COMPARISON THE CLINICAL PRACTICE OF PRIMARY CARE PAEDIATRICIANS AND GENERAL PRACTIONERS IN HUNGARY

Ferenc Kadar, Mihaly Kalman, Andras Paksy, Laszlo Paksy
Association of Hungarian Primary Care Paediatricians

1st BALTIC PAEDIATRIC – ECPCP CONGRESS 19-21 May, 2011 Vilnius

PRIMARY CARE PAEDIATRICIANS (PCPs) or GENERAL PRACTITIONERS (GPs)?

- Paediatrics: PCPs are the best trained and experienced professionals to ensure the quality of paediatric primary care;
- Long debate: who should be the primary caretaker for children?
- Professional bodies do not argue, do not stand up consequently for primary care paediatrics;
- Health politicians are not well informed about professional benefits of a paediatrics based system;
- Switch to a GP system, paediatrics based systems are declining, primary care paediatrics in danger!

"PCPs endangered species under the threat of disappearance." *(S. Barak)*

INDICATORS

Indicators: few, often inadequate to demonstrate

- attitude,
- knowledge,
- adherence of guidelines;

Surveys: do not study

- where,
- in what time scale, patients get definitive care;
- cost-effectiveness

  (especially considering a long term period)

COMPARISON AMONG DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

"Countries without few paediatricians in primary care: excellent results if only conventional indicators are considered" (*D. v. Esso*).

Child-health care data of Sweden, the Netherland (GPs) – excellent.
Data of Hungary, Spain (PCPs+ GPs) not as good - due to many factors.

Eliminate paediatricians from paediatric primary care in Hungary by referring to the excellent results of more developed countries?

Effectiveness of Swedish and Hungarian health care system isn't comparable (income per capita, socio-economic background, education, social services, local governments, traditions have much greater influence on children's health and well-being then health care structure does).

COMPARISON INSIDE ONE COUNTRY

PCPs or GPs are more competent to provide primary care for children?

More relevant answer by comparing the performance of the GP and PCP based system inside a given country.

Hungary: good opportunity to compare certain data of the two models.

HUNGARY

- ✓ 0-14 yr: 1,5 million (15% of population)
- ✓ 80 % cared by PCPs, 20 % cared by GPs
  - in underdeveloped sub-regions: 40-50 %
- ✓ Children in small villages cared by GPs
  - per capita income - lower
  - social conditions - worse
  - marginalized children - higher
  - access to services - limited
  - life expectancy at birth - shorter
- ✓GPs practices: number of 0-14 yr: 13%

  paediatric training of GPs: lower level, experience less

RECENT STUDY

- We tried to find comparable data;
- Characterise preventive care, therapeutic practice, early detection of some risk factors, referrals from primary care to hospital;
- Rather attitude, knowledge, protocol adherence of primary care doctors,
  than social circumstances of patients.

METHOD

Hungarian National Health Insurance:

covers all health activity of the country,
free of charge for all Hungarian citizen,
collects all data about patients and care.

Overview about practice of
all primary health care providers

Nationwide survey:
1st January - 31st of December 2010

AIM OF THE STUDY

1. Preventive practice: **PCV vaccination** rate,
2. Therapeutic practice: **use of antibiotics**,
3. **Cost of antibiotics** prescribed in primary care,
4. Early detection of **some risk factors**,
5. **Referrals** from primary care to **hospitals**.

PCV VACCINATION

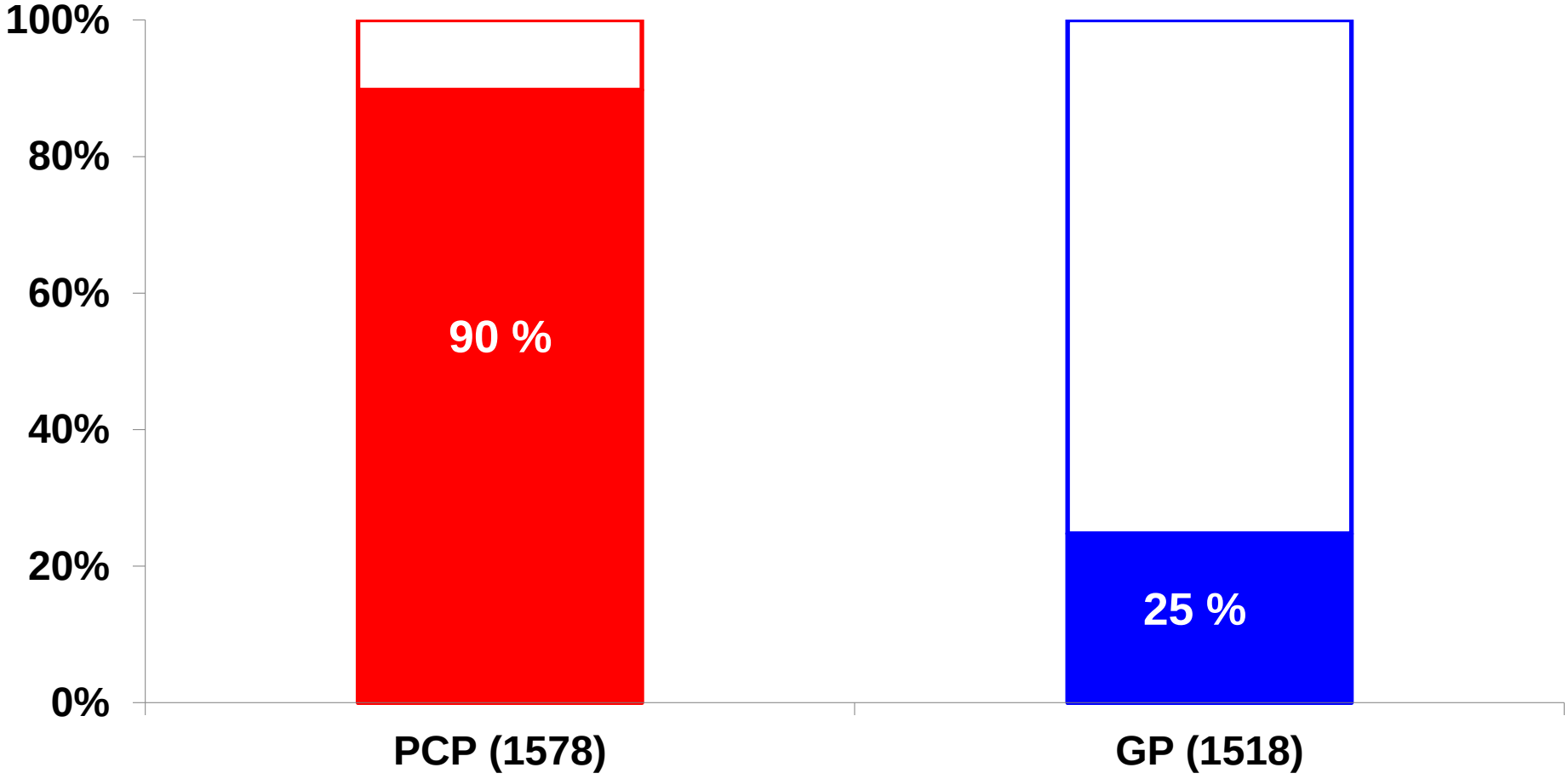
- Recommended, but not mandatory
- free of charge < 2yr since 2009,
- use defined by guideline,
- who refuse free of charge vaccines: negligible
- vaccination rate depends on

  knowledge,

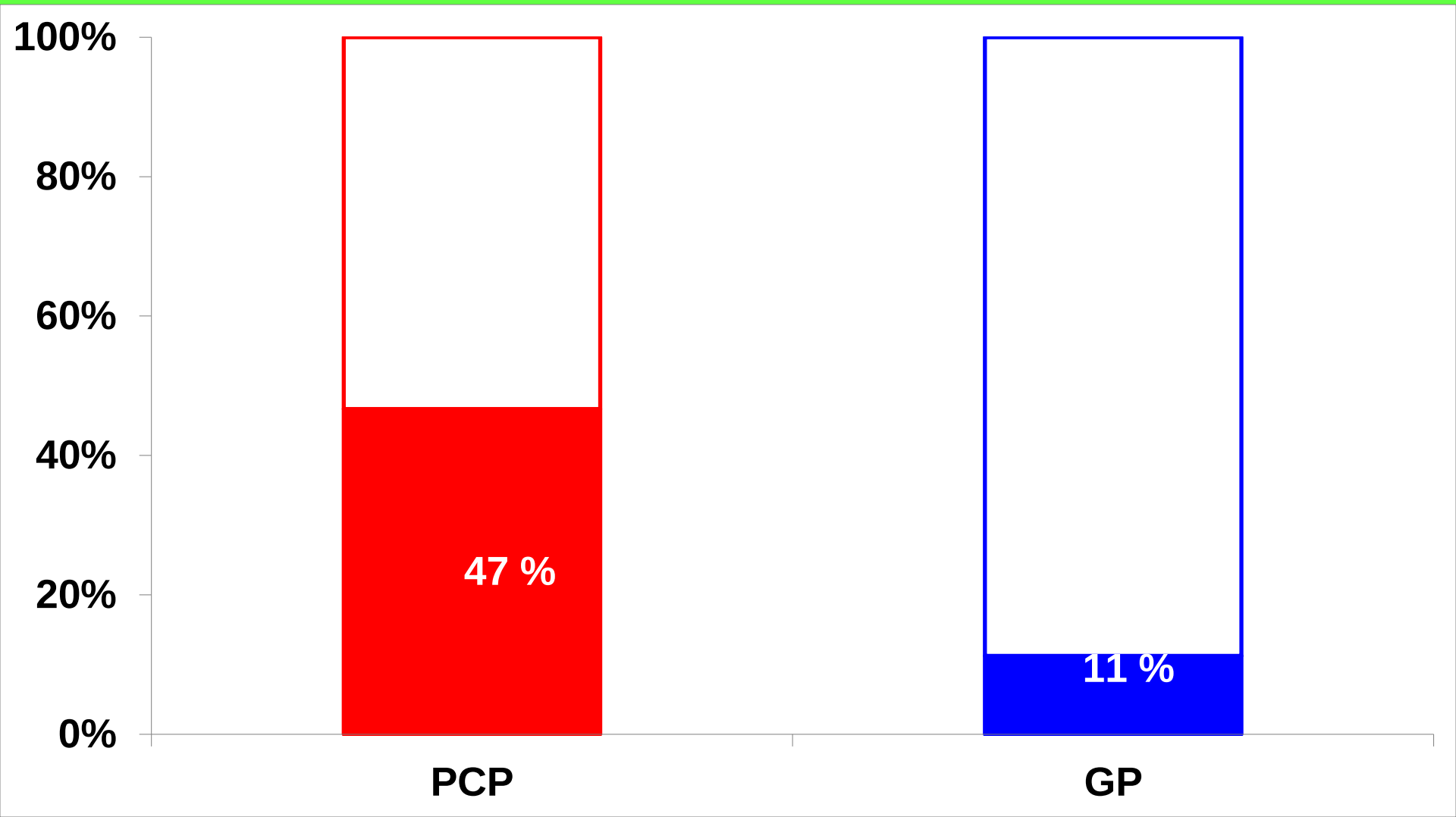
  attitude of primary care physicians.

PROPORTION OF PC DOCTORS USING PCV

FOR CHILDREN < 2 YR

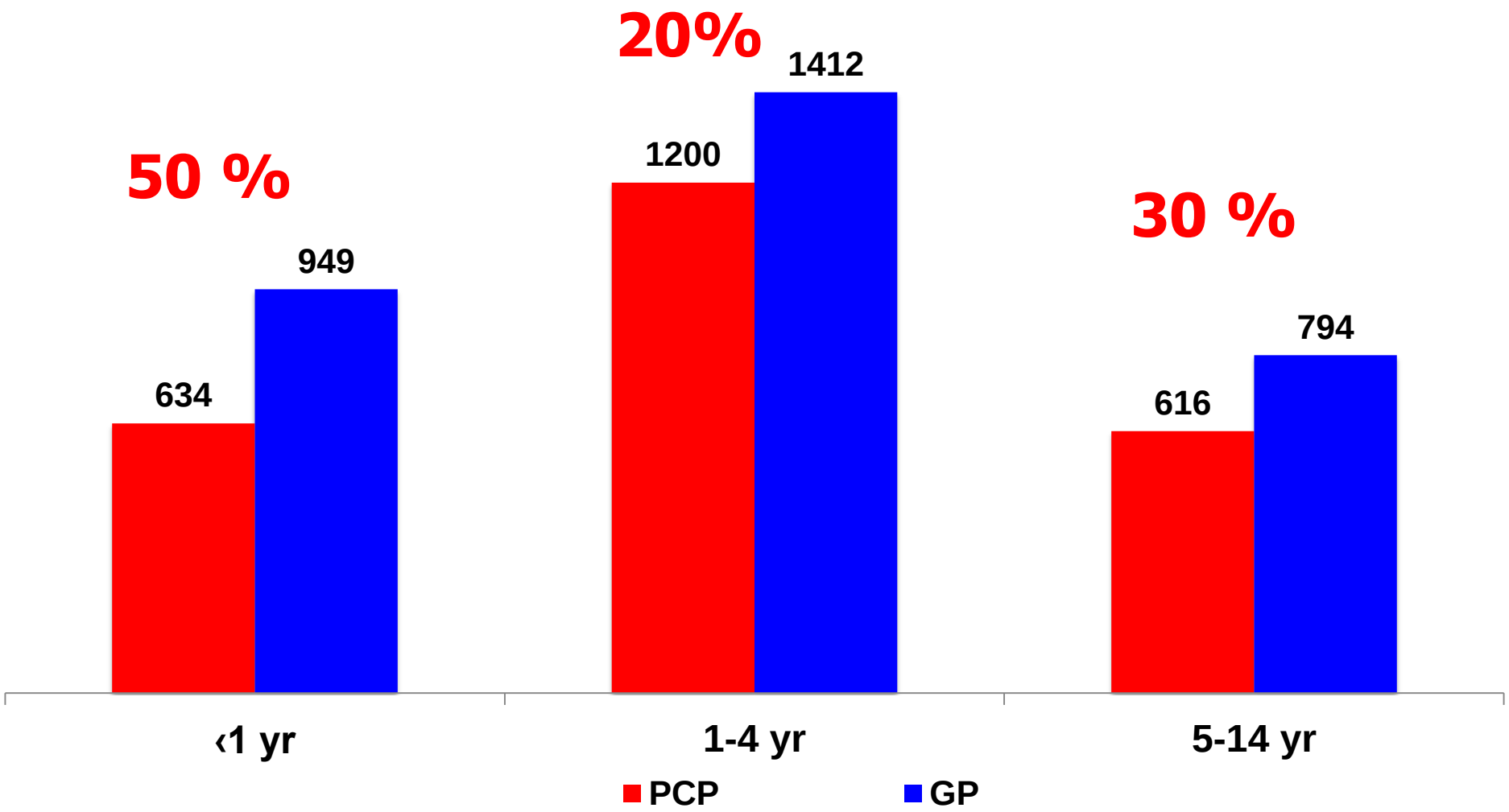


INFANTS VACCINATED WITH PCV AS DEFINED IN GUIDELINE



COST OF ANTIBIOTICS IN PRIMARY CARE OF CHILDREN

BY AGE GROUPS/100 CHILDREN (€)



USE OF ANTIBIOTICS

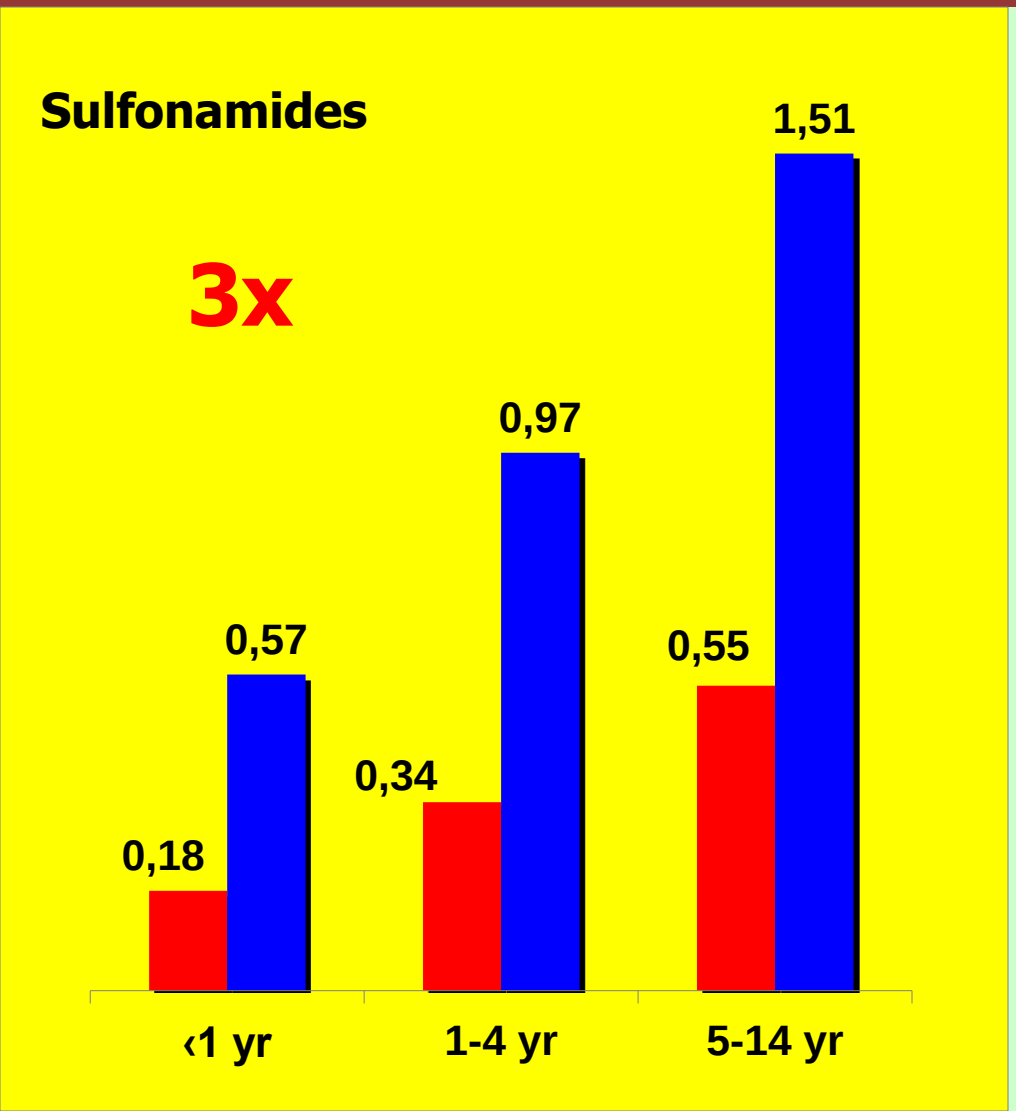
- Uncertainty in managing health problems of children

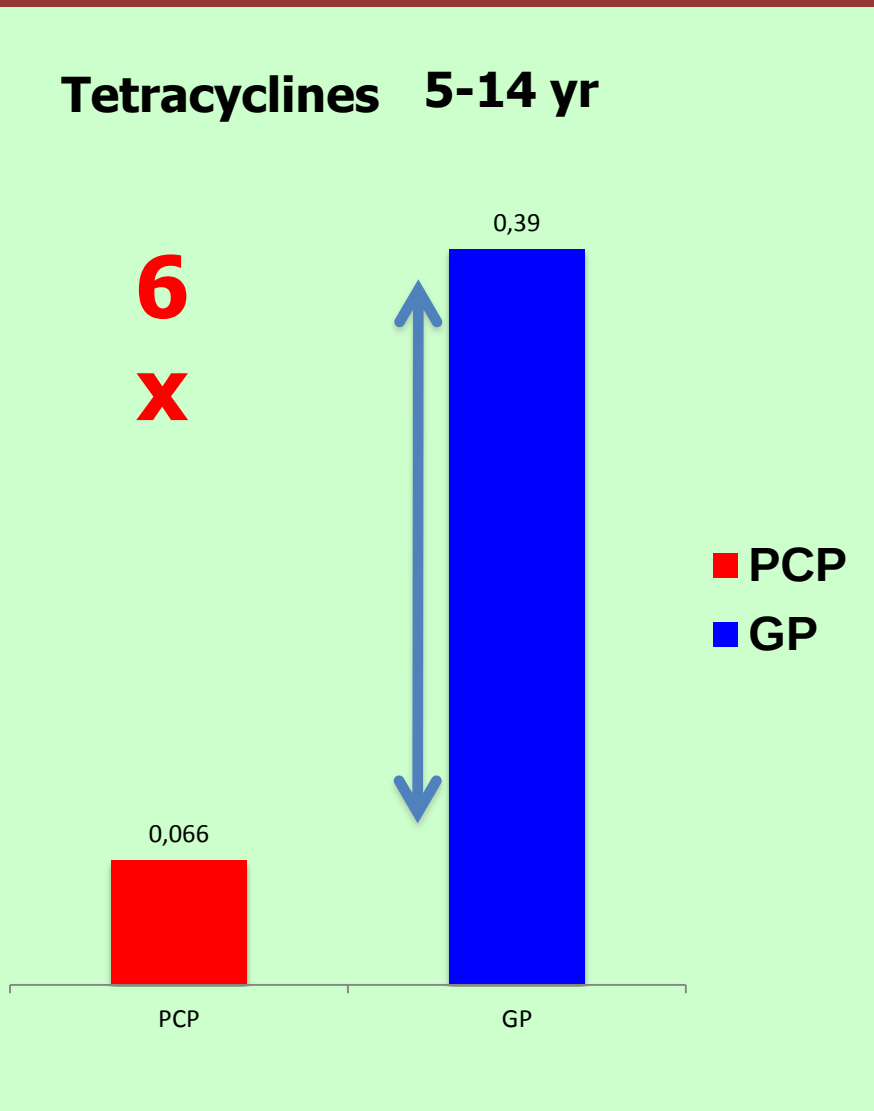
- If all children under the age of 14 yr would be treated by PCPs,

- **500.000 Euro/year** could have been saved from the budget of antibiotics in primary care – direct costs would be 21% less !

USE OF "OUT OF DATE" ANTIBIOTICS

BY AGE GROUPS/1 000 CHILDREN (DDD)





EARLY NEURO-DEVELOPMENT EXAMINATION

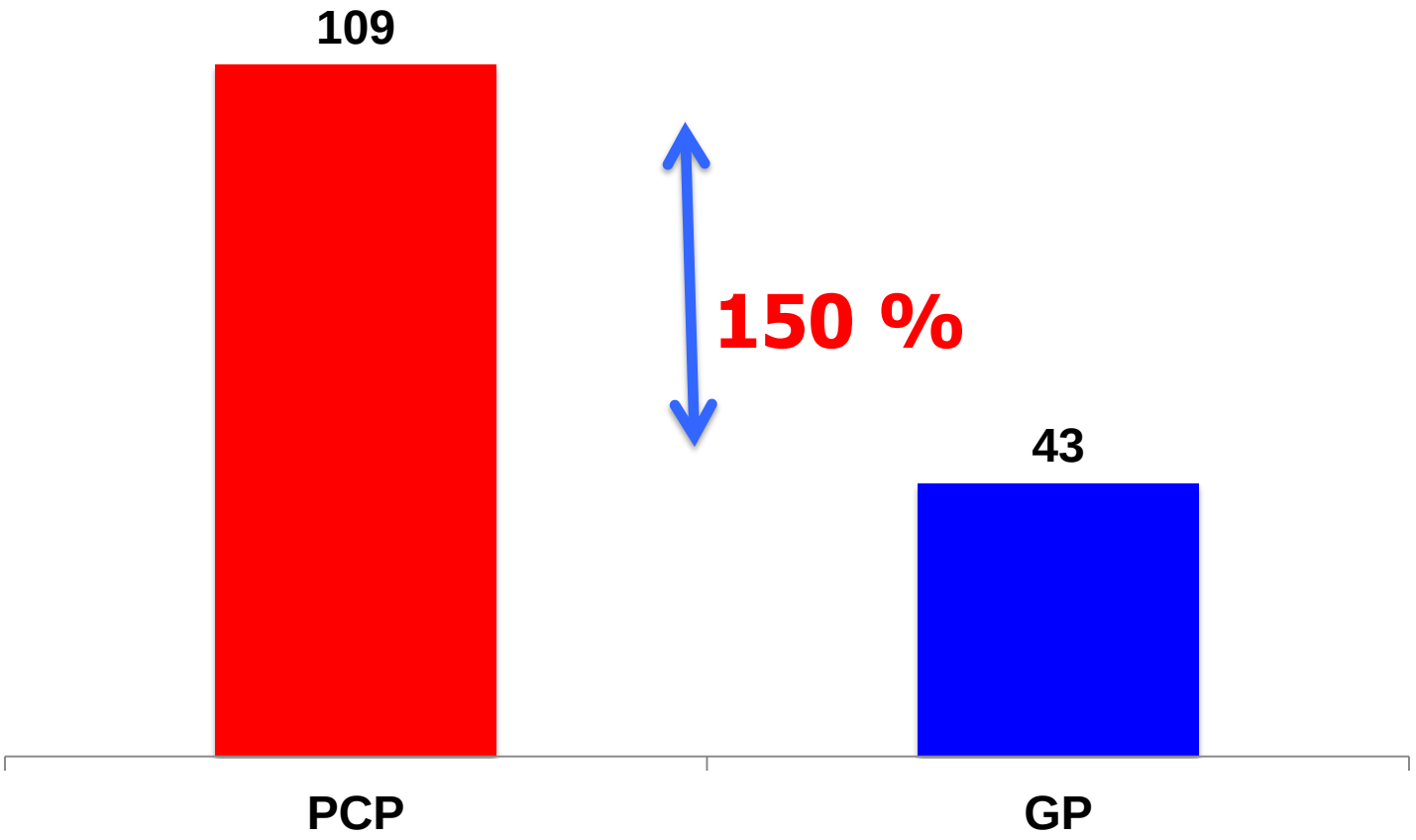
‹1 yr

Children who need early examination or treatment is higher among infants with low birth weight. Proportion of premature infants is almost 50 % higher in the socially disadvantaged families in Hungary. While a great majority of these children are cared by GPs, **they refer 35% less** infants to a paediatric neurology service (although we have a widely accessible network of free of charge paediatric neurologic outpatient clinics.) **PCPs are better trained** in recognizing neuro-development hazards, and they are better aware of the need of early diagnosis of preventable health problems.

Proper referral of infants to trained specialists might be inadequate by GPs.

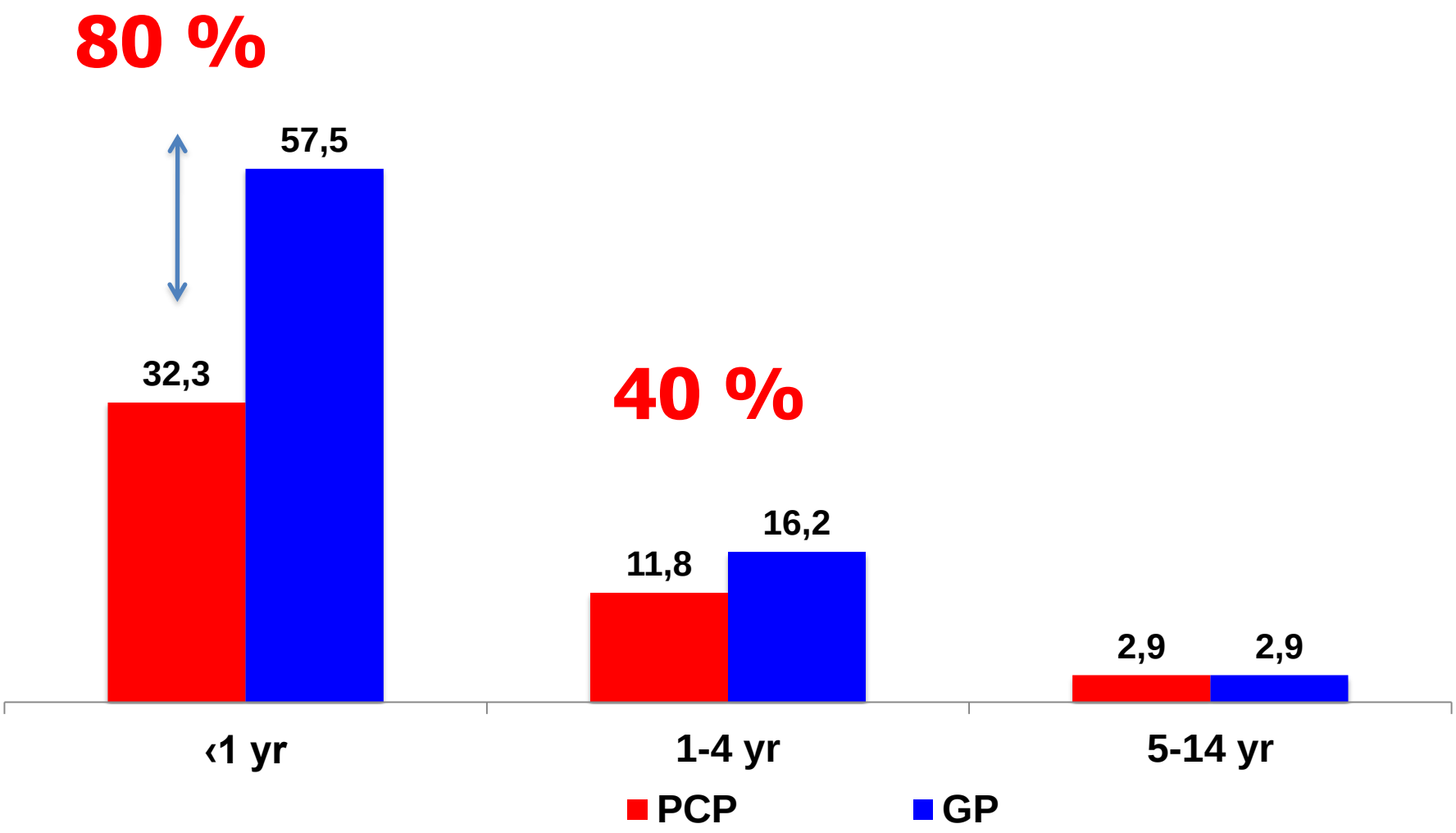
MICROBIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF URINE SAMPLES

/1 000 CHILDREN 0-3 yr



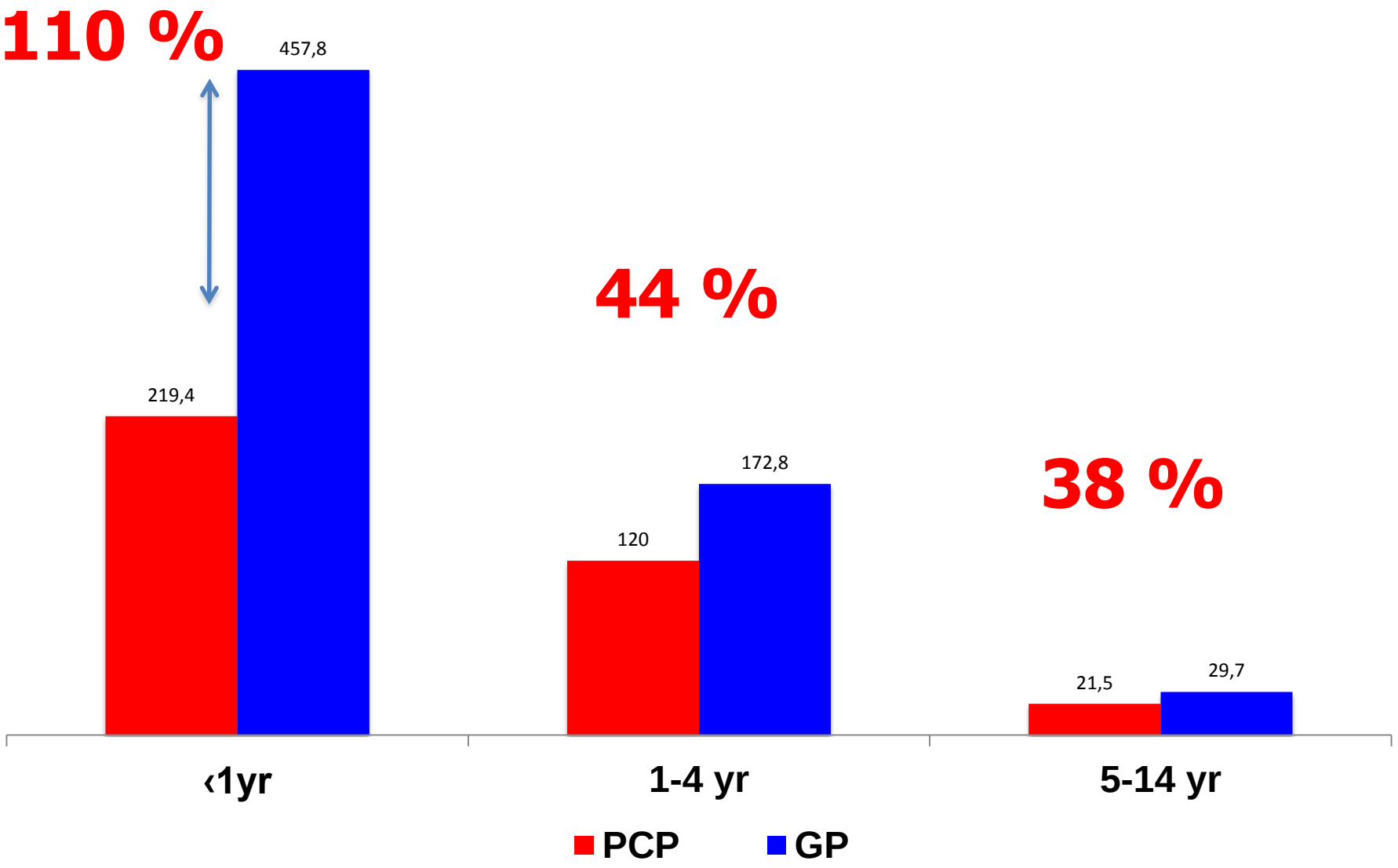
HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS WITH INTESTINAL INFECTIONS

/10 000 CHILDREN BY AGE GROUPS



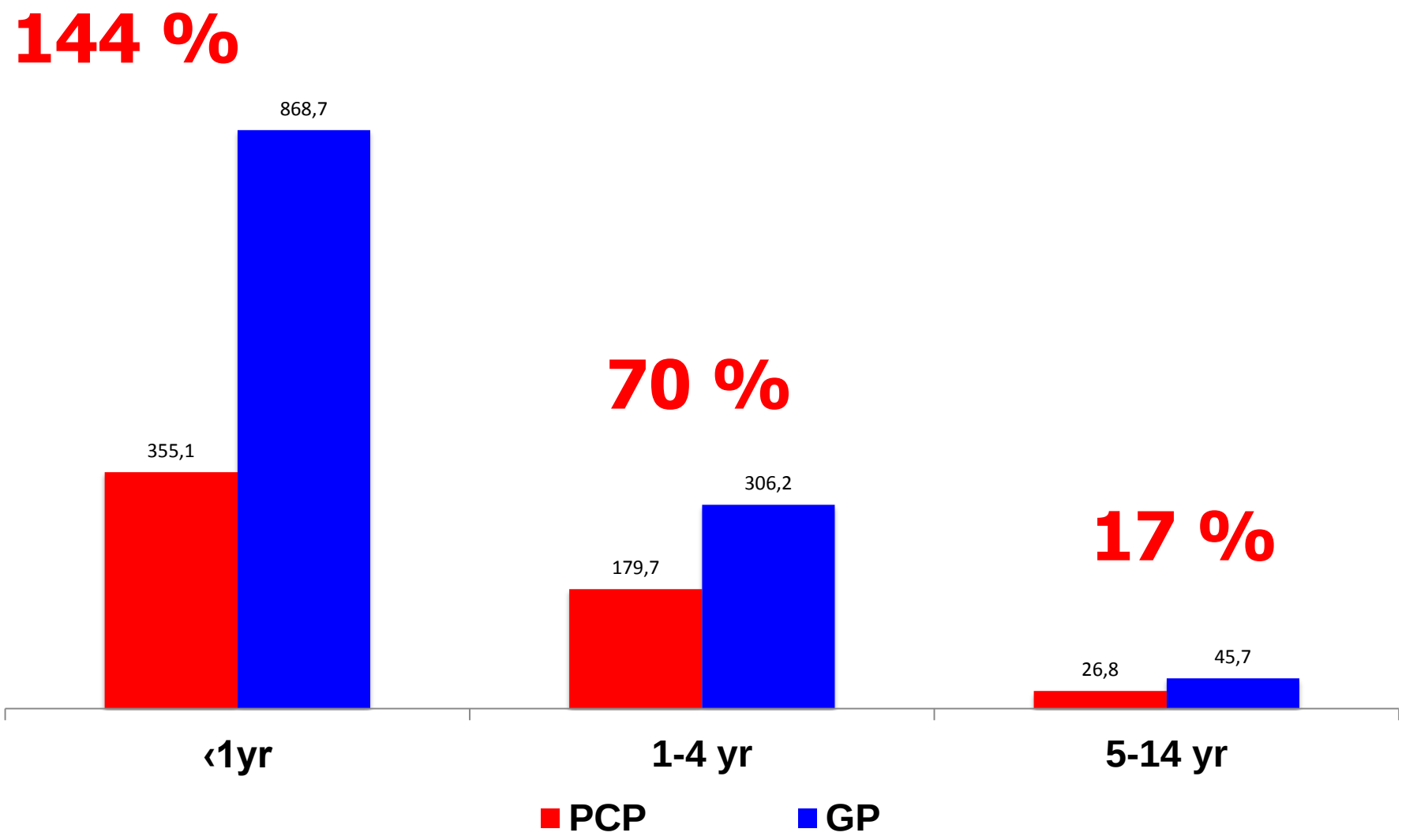
HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS WITH PNEUMONIA

/10 000 CHILDREN BY AGE GROUPS



HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS WITH BRONCHITIS

/10 000 CHILDREN BY AGE GROUPS



HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS

Not “clear data”, (many confounding factor, social conditions, difficulties at some remote areas with children’s first access availability.)

Uncertainty of GPS in the care of sick children may be an important factor in the appropriateness of paediatric admissions.

SUMMARY 1.

Primary care paediatricians

- prevent more,
- diagnose earlier,
- treat paediatric patients in a more appropriate manner than GPs in Hungary.

Cost of replacing PCPs by GPs would be high.

SUMMARY 2.

If health policy makers
want to avoid inequity in paediatric care,
would like to plan health care structure adapted to the needs of children;

If they would take into consideration long term cost-effectiveness of care;

More valid indicators of child-health-care should be identified.

Use of these indicators would be helpful to assess more precisely the differences between the various systems and would help making the right decision.