods"

- Performs the estimation and imputation tasks simultaneously
- Fits joint models for missing data in a relatively easy way
- Uses probabilistic approaches that can be implemented in standard software (e.g. OpenBUGS, JAGS or STAN)

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## ③ Principled incorporation of **external evidence** through priors

- Crucial for conducting sensitivity analysis to **MNAR**
- Useful in small/pilot trials where there is limited evidence



**Heel erg bedankt!**