CL27- CHILDHOOD VISION IMPAIRMENT: FACTS AND FIGURES FROM A REFERENCE HOSPITAL
João Tavares-Ferreira¹, Ana Marta Padrão¹, Daniela Rodrigues¹, Antonio Filipe Macedo², Rui Santana³, Cristina Freitas⁴, Amândio Rocha-Sousa⁵, Fernando Falcão-Reis⁵
¹Centro Hospitalar de São João, ²Lab. of Vision Rehabilitation, Centre/Department of Physics and Optometry, University of Minho, ³Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública – Universidade Nova de Lisboa, ⁴Serviço de Oftalmologia do Hospital de Braga, ⁵Departamento de Órgãos dos Sentidos Faculdade de Medicina da Universidade do Porto

Purpose: To investigate causes of paediatric visual impairment (VI) in a hospital population

Methods: As part of an observational study to estimate the prevalence and costs of visual impairment in Portugal (PCVIP study), clinical records of all patients attending the ophthalmology department of a tertiary hospital were analysed looking for patients meeting the inclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria were: i) presenting visual acuity in the better eye <5/10 (20/40) and/or ii) visual field less than 20deg. Diagnosis of cases with VI were classified according with ICD9. Results reported here were selected from the total number of patients with VI by filtering cases under the age of 19 years.

Results: In 18 weeks 118 cases of individuals under the age of 19yrs were detected, that corresponds to 4% of the total of cases with VI in this hospital. The mean-age was 10.9 (SD=4.7) years and 45% were female. Causes were divided by the five most common anatomical sites affected: 1) lens and refractive error (30%), visual pathways (28%), retina (21%), other including tumours (12%), and optic nerve (9%).

Conclusion: Our results show that vision impairment in the paediatric age remains common in reference hospitals. Some causes such are refractive errors leading to amblyopia might be prevented. Most of the remaining causes were not avoidable showing that an efficient support system must be available for children with VI and their families. We hope that this study will contribute for more effective preventing strategies and provision of services for children with VI.

Acknowledgment: Authors report on behalf of the ´Portuguese Visual Impairment Study Group (PORVIS-GROUP). This study has been supported by a grant from Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT): PTDC/DPT-EPI/0412/2012.