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Summary of research

Key words: glaucoma, intraocular pressure, epidemiology, risk factors

Intraocular pressure (IOP) is an important ocular physiological variable. Higher IOP is linked with increased risk of glaucoma (a chronic, irreversible degenerative optic neuropathy), retinal vein occlusions (blockages in blood vessels that often cause loss of vision). Elevated IOP is a common cause of referral to Hospital Eye Services. NICE guidelines make specific recommendations on referral from opticians to HES on the basis of IOP measurements. Eye disease accounts for 7% of all NHS out patient service episodes. Glaucoma is the commonest cause of irreversible blindness worldwide, and ranks second in causes of registered blindness in the UK (12% of total). IOP currently the only proven modifiable risk factor for glaucoma, and therefore is the focus of all glaucoma therapy- medication, laser and surgery. We plan to use UKBB data to explore the distribution and determinants of IOP in the UK, with the aim of gaining a clearer understanding of factors that influence the aetiology of glaucoma.