TIA referrals from a large Ophthalmology Emergency Department. How the symptoms matched the final diagnosis

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Introduction

Visual symptoms can be the only manifestation of Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA). The importance of referring to a TIA clinic to prevent further attacks or stroke is well recognised; however, inappropriate referrals can waste resources. We looked at how the primary symptom of referral matches the diagnosis after seen in the TIA clinic.

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Method

Retrospective analysis of all patients referred over one year (2017-2018) from Birmingham and Midland Eye Centre casualty department which is the only eye casualty that accepts urgent referrals in the Birmingham area and parts of West Midlands. Referrals were divided by symptoms into four categories: Transient unilateral loss of vision (TULV), Transient unilateral visual disturbances (TUVD), Transient bilateral loss of vision (TBLV) and Transient bilateral visual disturbances (TBVD).

Results

Among the referred 225 patients, 40 patients were diagnosed with BRAO/CRAO, 68 patients were referred to local hospital and 3 did not attend. (Figure 1)

Of remaining 114 patients, 54.4% were referred for TULV, 13.2% for TUVD, 7.0% for TBLV, 21% for TBVD & 4.4% for other reasons. (Figure 2)

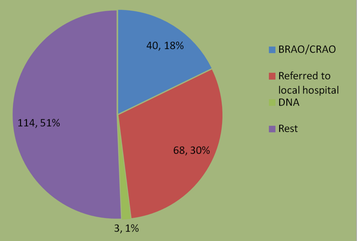


Fig 1 - Distribution of patients according to

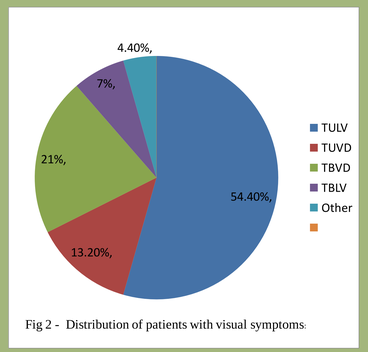


Fig 2 - Distribution of patients with visual symptoms.

Ocular TIA was confirmed in the TIA clinic in 54.8% patients of TULV, in 13.3% patients of TUVD, in 4.2% patients of TBVD and none in the TBLV group.

62.5% of TBLV and 22.6% of TULV patients were eventually diagnosed as migraine.

Patient referred with TULV:

62 patients were referred with TULV among which 34 (54.8%) patients were diagnosed eventually with TIA. The distribution of diagnosis is displayed in figure 3.

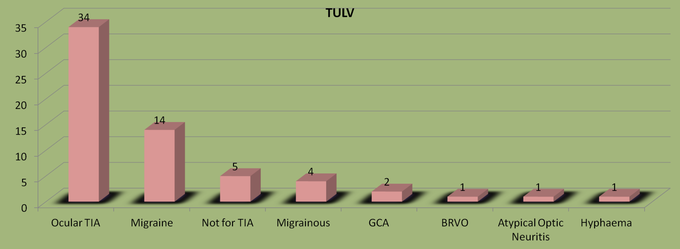


Figure 3- Final diagnosis of patients referred with TULV

Patients referred with TUVD:

15 patients were referred with TUVD. Only 2 (13.3%) of them were eventually diagnosed with TIA. (Figure 4)

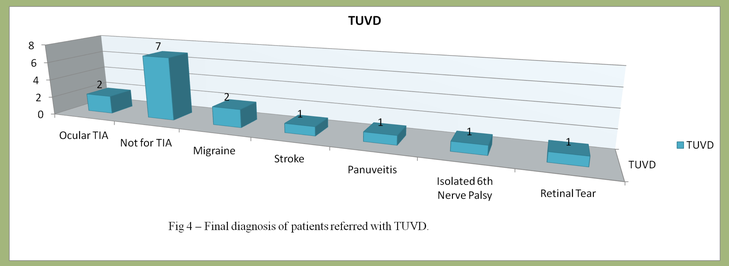


Fig 4 – Final diagnosis of patients referred with TUVD.

Patients referred with TBLV:

8 patients were referred with TBLV. None of them was finally diagnosed with TIA. The distribution of final diagnosis is shown in figure 5.

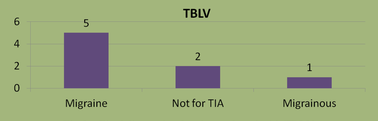


Fig 5 – Final diagnosis of patient referred with TBLV

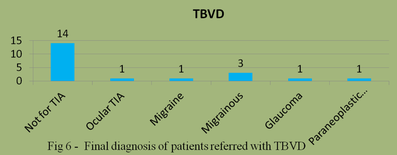


Fig 6 - Final diagnosis of patients referred with TBVD

Patients referred with TBVD:

One patient (4.2%) was finally diagnosed with TIA among 21 patients who were initially referred with TBVD. The distribution of diagnosis is shown in figure 6.

Conclusion

Categorising the cause of referral can be an added tool to help triage suspected TIA referrals from the emergency department of eye hospital.

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