

## INTRODUCTION

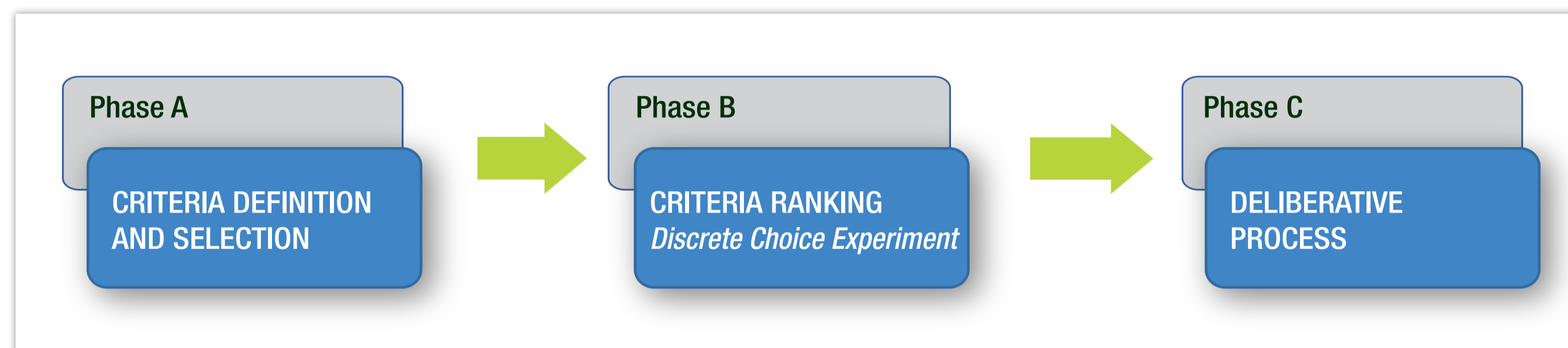
- Diabetic macular edema (DME) is the most common cause of loss of vision and blindness in diabetic patients, with a high and increasing prevalence<sup>1</sup>.
- Multicriteria Decision Analysis (MCDA), which has been applied to a broad range of areas in health care, are a set of techniques that provides a rigorous approach for decision making and helps increase the consistency and transparency of these decisions<sup>2,3</sup>.
- MCDA offers the potential to overcome the challenges of traditional decision-making tools especially when making complex decisions that include multiple criteria, simultaneously consider quantitative and qualitative data and involve multiple stakeholders<sup>2</sup>.

## OBJECTIVE

To determine the most relevant criteria in decision-making for the management of diabetic macular edema (DME) from the perspective of several stakeholders from different settings (clinical, pharmaceutical, health authorities, health management, psychological and patient association) in Spain.

## METHODS

- A MCDA for the treatment of DME patients was carried out, following the ISPOR MCDA Emerging Good Practice Task Force recommendations<sup>4</sup>.
- Twenty stakeholders participated in the project:
  - 7 physicians (6 ophthalmologists and 1 endocrinologist)
  - 4 hospital pharmacists
  - 3 national and regional health authorities
  - 3 health management experts (hospital general manager, medical director, and health-care quality and management professor)
  - 2 patients
  - 1 clinical psychologist
- The study was developed in three phases:



### PHASE A:

- An Advisory Board of 14 of the experts defined all the possible criteria (and the levels/characteristics that defined them) that could influence the decision-making in the treatment of DME patients (Performance Matrix).

### PHASE B:

- The previous selected criteria were screened, prioritized and weighted for the treatment of a 50-65 year-old diabetic patient with DME. This analysis was conducted by using a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE).
- From the Performance Matrix, criteria levels were combined to generate a set of hypothetical DME treatments, which guaranteed enough statistical significance to reveal the preferences of the participants and to establish the relevant criteria for decision-making. The 20 participants received an electronic questionnaire (DCE), where they chose the best option from several pairs of hypothetical treatments.
- A multinomial logit model was fitted to analyse the questionnaire responses applying the backward algorithm, considering as relevant the criteria with p-values <0.05. The best model to predict the decision-making was estimated after selecting the relevant criteria. In this model, each criteria was weighted based on the choice preference of the participants.

### PHASE C:

- Deliberative process with the Advisory Board to discuss the results and conclusions of the DCE.

## RESULTS

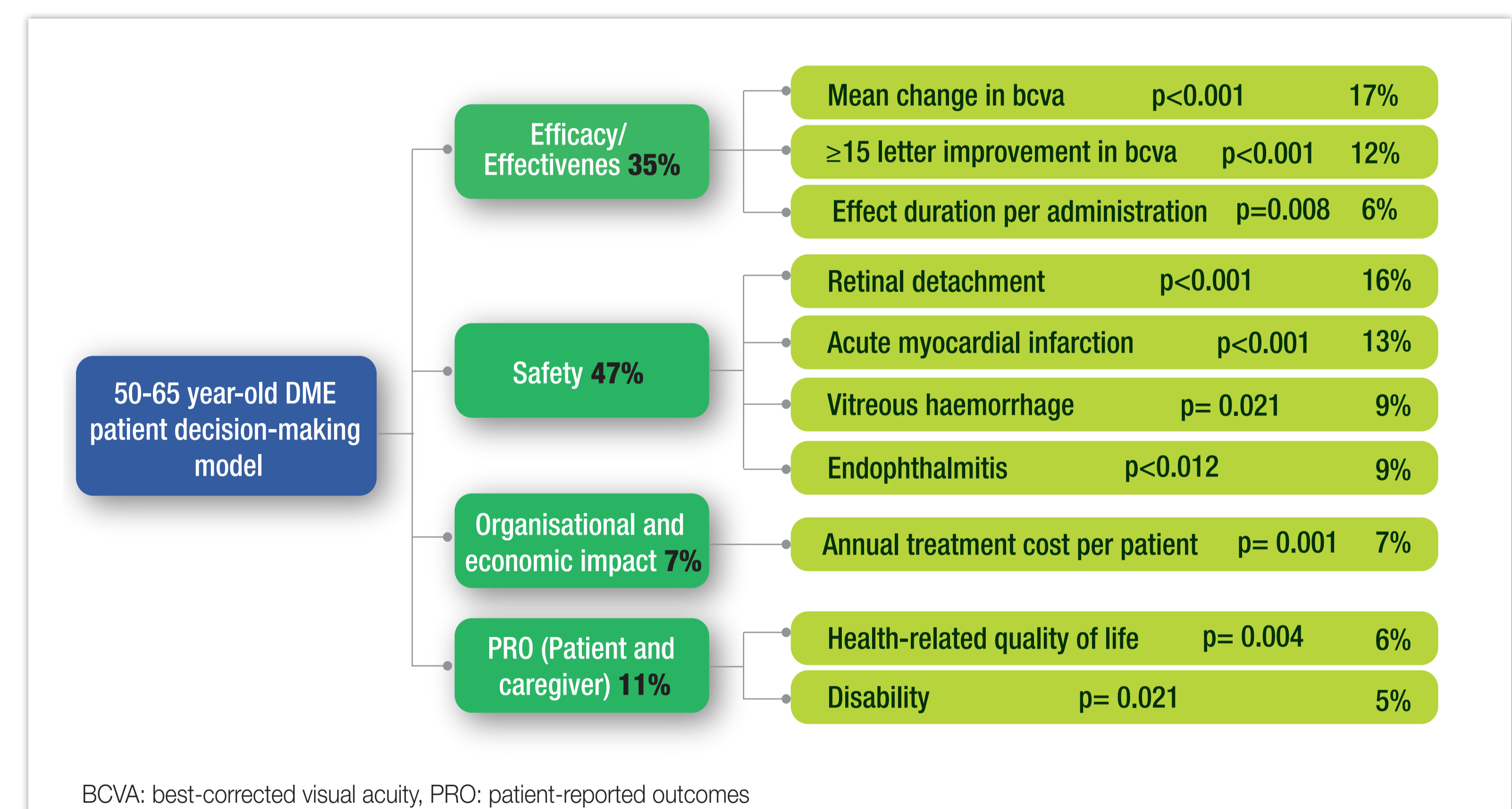
- A total of 31 criteria were initially defined in phase A (Table 1) and classified into several categories (for presentation purpose only).
- From the combination of levels from the 31 selected criteria, a set of 120 pairs of hypothetical treatments were obtained following an orthogonal design.

- The DCE results (phase B) established 10 out of 31 criteria as relevant in decision-making for a 50-65 year old diabetic patient with DME (Figure 1).
- Safety criteria had the greatest weight in the decision (47%), followed by efficacy/effectiveness (35%).
- The most relevant criteria for the decision-making in the treatment of DME patients were mean change in BVCA (17%) and the presence of adverse events such as retinal detachment (16%) or acute myocardial infarction (13%).

**Table 1. Selected criteria and levels for decision-making in DME**

	CRITERIA	LEVELS
EFFICACY/EFFECTIVENESS	Mean change in BCVA	0-5 letters // 6-10 letters // 11-15 letters // >15 letters
	≥15 letter improvement in BCVA	0-15% patients // 16-30% patients // >30% patients
	Reduction in central retinal thickness	≤20% reduction // >20% reduction
	Speed of action: visual acuity improvement	<1 month // 1-3 months // >3 months
	Effect duration per administration	≤1 month // > 1-4 months // >4-12 months // >12 months
	Response in prior treatment refractory patients	After change of treatment due to lack of response: Response is maintained // Response is improved // Response is reduced
	Reduction in the need of long-term treatment (3 years)	Yes // No
SAFETY	Ocular adverse events: increased intraocular pressure	Occurrence: controlled with medical treatment // Occurrence: controlled with surgical treatment // Non-occurrence
	Ocular adverse events: endophthalmitis	Occurrence // Non-occurrence
	Ocular adverse events: retinal detachment	Occurrence // Non-occurrence
	Ocular adverse events: vitreous haemorrhage	Occurrence // Non-occurrence
	Ocular adverse events: cataract	Occurrence // Non-occurrence // Progression
	Systemic adverse events: acute myocardial infarction	Occurrence // Non-occurrence
	Systemic adverse events: cerebrovascular accident	Occurrence // Non-occurrence
	Immunogenicity	Occurrence // Non-occurrence
ORGANISATIONAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT	Budget impact	Positive (increase of incremental costs) // Neutral // Negative (decrement of incremental costs)
	Annual pharmaceutical cost per patient	< €500 // €500-1500 // > €1500-3000 // > €3000
	Number of intravitreal injections (first year)	≤3 // >3
	Minimum required facilities	Clean room // Surgery room
	Healthcare burden	The treatment implies an increase in the healthcare burden // The treatment does not modify the healthcare burden // The treatment implies a reduction in the healthcare burden
	Need of Pharmacy handling	Pharmacy handling // No Pharmacy handling
PRO (PATIENT & CAREGIVER)	Disability	Improvement of functional capacity and performance of activities of daily living // No effect in functional capacity and performance of activities of daily living // Worsening of functional capacity and performance of activities of daily living
	Quality of life	Improvement of quality of life (social/occupational) // No effect in quality of life (social/occupational) // Worsening of quality of life (social/occupational)
	Affection of emotional state	Anxiety and depression treated pharmacologically // Anxiety and depression treated non-pharmacologically // No anxiety or depression
	Treatment satisfaction	Improvement // No effect // Worsening
	Caregiver burden	No increase of the caregiver burden // Moderate increase of the caregiver burden* // High increase of the caregiver burden**
PERSISTENCE AND OTHERS	Treatment persistence	Persistent patient // Non-persistent patient
	Pharmaceutical form	Modified- or delayed-release // No modified release
	Available presentations	Vial // Syringe/Injector // Vial and Syringe/injector
	Therapeutic innovation: new mechanism of action	Yes // No
	Therapeutic innovation: new therapeutic target	Yes // No

**Figure 1. Relevant criteria for decision-making in DME**



## CONCLUSIONS

- From a multi-stakeholder perspective and considering the revealed preferences of the participants:
  - The selection of an appropriate treatment for DME patients should guarantee the patient safety while maximizing the improvements in visual acuity with the longest treatment effect.
  - Furthermore, it should contribute to the system sustainability with an affordable treatment cost.
  - Finally, it should assure a positive impact in health-related quality of life and prevent from disability.

## REFERENCES

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2. Adunlin G, et al. Health Expect. 2015;18(6):1994-905.
3. Thokala P, et al. Value Health. 2016;19(1):1-13.
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\*it requires the caregiver to occasionally accompany the patient to the treatment-related visits  
 \*\*it requires the caregiver to frequently or continuously accompany the patient to the treatment-related visits