CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS IN LOW VISION CLINICS OF CHANGHUA SHOW CHWAN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL FROM 2008 TO 2011

Chan-Wei Nien, Ching-Yang Lin, Shih-Chun Chao

Purpose: To report the characteristics of students in low vision clinics of Changhua Show Chwan Memorial Hospital from 2008 to 2011.

Method: A cross-sectional observational study. Under the “Professional Counseling Program of Visual Disability Students” of Changhua county government, we cooperated with special counseling teachers and optometrists to give full assessment and medical service to students with visual impairment.

Result: We collected 97 visits of 55 students in our low vision clinics from September 2008 to December 2011. The age ranged from 5 to 16 years old with a mean of 10.5. There were 27 (49.1%) boys and 28 (50.9%) girls. 54 students were qualified with visual impairment and 47 of them were low vision students. The leading cause of low vision was retinopathy of prematurity (11/47; 23.4%), followed by brain-related visual disorder, amblyopia, and congenital cataract. Retina (16/47; 34.0%) was the main anatomical site to cause low vision, followed by brain (10/47; 21.3%), globe appears normal (8/47; 17.0%), lens (5/47; 10.6%), optic nerve (4/47; 8.5%), whole globe (3/47; 6.4%), and uvea (1/47; 2.1%).

Conclusion: The number of students with visual impairment or low vision was underestimated. Under the “Professional Counseling Program of Visual Disability Students”, we hope we can provide an integrated medical resource for parents to train and restore the residual visual function of the students, as well as offering some references on visually impaired children in Taiwan.

Key words: Low vision student, visual impairment children, school-age children

INTRODUCTION

Visual impairment restricts the availability of environment information input and affects children’s motor, cognitive, and affective development. Etiology, age of onset, multiple disabilities, social economic status, and environment interactions determine the severities of