

**Fagan's nomogram: finally completed after 37 years!**

Caraguel, C.G.B.<sup>1</sup> and Vanderstichel, R.<sup>2</sup>, <sup>1</sup>*School of Animal & Veterinary Sciences, The University of Adelaide, Australia,* <sup>2</sup>*Atlantic Veterinary College, Department of Health Management, Canada;*  
*charles.caraguel@adelaide.edu.au*

In 1975, Fagan published a nomogram to help practitioners determine, without the use of a calculator or computer, the probability of a patient truly having a condition of interest given a particular test result. This is necessary for the interpretation of a test result as no test is perfect. Nomograms are very useful for speedy interpretations, and Fagan's has been adopted by several reference textbooks specializing in evidence-based medicine and clinically applied epidemiology, both in the human and veterinary context. However, the practicality of Fagan's nomogram is limited by its use of the likelihood ratio (LR), a parameter not usually reported in evaluation studies of diagnostic tests with a dichotomised outcome. The LR reflects the strength of evidence provided by a test result and can be computed from the conventional diagnostic sensitivity (DSe) and specificity (DSp) of the test. This initial computation is absent in Fagan's nomogram, making it impractical for routine use. We have improved Fagan's nomogram by seamlessly integrating an initial step to compute the likelihood ratio. The resulting two-step nomogram allows the user, be it a clinician or researcher, to quickly interpret the outcome of a test without using any in silico support. With the addition of the DSe and DSp, the nomogram, for the purposes of interpreting a dichotomous test result, is now complete. Overall, this tool is more accessible and flexible than the original, which will facilitate its use in routine practice of evidence-based medicine.