

Health Economic Evaluation as a Tool for Sustainable Financing of the Unified Health System: the Case of Hemodialysis

1. OBJECTIVE

To analyze the impact of an economic evaluation on the revision of the value of payment per production in the financing of the hemodialysis (HD) procedure in the Unified Health System (acronym in portuguese, SUS).

2. METHODOLOGY

The Brazilian Ministry of Health team carried out a micro-costing analysis with bottom-up distribution of an HD clinic, in two comparative scenarios: 20 or 30 machines. The average values of these costs were compared with the value of the readjustment requested by the institutions providing services to the SUS. Subsequently, the Budgetary Impact (BI) was calculated.

3. RESULTS

The total cost of the hemodialysis session per patient presented by the institutions of the clinics affiliated with SUS was R\$ 273.44 (USD 53.48), which would represent an increase of 25.2% on the current value (R\$ 218.47 - USD 42,54). Micro-costing measured the average cost at between R\$ 223.72 and R\$ 261.16 (USD 43,76 - USD 51,08), allowing for an incremental adjustment of between 2.4% and 19.5%. The decision was to adjust by 10.3%, which is above the accumulated inflation variation (9.73%). The difference in the BI between the index requested and that granted represents a saving of R\$ 510.5 million per year (USD 99.8 million), representing almost 1% of the specialized care budget.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The annual exemption of the public health system by half a million reais boosts efficiency in the line of care in this area, which in 2022 represented the largest outpatient expenditure of the SUS. These results highlight the continued need to adopt data- and evidence-based approaches to ensure the effectiveness and financial viability of policies, especially in high-cost sectors such as hemodialysis, thus contributing to the financial sustainability of the SUS.

Figure 1. Composition of the total cost considering the micro-costing analysis of the hemodialysis procedure per patient, in reais (R\$), 2022.

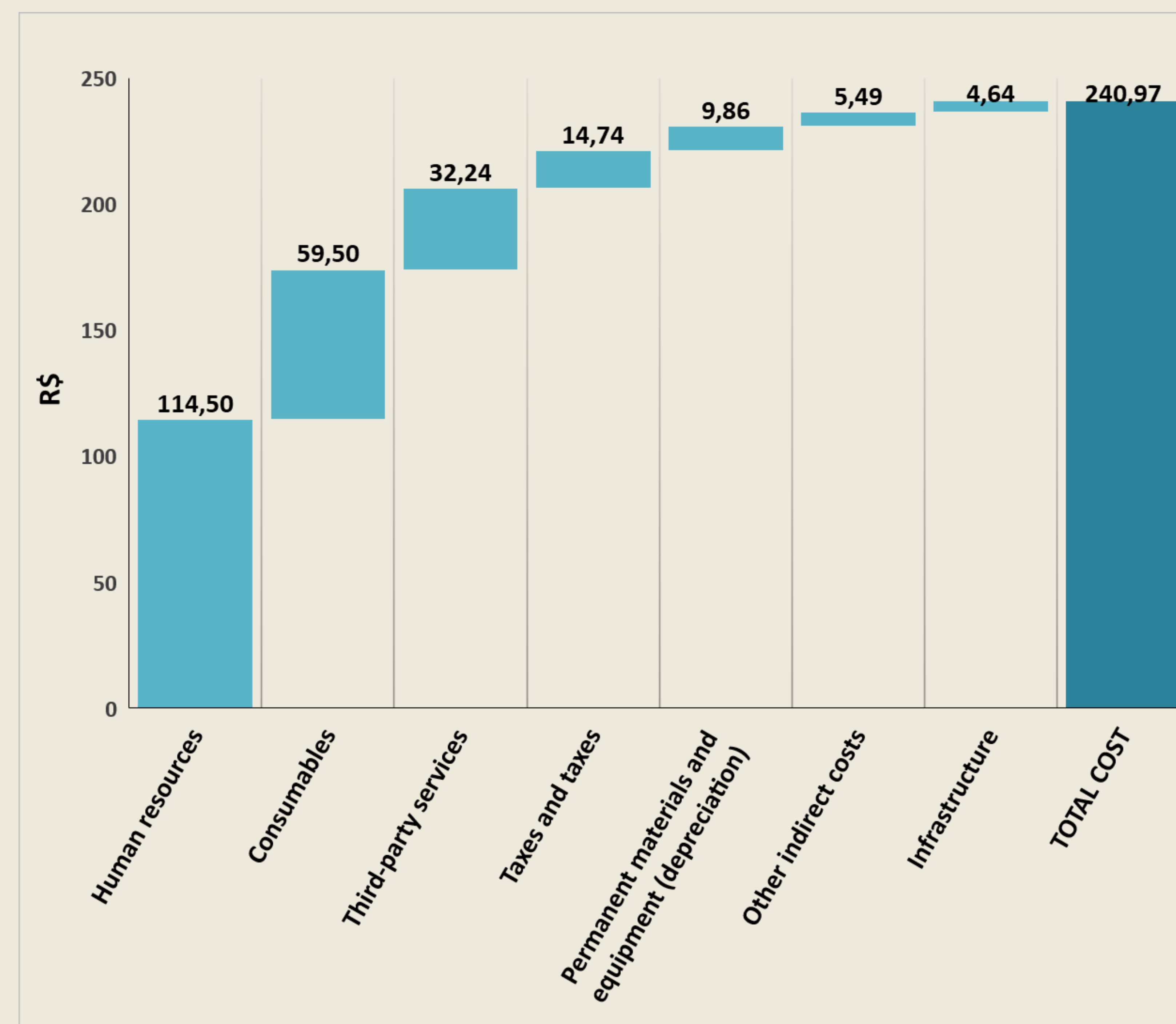


Figure 2. Distribution of costs considering the micro-costing analysis of the hemodialysis procedure per patient, in percentage (%), 2022.

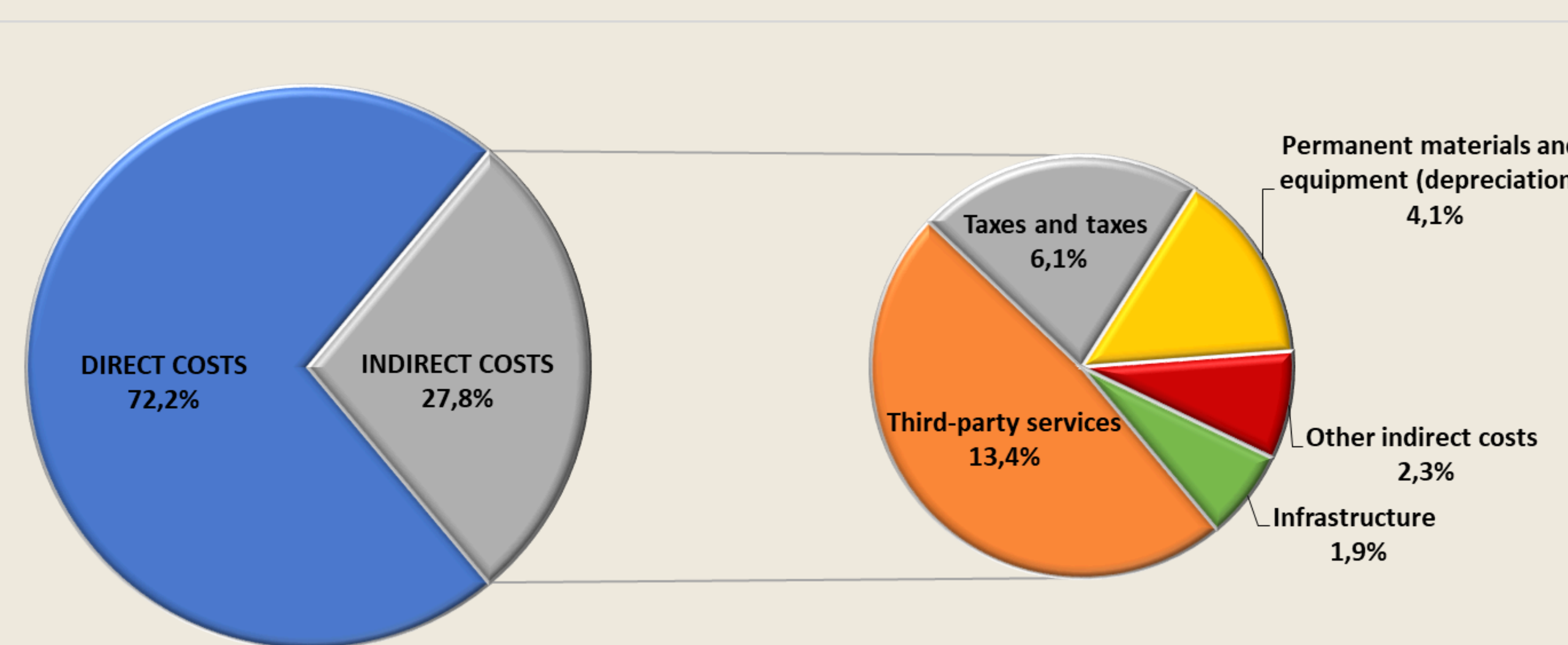


Figure 3. Comparison of the cost of the hemodialysis session from the perspective of SUS-affiliated clinics and the government, values in reais (R\$), 2022.

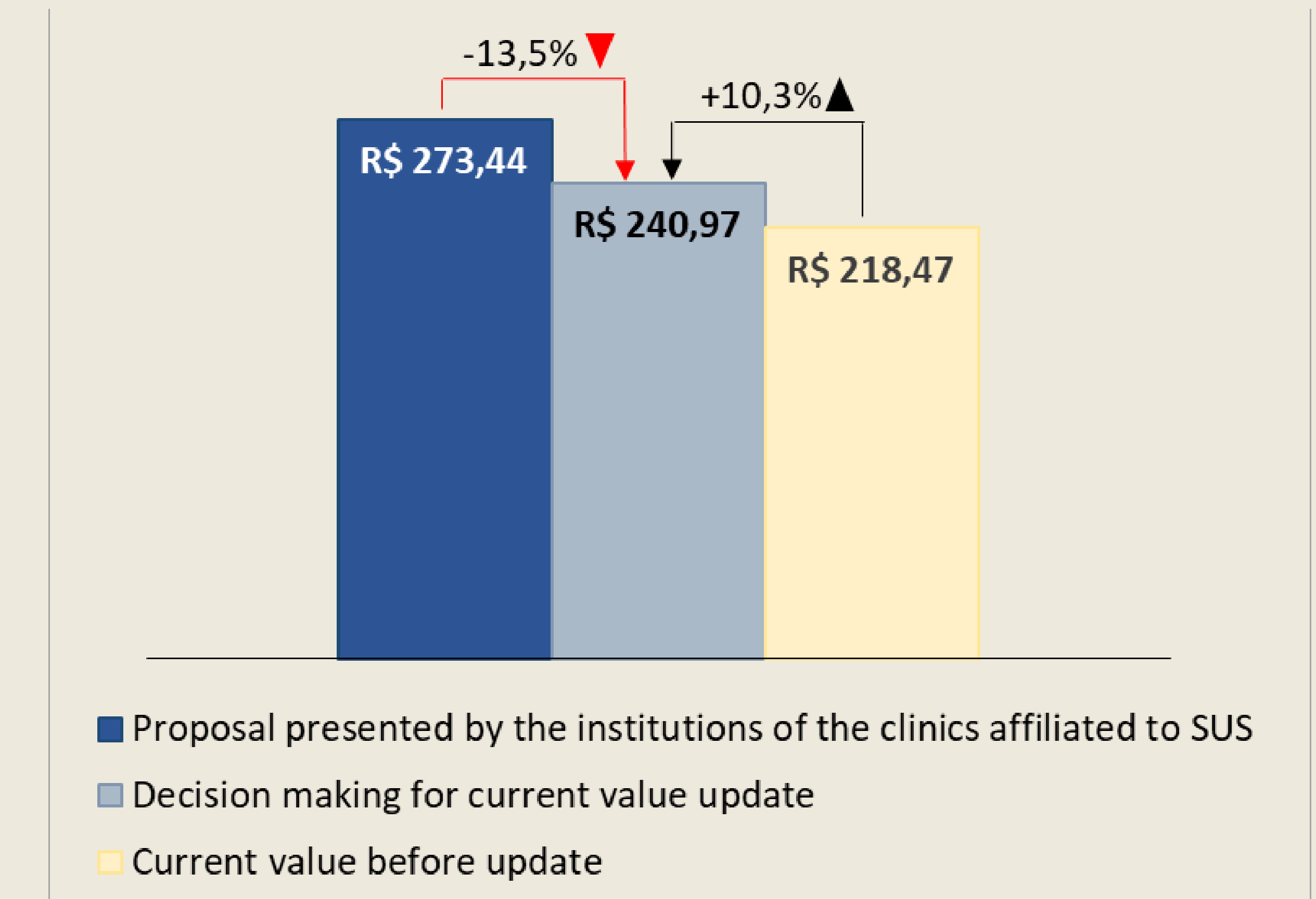


Figure 4. Annual savings of SUS resources due to decision making based on economic evaluation, values in reais (R\$), 2022.

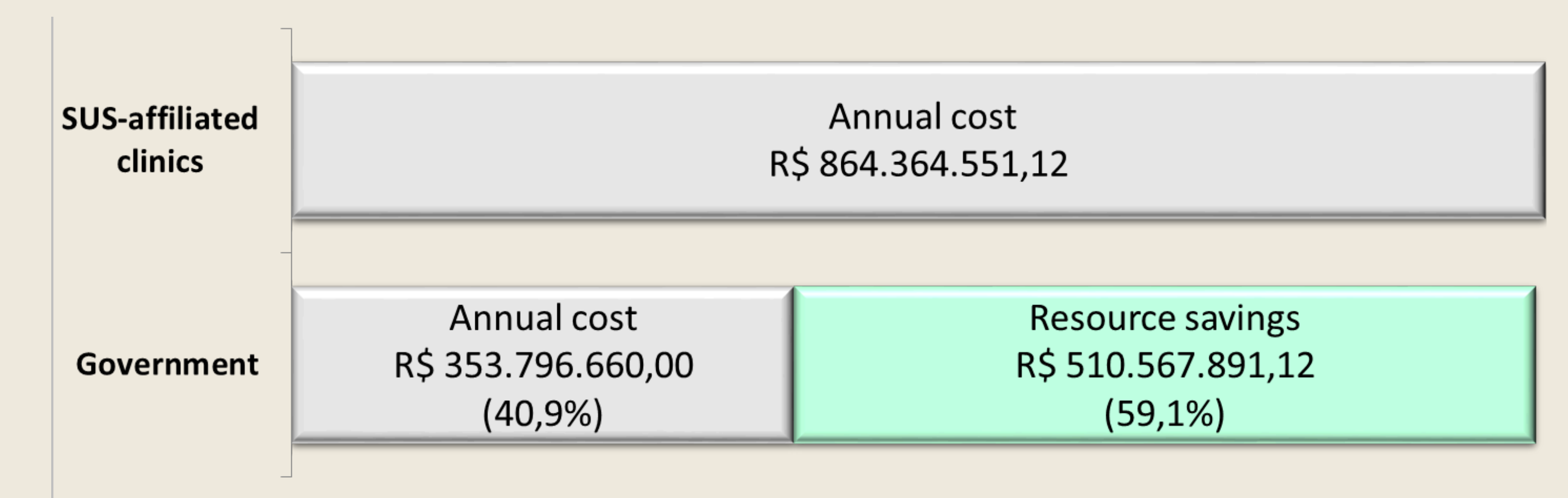


Figure 5. Impact of resource savings on the Secondary Care budget, values in reais (R\$), 2022.

