



CATARATA

08:30 | 10:45 SALA PÉGASO

Mesa: José Lemos, João Paulo Macedo, Délio Portela

10:15

CL16- THE RESULTS OF A VISUAL HEALTH SCREENING IN LISBON: THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIMARY PREVENTION

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Introduction: Visual health problems are a major public health burden. Preventing avoidable visual impairment and blindness is a strategic objective of the national health program for 2011-2016. General population information, primary prevention and prompt access to ophthalmological care are major aims of this program. The purpose of this project is to present the results of a visual health screening on the metropolitan area of Lisbon.

Methods: From September to November 2014, a visual health screening was performed over the 24 districts of Lisbon. After signing an informed consent, each subject filled a questionnaire concerning demographic data - age, gender, level of education, professional activity – past medical history and past ophthalmologic history. Afterwards, a ophthalmological observation was undertaken by health professionals, which included external eye observation and visual acuity (VA) evaluation either uncorrected or with present refractive correction. Posteriorly, the subjects were provided with general information regarding visual health issues and major ophthalmologic diseases (refractive errors, cataract, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy). In selected cases, when visual impairment was observed, the subjects were referred to their health care provider for further ophthalmological evaluation.

Results: A total of 1955 subjects voluntarily participated in the screening. The majority of them were above 55 years of age, currently retired, with a low level of education. Overall, 13.1% stated that had never been evaluated by an ophthalmologist and 21.4% of the patients had their last ophthalmology consultation over 4 years ago. Arterial Hypertension and Diabetes Mellitus were the most common pathologies in past medical history. Concerning ophthalmological past history, 78.2% of the subjects had a refractive error correction and 29.7% were diagnosed with cataract, of which 323 subjects had already been treated surgically. On observation, 12.2% subjects had alterations on external observation, 62.8% had a decreased VA, 18.2% didn't have any refractive correction and 38.2% had a decrease in VA despite their refractive correction. In total, 320 subjects were referred to their clinician for ophthalmological evaluation.

Conclusion: Visual health screening is a fundamental strategy to provide information to the general population and an effective method to identify individuals at risk of severe visual impairment.