ecvi
electronic certificate for vision impairment

Guide Dogs

Electronic Monitoring of Causes of Certifiable Visual Impairment in England and Wales

Background

Data on causes of sight-threatening eye conditions in England and Wales are scarce. Accurate data would facilitate high quality research into causes, prevention, treatment and cure of conditions that impair the quality of sight in many thousands of people and help target appropriate service delivery.

In 2003 a new form, the Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) was released by the Department of Health for certifying patients as visually impaired – the first step in the registration process. Our project, funded by Guide Dogs began in 2006 and has been in operation for one year during which time we have established a repository for data collected during the certification process, the Certifications Office.

The ECVI can be used directly in place of the paper CVI - streamlining the certification process and facilitating more accurate coding of diagnosis. We are currently testing this software at Moorfields Eye Hospital and implementation at three local external sites is to commence shortly. Widespread use of the ECVI should enable accurate data collection and up-to-date analysis on causes of severe visual impairment.

To date we have entered 18173 CVI's. Of these, 51% were sight impaired and 42% severely sight impaired. The rest were either Not Recorded or Unknown.

Facts

01.
We are auditing completion of CVI forms and will be feeding information back to the Department of Health, Royal College of Ophthalmologists and leading eye charities.

02.
There appears to have been a drop in numbers of newly registered sight impaired people (2005/6 vs 2002/3) and we are using our CVI data to identify reasons for this.

03.
The ECVI is a web-browser-based system that enables the filling of forms online. The data is sent securely within the NHSNET, and stored on Moorfields Eye Hospital's database servers.

04.
There is discontent among paediatric ophthalmologists about the diagnostic list on the CVI. We are facilitating the use of an alternative list which should enable collection of better quality data.

05.
We are using the ECVI at MEH with variable success, as MEH has numerous outreach sites each with their own procedures & IT access.

06.
We have recruited pilot external sites but have been unable to commence operations due to data transfer queries and confidentiality issues.

07.
Ultimately we want everybody to use the ECVI but clearly its success depends on the development and implementation of the NPfIT.

08.
We would like to hear from anybody interested in helping us with this Guide Dogs funded project.

Royal College of Ophthalmologists
Certifications Office

Empire House, 136-144 City Road, London, EC1V 2QN

Tel: 0207 253 3411 ext: 2937   Email: ecvi@moorfields.nhs.uk