Reviewer's report

**Title:** Micro-costing the provision of emotional support and information in UK eye clinics

**Version:** 1 **Date:** 18 June 2013

**Reviewer:** Joanna M Charles

**Reviewer's report:**

This is an interesting paper that may enable the role of Eye Clinic Liaison Officer to be further researched with particular emphasis on costs and cost-effectiveness.

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

Comment 1: There is an incomplete hanging sentence on Page 2 under the "Methods" Section of the Abstract.

Comment 2: On Page 5 under the "Methods" section no information is provided as to how the four ECLOs who took part in the semi-structured interviews to inform the survey questionnaire were recruited. Please could the authors provide this information.

Comment 3: The Methods section should be split into two distinct sections relating to each of the two aims outlined at the end of the "Background" section in the paper, for ease of understanding.

Comment 4: In the "Results" section on Page 5 it would be beneficial to see the n of ECLOs who do not provide training in vision aids (LVAs) and ECLOs who do not provide advice LVAs or non-optical aids such as lighting reported in the "Role of ECLOs" section.

Comment 5: On Page 7, the sections titled “Cost of providing a full time ECLO in eye clinics”, “Sensitivity analysis” and the first paragraph of “Cost of providing support per lifetime per patient” discuss methods of the micro-costing rather than cost. The paragraphs within these sections that do not report results should be moved to the Methods section on Page 5.

Comment 6: On Page 7, under the section “Cost of providing a full time ECLO in eye clinics” employer national insurance and superannuation/pension contributions are stated as included elements of costs, but the rate used is not reported in the manuscript. Please state the rate of superannuation/pension contributions used in the calculation.

Comment 7: Add “Limitations” as a heading before the second paragraph on Page 10 and add the heading “Conclusion” above the final paragraph of the manuscript, also on Page 10.
Comment 8: In Table 1 there are many incidences where the percentage does not match the n reported. This may be due to the fact that not all of the ECLOs provide the service resulting in a lower total n (less than the total N of 18); however, this is not explained and reported in the manuscript. If this is the case, please review this table and revise the method sections pertaining to Table 1 as appropriate.

Comment 9: Details are required in the Methods section of how the average number of patients per day (9.1), was used to calculate the other number of patients per day estimates reported in Table 3.

Comment 10: The term “cost per patient contact” is used throughout the manuscript; however, this term needs defining where it first appears in the manuscript as there is currently no definition provided in the paper.

Minor Essential Revisions

Comment 1: There is a double full stop (..) at the end of the sentence explaining the first aim of the study, in the "Background" section of the Abstract, Page 2.

Comment 2: On Page 4 in the final sentence detailing the second the aim of the study replace “as well” with “and” before “….whether sufficient facilities have been provided for ECLOs”.

Comment 3: On Page 7, under the heading “Sensitivity analysis” in the first sentence the word “ECLO” appears too late in the sentence and it therefore doesn’t make sense. Please change this sentence to “The number of patients an ECLO sees per day may vary from clinic to clinic”.

Comment 4: On Page 7, in the “Sensitivity analysis” section the final sentence “table 2” requires a capital T for Table.

Comment 5: In Table 2 on Page 16, the final row on this page currently states the “full economic cost to employ an ECLO (year 1) is £34,290.30, assuming no training costs. Should this state “year 2” in the brackets rather than year 1 as currently reported in the manuscript?

Comment 6: Table 4’s title does not make sense currently, please change to “Table 4: Lifetime cost an ECLO’s intervention for various ages and frequencies of contact”.

Discretionary Revisions

Comment 1: Where “However” appears at the beginning of a sentence add a comma after it (2nd paragraph, Page 6; 3rd paragraph, Page 9; 2nd paragraph of limitations, Page 10).

Comment 2: On Page 7, under the section titled “Cost of providing a full time ECLO in eye clinics” on the 3rd line, change the sentence “The following age points were used since data don life expectancy and percentage of the
population….” to “The following age points were used as data don life expectancy and percentage of the population….”.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests