

I: Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2003;(4): CD003925.

Orientation and mobility training for adults with low vision.

Virgili G, Rubin G.

Eye Clinic II, Department Oto-Neuro-Ophthalmological Surgical Sciences, University of Florence, Via le Morgagni 85, Florence, ITALY, 50134.

BACKGROUND: Orientation and mobility (O&M) training is provided to people who are visually impaired to help them maintain travel independence, teaching them new orientation and mobility skills to compensate for reduced visual information.

OBJECTIVES: The objective of this review was to assess the effects of orientation and mobility training, with or without associated devices, for adults with low vision.

SEARCH STRATEGY: We searched the Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials - CENTRAL (which contains the Cochrane Eyes and Vision Group trials register) (Issue 3 2002), MEDLINE (1966 to August 2002), EMBASE (1980 to September 2002) and LILACS (September 2002) and the reference lists of articles.

SELECTION CRITERIA: We planned to include randomized or quasi-randomized trials comparing orientation and mobility training with no training in adults with low vision.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS: Two reviewers independently assessed the search results for eligibility. **MAIN RESULTS:** No studies were found that satisfied the inclusion criteria. **REVIEWER'S CONCLUSIONS:** We could not find any controlled trials on the effects of orientation and mobility training for adults with low vision. As a premise to future trials, orientation and mobility instructors and scientists should reach a consensus and develop valid measures of mobility performance that are both reliable and meaningful to people with low vision.

2: Br J Ophthalmol. 2003 Aug; 87(8): 941-5.

Causes and temporal trends of blindness and severe visual impairment in children in schools for the blind in North India.

Titiyal JS, Pal N, Murthy GV, Gupta SK, Tandon R, Vajpayee RB, Gilbert CE.

Dr R P Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences, AIIMS, Ansari Nagat, New Delhi, India.

AIMS: To describe the causes of severe visual impairment and blindness (SVI/BL) in children in schools for the blind in north India, and explore temporal trends in the major causes.

METHODS: A total of 703 children were examined in 13 blind schools in Delhi. A modified WHO/PBL eye examination record for children with blindness and low vision which included sections on visual

acuity, additional non-ocular disabilities, onset of visual loss, the most affected anatomical part of the eye concerning visual impairment, and the aetiological category of the child's disorder based on the timing of insult leading to visual loss was administered in all children.

RESULTS: With best correction, 22 (3.1%) were severely visually impaired (visual acuity in the better eye of <6/60) and 628 (89.3%) children were blind (visual acuity in the better eye of <3/60).

Anatomical sites of SVI/BL were whole globe in 27.4% children, cornea 21.7%, retina 15.1%, and lens 10.9%. The underlying cause of visual loss was undetermined in 56.5% children (mainly abnormality since birth 42.3% and cataract 8.3%), childhood disorders were responsible in 28.0% (mainly vitamin A deficiency/measles 20.5%), and hereditary factors were identified in 13.4%.

Study of temporal trends of SVI/BL by comparing causes in children in three different age groups-5-8 years, 9-12 years, and 13-16 years-suggests that retinal disorders have become more important while childhood onset disorders (particularly vitamin A deficiency) have declined. **CONCLUSIONS:** Almost half of the children suffered from potentially preventable and/or treatable conditions, with vitamin A deficiency/measles and cataract the leading causes. Retinal disorders seem to be increasing in importance while childhood disorders have declined over a period of 10 years.

Vision 2020 : The Right to Sight - India Forum

D. Nagarajan

Chief Executive Officer, Vision 2020:
The Right to Sight India Forum

R.D. Thulasiraj

Chairman, India Vision 2020: The
Right to Sight India Forum

The advent of VISION 2020: The Right to Sight brought into focus a long felt need - to bring together the national and International NGOs working for eye care in India. The purpose of bringing them together is for better coordination, sharing of information/resources and effective collaboration to achieve the goals of

VISION 2020. This initiative was discussed in a four-day workshop held in Hyderabad from 27 - 30 January 2003. This workshop was attended by representatives from the international non-governmental organisations, the World Health Organization, the Indian Government, WHO Collaborating Centers and a few individual NGOs nominated by their supporting agencies.

Participants resolved to take the idea of collaboration forward by establishing a formal organisation, the "VISION 2020: The Right to Sight" India Forum. In order to take this forward a steering committee

was formed with a mandate to set up the organisation structure, membership guidelines, rules and regulations, and to incorporate it under an appropriate act in India. Suggestions for immediate activities included mapping eye care resources, developing a framework for resource management, and monitoring eye care activities.

The steering committee has had 3 meetings so far. The members include Mrs. Alice Crasto - Sight Savers International, John Tressler - Christoffel Blindenmission, Dr. G.V.Rao - Orbis, Dr C.S. Shetty - Lions International, Dr. G.N. Rao - LVPEI,

Mr. R.D. Thulasiraj - Aravind Eye Hospitals, Dr. H.K. Tiwari - R P Centre, Dr. Bachani - Ministry of Health, and Dr. M. Upadhyay - WHO.

Planned activities of the VISION2020 India Forum:

1. Advocacy

- VISION2020 state launches with clear commitments including an action plan and budget

- Encouraging active Government/ NGO involvement in World Sight Day celebrations at the state/central level

2. Mapping

- Facilitating information sharing among the INGO community
- Initiating comprehensive national mapping

3. Development of a framework for monitoring
4. Alignment of eye care programs to VISION2020 objectives
5. Developing new programme initiatives
6. Creating a framework for resource management.

The following organisations are founder-members of the Forum

1. CBM International
2. Sight Savers International
3. Orbis International
4. Fred Hollows Foundation
5. Operation Eyesight Universal
6. Seva Foundation
7. Lions Cub International (LCIF)
8. International Centre for Eyecare Education (ICEE)
9. Aravind Eye Care System
10. L.V. Prasad Eye Institute

The following organisations are also being requested to become founder members:

1. Dr. R. P. Centre, Delhi
2. Helpage India, Delhi
3. International Eye Foundation, USA.

The Forum is in the process of being registered as a Society in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, where the office will be located initially.

Tools to plan for more effective eye care programmes

S. Saravanan¹, Praveen K Nirmalan², R.D. Thulasiraj³

1. MHM, Faculty Member, Lions Aravind Institute of Community Ophthalmology, Aravind Eye Care System, Madurai, Tamil Nadu
2. MD, MPH, Research Ophthalmologist, Lions Aravind Institute of Community Ophthalmology, Aravind Eye Care System, Madurai, Tamil Nadu
3. MBA, Executive Director, Lions Aravind Institute of Community Ophthalmology, Aravind Eye Care System, Madurai, Tamil Nadu

Blindness is a global public health problem with approximately 45 million people blind and another 135 million people visually impaired, worldwide. The large number of patients requiring care suggests that a well run eye care programme can

generate enough revenue to sustain itself, provided patients can be brought into the system and services are of high enough quality to attract patients. Developing a sustainable programme, however, requires a lot of planning to balance investment and yield for optimal results. Workload estimations are needed to plan for human resources and infrastructure requirements. The potential market for services needs to be estimated to determine the reach of the programme, and to plan for strategies to better tap the unmet need. Such planning will provide eye care programmes with a structured but flexible approach towards building sustainability.

We are currently developing tools for the following

1. To estimate the market potential or the unmet need for cataract and refractive services

2. A tool to guide through decision making or an investment analysis for acquiring ophthalmic equipment.
3. A tool for strategic planning for an existing eye hospital including planning for manpower requirements and cost recovery
4. A tool for establishing effective eye hospitals

We encourage readers to access and evaluate these tools and provide us with feedback to further improve them. The tools and manual can be accessed at <http://www.aravind.org/tools/index.htm>

We wish to acknowledge support from International Eye Foundation, USA towards development of these tools.

Address for feedback and correspondence: S. Saravanan, Faculty, LAICO, Aravind Eye Care System, 72, Kuruvikaran Salai, Gandhi Nagar, Madurai - 625 020
Phone: 91-0452-5356500
Fax: 91-452-2530984
E mail: saravanan@aravind.org