

Figure 1 Probability of success over time, based on Kaplan-Meier life-table analysis.

movements to no light perception due to progression of her underlying disease (familial exudative vitreoretinopathy).

The early postoperative complications encountered were hyphaema ($n = 4$), hypotony ($n = 3$), and choroidal effusion ($n = 2$).

Overall, AV insertion resulted in a reduction in mean IOP from 26.4 mmHg (SD 7.1) to 18.3 mmHg (SD 7.6) after 12 months. Although our success rate may appear lower than those reported in some other studies,¹⁻⁴ comparison with published literature is difficult due to a lack of homogeneity in case mix.⁵

We agree with the experience of Özdal *et al*⁴ that AV appears relatively safe and effective in refractory glaucoma.

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Sir,

A survey of excimer laser use among consultant ophthalmologists in United Kingdom

Laser refractive surgery is a rapidly evolving field in ophthalmology. We carried out a national UK survey to acquire information regarding surgeon demographics, types of excimer laser utilised (phototherapeutic keratectomy (PTK), photorefractive keratectomy (PRK), laser assisted *in situ* keratomileusis (LASIK), laser epithelial keratomileusis (LASEK)), indications, and the complication rates within the UK by consultant ophthalmologists (accredited independent practitioners from the Royal College of Ophthalmologists (RCO)).

The UK refractive survey¹ (UKRS) in 2005 reported on 61 clinics. The survey stated that 65% of practitioners who performed excimer therapy were ophthalmic consultants. This percentage has increased to 43% in 2004² from 35% in 2003.³

Postal questionnaires were sent to all 903 ophthalmology consultants registered with the RCO in the UK. The questionnaire was anonymous and single paged to encourage a high response rate (Figures 1 and 2).

The overall response rate was 49.1% (443 out of 903) which compares with the response rates from US surveys 11.8-18.4%.⁴⁻⁸ Five per cent of the respondents had performed excimer therapy in the previous month and all were corneal specialists.

Forty-four percent of the consultants treated patients privately alone whereas 48% treated both National Health Service (NHS) and private cases, and 8% did not respond in this regard.

Twenty-three consultants reported on their refractive practice over the previous month. When considering the case load of the surgeons, 34.8% (*vs* 47% in 2004 US Refractive Survey (USRS))⁷ performed more than 20 procedures per month and 26.1% (*vs* 19.6% USRS⁷) conducted less than five procedures per month.

Overall 13.3% (57/429) of patients underwent PTK, 1.6% (7/429) PRK, 59.7% (256/429) LASIK, and 25.4%

Consultant Ophthalmologists use of EXCIMER lasers in the UK

Do you have access to an Excimer laser? Y / N
 Have you used the Excimer laser in the last month? Y / N
 If No, please return the form without answering the remaining questions
 If Yes, please complete the rest of the questionnaire:

In the last month,
 Did you treat: NHS patients
 Private patients
 BOTH

Please enter the number of patients treated in the last month:

Type of EXCIMER treatment	No. of patients (standard EXIMER treatment)	No. of patients (Augmented treatment with MMC)
PTK		
PRK		
LASIK		
LASEK		

Indications for PTK treatments performed:

Please enter the number of PTK patients with the below indications for EXCIMER / diagnoses:

	No. patients treated
Recurrent erosion syndrome (post trauma / idiopathic)	
Recurrent erosion syndrome (2 ^o to map dot dystrophy)	
Band keratopathy	
Treatment of corneal scars (2 ^o to corneal dystrophies)	
Treatment of corneal scars (2 ^o to other causes)	
Bullous keratopathy	
Post graftastigmatism	
Other	

If patients were treated for refractive errors, how many patients were treated using:

	No. patients
Wavefront guided	
Non wavefront guided	

Were there any complications of EXCIMER laser treatment in patients treated in the last year? Y / N

Complications

	No. patients
Need for DLK	
Free flap (LASIK)	
infection	
Refractive surprise	
Under / over correction needing further treatment	

Comments:

Figure 1 Questionnaire despatched to consultants.

(109/429) LASEK. Consultant activity comprised PTK 47.8% (11/23), PRK 8.7% (2/23), LASIK 95.7% (22/23), and LASEK 65.2% (15/23). In total 78.3% of surgeons (18/23) used multiple modalities of laser therapy during the previous month.

The popularity of LASIK is mirrored in the 2004 USRS;⁷ however in contrast to this study (65.2 vs 8.7%) PRK is still more popular than LASEK in US (PRK (71%) vs LASEK (40.8%))⁷ even though there is a shift towards LASEK.

Wavefront-guided ablation was used by 60.1% of our consultants (vs 71.6% USRS⁴) on 25.8% of patients. Mitomycin-C (MMC) treatment was used by 13.6% of consultants (vs 58.4% USRS⁷) on 3.5% of the patients.

In 57 patients treated with PTK, recurrent erosion syndrome (40.4%) was the most common indication followed by band keratopathy (29.8%), post graft astigmatism (21.1%), and treatment of corneal dystrophy (3.5%).

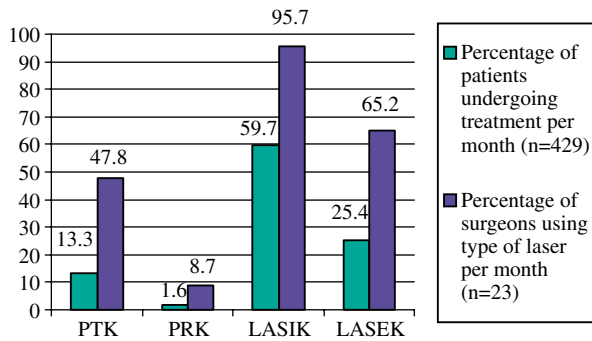


Figure 2 Percentage of patients (green columns) undergoing various types of excimer laser and percentage of surgeons (blue columns) using various types of excimer laser in the previous month.

Fagerholm *et al*⁹ found that recurrent erosion syndrome was the most common indication in Sweden, in contrast Rao *et al*¹⁰ reported corneal scars were the most common indication in India.

Complications of excimer laser ablation over the last year were recorded. Residual refractive error requiring further treatment was described by 82.6%, diffuse lamellar keratitis (DLK) by 52.2% (*vs* 66.7% USRS⁴), microbial keratitis by 8.6% (*vs* 4% in LASIK, 1.1% in LASEK, and 2% in PRK from USRS⁷), and flap related complications by 8.6% of the surgeons (*vs* 5.6% USRS⁷).

Over the last year reported complications included 43 cases of DLK, two cases of infection and two flap-related problems. The average percentage of patients with refractive error requiring further treatment was 11%. Jabbur *et al*¹¹ reported 8.7% retreatment rate after LASIK and Taneri *et al*¹² reported a 6.7% rate after LASEK in their study group.

Our study is the first UK national survey of excimer laser use by RCO accredited ophthalmology consultants and provides novel information in the use of excimer laser for both refractive and therapeutic indications.

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Sir, Conjunctival rhabdomyosarcoma presenting as a squamous papilloma

We report the case of an 8-year-old girl who presented clinically with a right conjunctival papilloma. As a precaution, because the lesion continued to grow, a biopsy was performed and showed rhabdomyosarcoma. This is a highly unusual presentation of a rare tumour