Reviewer's report

Title: Longitudinal study on visual outcome and spectacle use after intracapsular cataract extraction in Northern India

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Reviewer: Dr Darwin C Minassian

Level of interest: A paper whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Advice on publication: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the compulsory revisions

General comments
This paper provides some evidence that patients receiving refraction and best spectacle correction for aphakia do well in terms of satisfaction and perceived benefits. The study, however, does not include a comparative analysis with patients given a standard lens (+10 or +11) without best correction. The report is thus of somewhat limited interest and does not properly address the important issue of quantifying the additional gains from refraction and best correction, and whether the gains are worth the considerable effort and additional resources that have to be used. Nevertheless, the paper does provide some interesting data on visual acuity and satisfaction at one year after provision of spectacles for aphakia.

Specific comments

The following problems need to be addressed (compulsory revisions).

1. Selection of the sample
167 patients who had been given best-corrected spectacles were selected. What pool were these selected from? How many in total had been given best correction and how was the selection made. For example was it sequential or random etc. This should be clarified since selection bias would be an important issue in such a study.

2. Loss to follow-up
Eleven patients were out-of-station and thus potentially avoidable losses. Could this have resulted in bias? For example, were these eleven patients more likely to have better vision, more mobility etc? This potential source of bias should be mentioned and discussed.

3. Analysis of sub-groups
The separation of those using the provided spectacles and those using other spectacles is problematic and results in an overestimate of the perceived benefits and satisfaction for those given best correction (Tables 3 and 4) i.e. the cohort of interest. Those using other spectacles do so mainly because they are not happy with the provided spectacles, and would be just as unhappy or perhaps even less happy if they had continued to use them. Therefore, the findings in the 'Total"
columns in Tables 3 and 4 are more informative. This point should be discussed and clarified in the text.

4. No confidence limits are given for the main estimates in the ‘Totals’ column of Tables 3 and 4. These should be provided in the tables and/or in the text.

5. The sentence in Conclusions in the Abstract does not make sense. Some rewording is required.

**Competing interests:**

None declared.