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INTRODUCTION

Disease-related malnutrition (DRM) is a complex syndrome that results from inadequate nutrient intake that does not meet the patient's physiological requirements and from the systemic inflammatory response associated with a disease state. In hospitalized patients with DRM, there is a negative feedback effect, since hospitalization is a risk factor for developing malnutrition or worsening a previous malnutrition condition, but malnutrition itself negatively affects the clinical evolution of hospitalized patients

OBJECTIVE

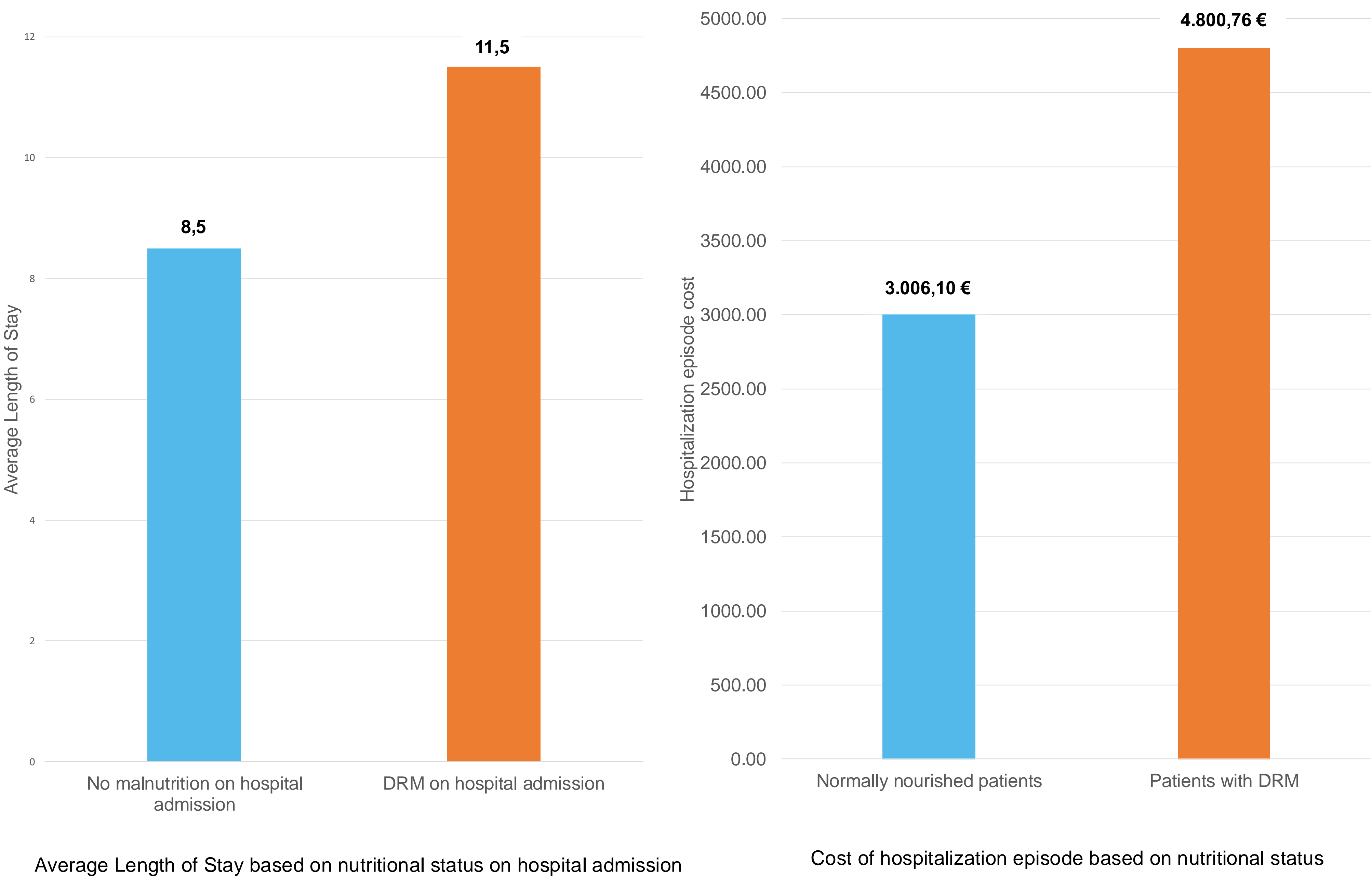
This research aims to measure the population affected by DRM in Spanish hospitals and estimate its impact on health resources utilization and costs.

METHOD

A systematic review of the literature was conducted in publications that have evaluated the prevalence of DRM in hospitalized patients, and its clinical and economic impact. Based on these data, the number of people affected by DRM in the Spanish hospital setting and the additional cost for public and private health care were estimated.

RESULTS

The prevalence of DRM in hospitalized patients is, according to GLIM criteria, 29.7%, which allows us to estimate about **780,000 adults hospitalized with DRM in Spain**. These patients have higher in-hospital mortality and a higher rate of early readmissions. A prolongation of hospital stays is also recognized, so that **each episode of hospitalization of patients with DRM is associated with an additional cost of € 1,800** compared to normal-nourished people. **The extrapolation of the additional cost per episode to the number of people with DRM in the Spanish hospital setting allows us to estimate an additional cost of more than 1,400 million euros.**



CONCLUSIONS

DRM is a serious public health problem in itself, but its impact is even greater as it negatively affects the evolution of other diseases. Despite the evidence on the value of nutritional treatment of DRM in reducing the average length of stay and rehospitalization, **there are still many opportunities for improvement of diagnosis and treatment of DRM in hospitals and community settings..** Therefore, **it is necessary to implement strategies to improve the comprehensive approach to this disease to reduce the clinical impact on patients and favor an efficient use of economic resources.**

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