

14/04/19

BIPOSA,
c/o Andrée Welsh
PO Box 598,
Stockton on Tees,
TS20 1WY.

Re: BIPOSA Research Award 2018 – six month update

Project title: Evaluation and clinical validation of a new picture based-visual acuity test for young children with amblyopia – a comparison of The Auckland Optotypes with crowded logMAR letters and crowded Kay pictures

Short title: Evaluation of The Auckland Optotypes in Children with Amblyopia (TAO-CA)

Dear BIPOSA,

Many thanks to the BIPOSA Trustees for the allocation of the 2018 research award. This project is underway at Moorfields and I will shortly be commencing recruitment for this study. As a result of delays in study set up data collection has not yet started; however, much progress has been made on this project since acceptance of the BIPOSA award, as detailed below.

At the time of writing the BIPOSA research award application there was a likely possibility that the COMPLog licence which is needed to display the TAO optotypes would be available due to a proposed change in Moorfields NHS Foundation Trust's visual acuity test systems. However, it later became clear that COMPLog would not be available in time for the commencement of this project and as such it was necessary to seek additional funding to support the purchase of the COMPLog licence. An application was made to the College of Optometrists small grant scheme for the COMPLog licence and also to support the employment of a research optometrist on this project to act as the second observer at the Moorfields City Road site, assisting the lead research orthoptist/BIPOSA lead applicant in interobserver reliability assessment of the TAO test. Funding of £5,026.80 was secured from the College of Optometrists for the COMPLog licence and the research optometrists time (0.1 WTE).

Following the confirmation of funding from BIPOSA we were able to apply to the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) at Moorfields to match the funding awarded to cover NHS overheads. This funding has now been confirmed by Moorfields BRC and will, along with the BIPOSA funding, support the Band 7 and 6 research orthoptists detailed in the BIPOSA grant application. The Moorfields BRC funding also secures the purchase of the Microsoft Surface Pro tablet computer to display the TAO optotypes at the Bedford site.

Once all necessary funding was secured the ethics application for this study was prepared. The IRAS form for this project was completed by mid-December 2018. Local research and development department approvals were required prior to IRAS submission. Unfortunately, some delay was experienced in local permissions; this was authorised in late February 2019 and the IRAS form was submitted promptly afterwards. A provisional favourable ethical opinion was granted by the Research Ethics Committee – London Surrey on the 26th of March 2019; final confirmation of REC favourable opinion was received on 8th April 2019. Health Research Authority approval was subsequently issued on 11th April 2019. Final local confirmations and approvals are required before recruitment can commence; it is expected that this will be ready very shortly.

All necessary equipment has been ordered for this study. The research orthoptist for the Bedford site and the research optometrist at the Moorfields site have been identified and suitable research time allocated for data collection.

Although commencement of recruitment is behind the anticipated timeline submitted in the BIPOSA research award application I still anticipate that this project will complete in good time. In particular, the funding secured for the research optometrist will help additional screening for potential participants and facilitate timely recruitment at the Moorfields site. Provided no further delays are experienced we can expect to finish data collection by late summer 2019 allowing for data analysis and write up in September 2019. Study findings will be ready for presentation at BIPOSA Edinburgh 2019.

Despite the unexpected delays experienced in study set up I remain confident that this project will be completed before BIPOSA 2019 and am happy to provide further updates during data collection and analysis if the Trustees wish.

Many thanks again for the opportunity to carry out this research and I look forward to presenting you with the overall findings.

Yours sincerely,



Siobhán Ludden, PhD BMedSci(Hons)