



Long-term Impacts of Medical Education Reform on Local Children: Evidence from the Area Health Education Center Program

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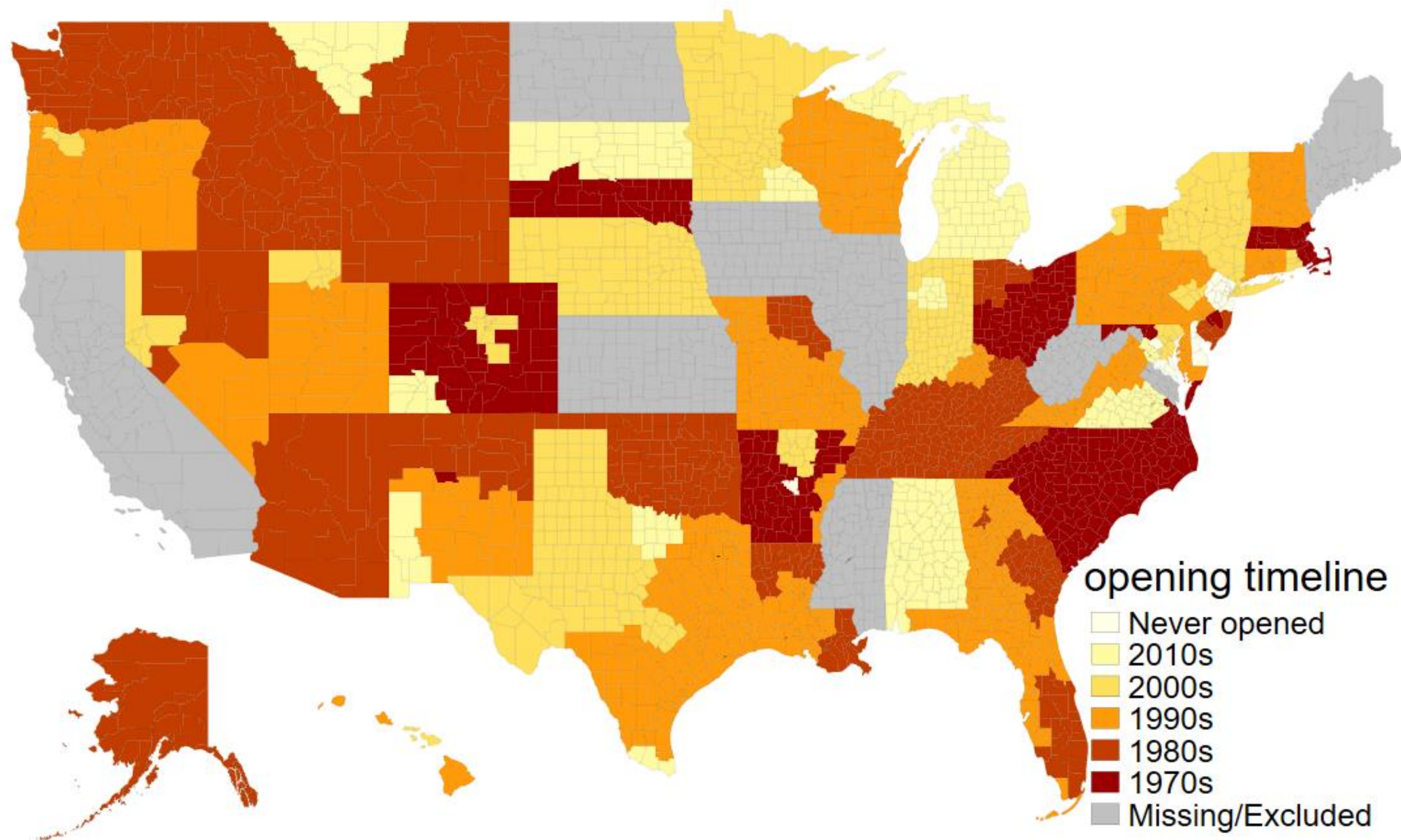
Introduction

- Medical education system determines the supply of the healthcare professionals.
- Hypothesis 1: expanded access to medical education and training improves local healthcare manpower.
- Hypothesis 2: exposure to the expansion of medical education and training improves health and human capital.
- Investigated the **long-term consequences** of **childhood exposure** to a unique federal medical education reform:
 - the **Area Health Education Center program (AHEC)**.
- **Key findings:** Childhood exposure to the opening of a local Area Health Education Center leads to:
 - Better health status
 - Improved health behaviors
 - Higher education attainment

Institutional Background

- The Area Health Education Center (AHEC) program
 - initiated to tackle nationwide health professional shortage
 - proposed by the Carnegie Commission In 1970
 - authorized by the Comprehensive Health Manpower Training Act in 1971
 - start to be established in states since 1972
 - aimed to make health care education locally available

Fig 1: Time & Geo Variations in Establishing AHEC Nationwide



Data & Methodology

- Data
 - Hand-collected opening dates of AHECs
 - National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY 79, 79 youth, and 97)
 - County Business Patterns (CBP)
- Event study specifications
 - Pre-/ Post- opening of the local AHEC
 - Counties with/ without a local AHEC
 - Controls: individual characteristics, county characteristics, year F.E., county F.E, state-year time trends

Main Results

Fig 2: Short-run Impacts on **County Healthcare Employment**

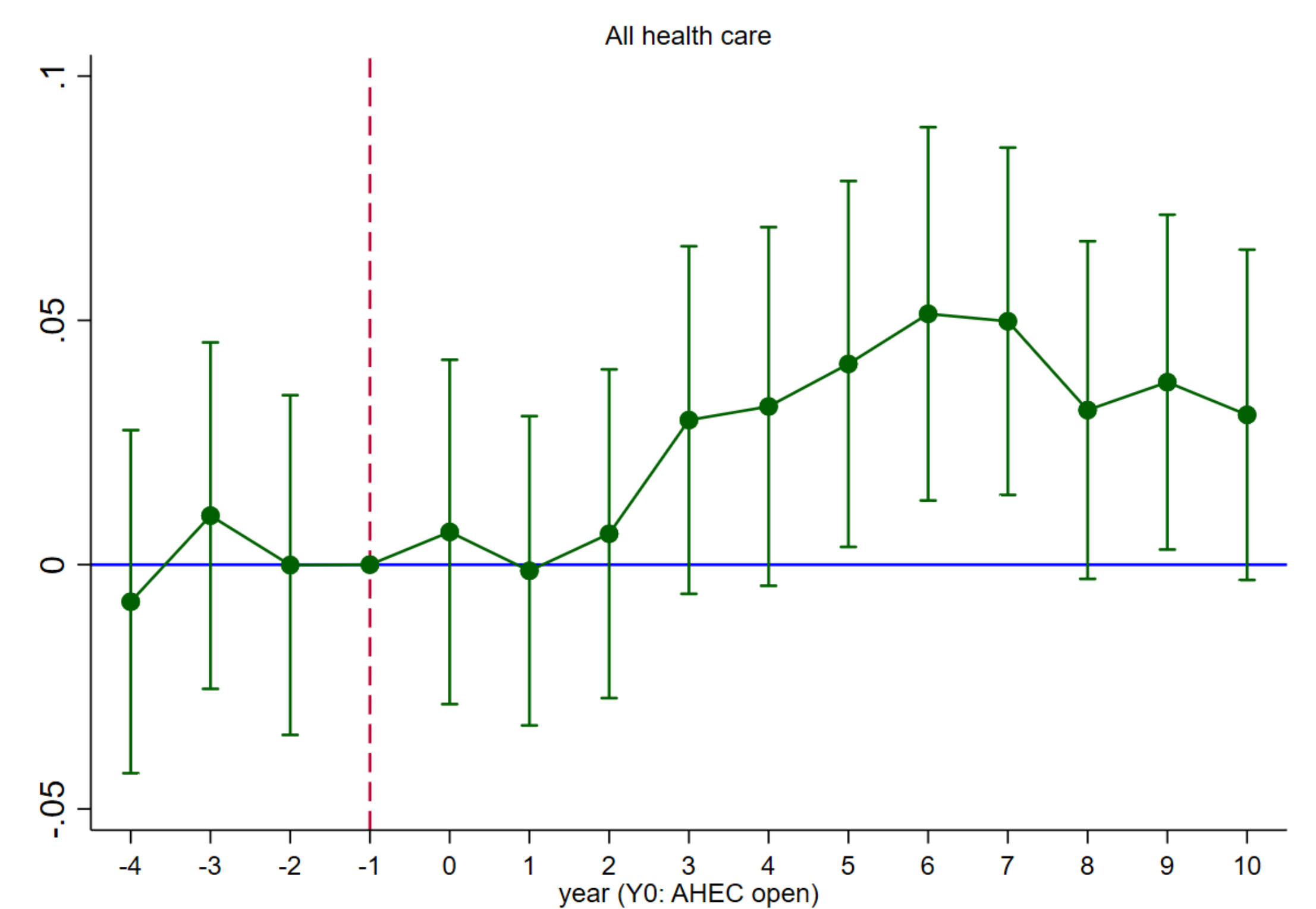


Fig 3: Long-term Impacts of Childhood Exposure to AHEC on **Health Status (e.g. obesity)**

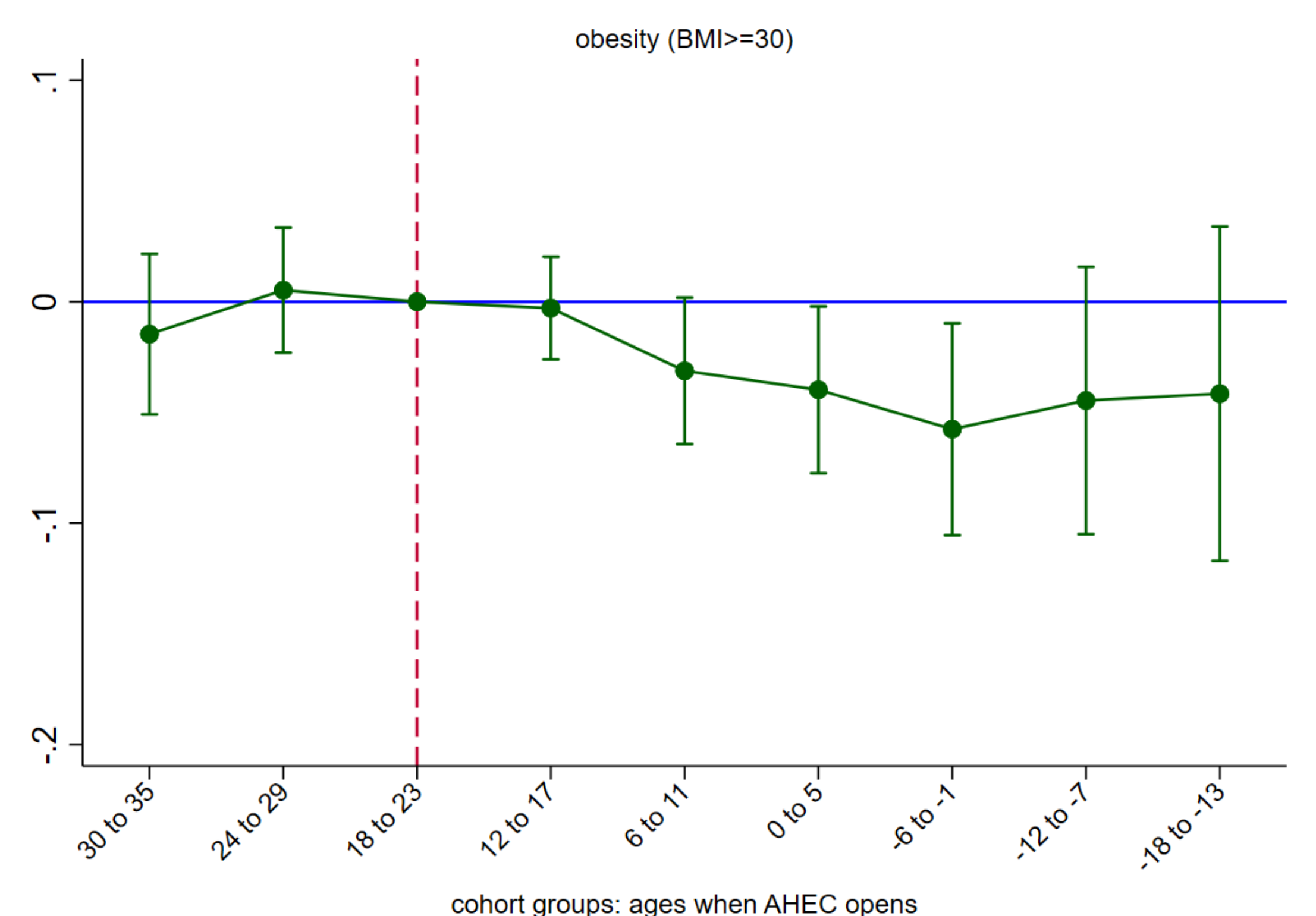


Fig 4: Long-term Impacts of Childhood Exposure to AHEC on **Health Behaviors (e.g. smoking)**

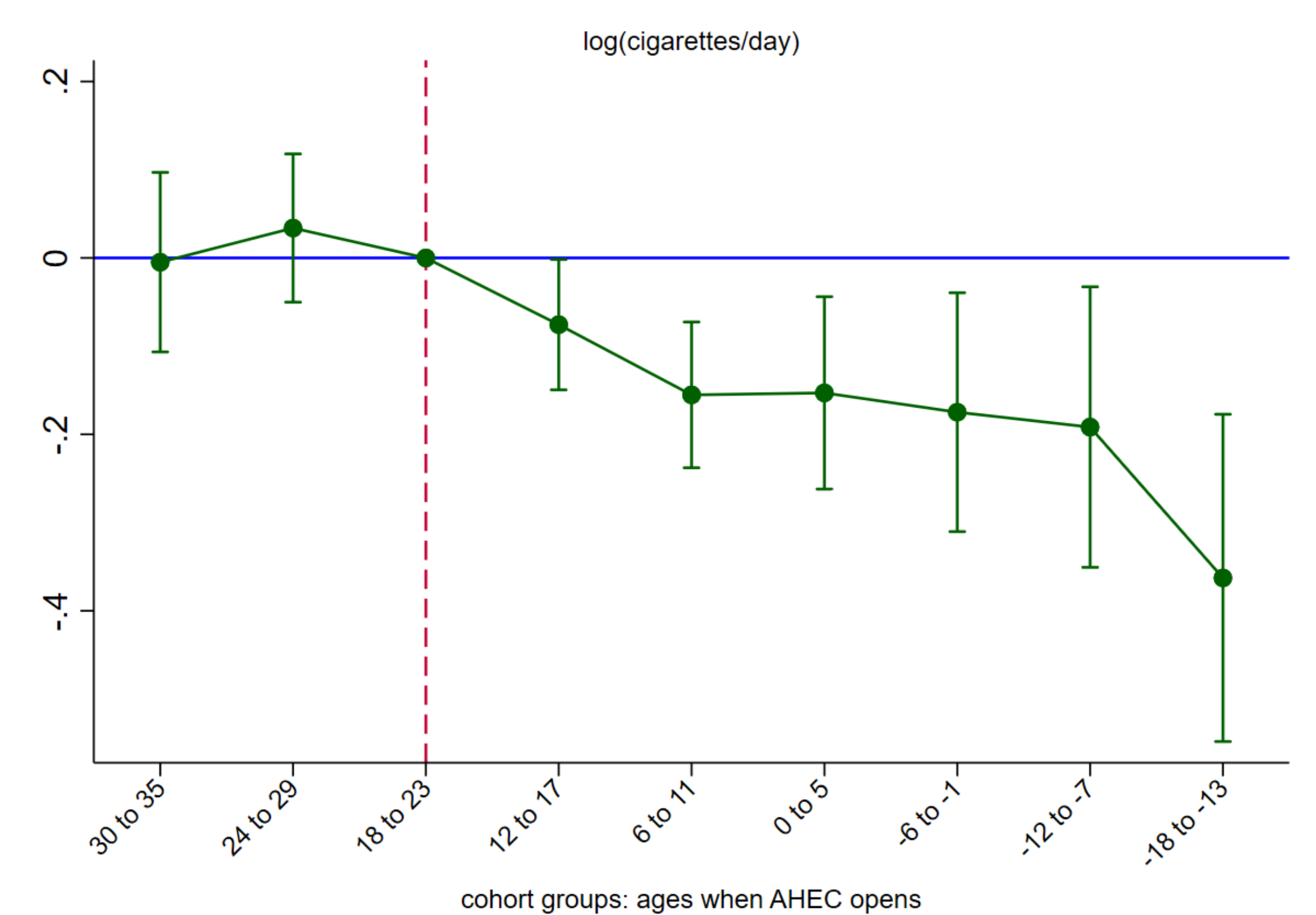
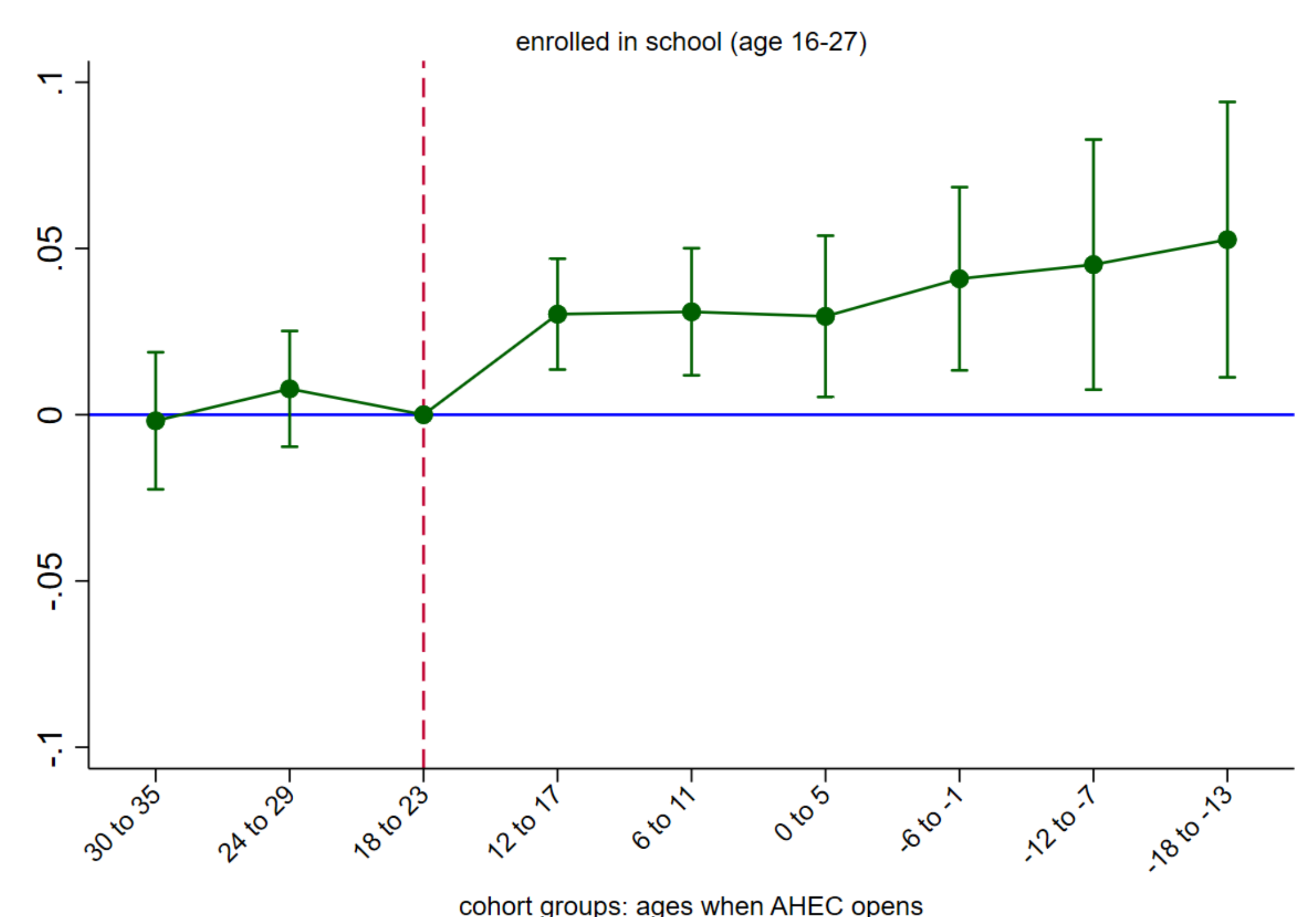


Fig 5: Long-term Impacts of Childhood Exposure to AHEC on **Education (e.g. enrollment 16-27)**



Conclusions

- Opening a local AHEC increases local healthcare workforce.
- People with childhood exposure to a local AHEC:
 - less likely to be overweight, especially obese, and have health limitations; more likely to feel healthy and not depressed
 - consume less alcohol and fewer cigarettes
 - achieve higher education degrees