

The population perspective on cataract surgery in Central India- A brief abstract

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Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya (SNC), an eye care service provider in Chitrakoot, India, found that only 55-60% of people advised cataract surgery in their clinics actually accepted surgery. SNC therefore conducted a study to understand individual, family and community-based decision-making regarding cataract surgery.

SNC studied a representative sample of people attending outreach screening camps between April 2005 and July 2006. Semi-structured interviews using a standardized questionnaire (appended), were conducted on consenting patients with VA < 6/60 in one or both the eyes due to cataract. A maximum of 15 from each camp were interviewed.

298 people (mean age 64 years, 57% men) were selected from 24 screening camps conducted in 22 villages of 5 districts, of whom 224 (75%) were blind in both eyes. Of the total sample, 74 (25%) were unable to work, 102 (34%) worked in agriculture and

significantly more women (74, or 25%) worked in the home, and 16% were in other categories.

One hundred people (34%) had previously sought treatment for their eye problems. Of these 55 (55%) had been advised cataract surgery, and 30 (30%) had been advised spectacles. Thirty-one (55%) of the 55 subjects who were advised cataract surgery, had surgery. Eight (33%) of the remaining 24 subjects cited lack of personal funds, 5 (21%) stated both lack of an escort and the difficulty of traveling in the hot season, and 6 subjects (25%) other reasons.

In conclusion, social and economic barriers limit utilization of eye care services by older blind people in central India. More active eye care program interactions with communities and families are needed to facilitate wider use of available eye care services.

Questionnaire for Cataract blind

(Interview participants – those having < 6/60 Visual Acuity due to cataract in one or both eyes)

- Name: _____ Age/sex: _____
- Address: _____ Village: _____
- Vision: RE: _____ LE: _____
- Q. 1. What kind of work do you do daily (Presently)?
- a. Taking care children ()
 - b. Taking care home ()
 - c. Supporting Agriculture ()
 - d. Going work for others to earn money ()
 - e. Can not work ()
 - f. Others ()
- Q. 2. For how long have you had poor vision?
- a. 0 – 1 year ()
 - b. 1 – 2 years ()
 - c. > 2 years ()
- Q. 3. Are you having a problem to perform your daily work?
(i) Yes () (ii) No ()
- If yes go to Q. No 4, if no end the interview.
- Q. 4: have you gone for treatment? Yes: () No: ()
- If yes go to Q No 5, if no go to Q No 10
- Q. 5. Where you have gone for treatment?
- a. Eye Hospital/Eye camp ()
 - b. Private practitioner ()
 - c. Pharmacy shop ()
 - d. Health Post/Sub Health post ()
 - e. Traditional Healer ()
- Q. 6. If eye hospital/Eye camp, when did you visited last time?
- a. 1 – 3 months ()
 - b. 3 – 12 months ()
 - c. > 1 year ()
- Q. 7. If you have visited eye hospital/eye camps what they advised you?
- a. Surgery ()
 - b. Glass and medicine ()
 - c. Referred to other place ()
 - d. Nothing ()
- Q. 8. If you are advised cataract surgery, why you have not accepted surgery?
- a. Not having money ()
 - b. Not having escort ()
 - c. Seeing the bad result of other people ()
 - d. Operation fear ()
 - e. Against with God ()
 - f. Very hot season ()
 - g. Other (Please specify) ()
- Q. 9. Which month do you feel is appropriate for performing eye surgery
- Summer () Winter () Any season ()
- Q. 10. Why you have not gone for treatment?
- a. Not having knowledge/not getting information where to go ()
 - b. Not getting family support for the treatment ()
 - c. Geographical distance ()
 - d. Not having money ()
 - e. Not willing for treatment ()
 - f. Other ()
- Q. 11. How did you come to know about Sadguru Netra Chikitsalaya?
- a. Famous eye hospital ()
 - b. Villagers ()
 - c. One of my family member had undergone successful eye operation ()
 - d. Eye camp ()
 - e. Don't know ()
 - f. Others ()