

Mitchell J, Reeves A, Bradley C (2009) Eccentric vision training for people with macular disease (MD) improves MacDQoL measures of quality of life. 2009 International Society for Quality of Life Research meeting abstracts. The *QLR Journal*, A-48, Abstract #1328.

Oral presentation at ISOQOL 2009, New Orleans

ECCENTRIC VISION TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WITH MACULAR DISEASE (MD) IMPROVES MACDQOL MEASURES OF QUALITY OF LIFE

Jan Mitchell, Psychology, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, UK, Amanda Reeves, Andover, Hampshire, UK, Clare Bradley, Psychology, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey, UK

AIMS: To evaluate a programme in which people with MD were trained to use eccentric viewing (EV) and 'steady eye strategy' (SES) techniques and to teach the skills to others with MD. **METHODS:** A prospective longitudinal design. Thirty-six trainers (27 women, mean age 68yrs, 19 registered sight impaired) and 39 trainees (20 women, 81yrs, 31 registered sight impaired) completed telephone interviews at least 2 days before start of training and at least 3 months post-training. Demographic, MD-dependent QoL (MacDQoL) and vision function data were collected. Follow-up data also included items relating to training. Pre and post-training reading speeds and QoL scores were compared (Wilcoxon signed ranks test). Spearman's correlations and Mann Whitney tests were used to evaluate the training. **RESULTS:** Trainers: Reading speed increased from 50 to 60 words per minute (wpm) on average (20.4% increase, $p < 0.001$). MacDQoL scores indicated a significant reduction in negative impact of MD following training on aspects of life including work ($p < 0.005$), independence, mobility, and other aspects of daily life (p 's < 0.05). The greatest reduction in negative impact of MD on QoL was seen for those with initial reading speeds of 41-80 wpm. SES was associated with perceived ability to read more easily and to rely less on others for reading (p 's < 0.05). Trainees: Reading speed increased from 26 to 35 wpm (37.9%, $p < 0.001$). After training, MacDQoL scores showed a significant reduction in negative impact of MD on self confidence and having mishaps and losing things (p 's < 0.05). Increase in reading speed was associated with perceived ability to read more easily and to rely less on others for reading (p 's < 0.05). Anecdotal evidence indicated improvements in ability to read and to perform other near and distance vision activities. **CONCLUSIONS:** Improved reading speed and QoL were evident after EV training in both trainers and trainees. The data provide further evidence of MacDQoL responsiveness to change and support for the benefits of EV training in people with MD.