

Proportions of CVIs in England attributable to four major causes before, during and after the COVID pandemic



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Purpose

- The Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) can enable access to support.¹⁻³
- During 2020/21, there was a fall in CVIs relating to national lockdowns.
- Here, we explored proportions of CVIs attributable to four major causes, focusing on trends over the period from 2009 to 2024 and changes in the 2020/21 year.

Methods

- Data relating to CVIs received by the Certification Office (based at Moorfields Eye Hospital, London), covering the period from Apr 2009 to March 2024, were analysed.
- Each year's data is for the period from April to the end of March the following year.
- Provisional data for 2024/25 were also included.
- Total annual numbers of CVIs were extracted as well as those relating to four main causes, namely:
 - Age-related macular degeneration (AMD),
 - Glaucoma,
 - Diabetic eye disease (DED)
 - Hereditary eye disease (HED).
- CVIs by each cause were evaluated also as a proportion of the total in each year.

Results

- Annual CVIs increased from 22,687 in 2009/10 to 25,110 in 2023/24.
- Numbers fluctuated over the period, but exceeded 22,500 each year other than 2020/21 (when 16 499 CVIs were recorded).

Acknowledgements

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Results (continued)

- Figure 1 shows the annual numbers of CVIs in total and by each of the 4 causes (lowest panel showing each cause as proportion of the total).

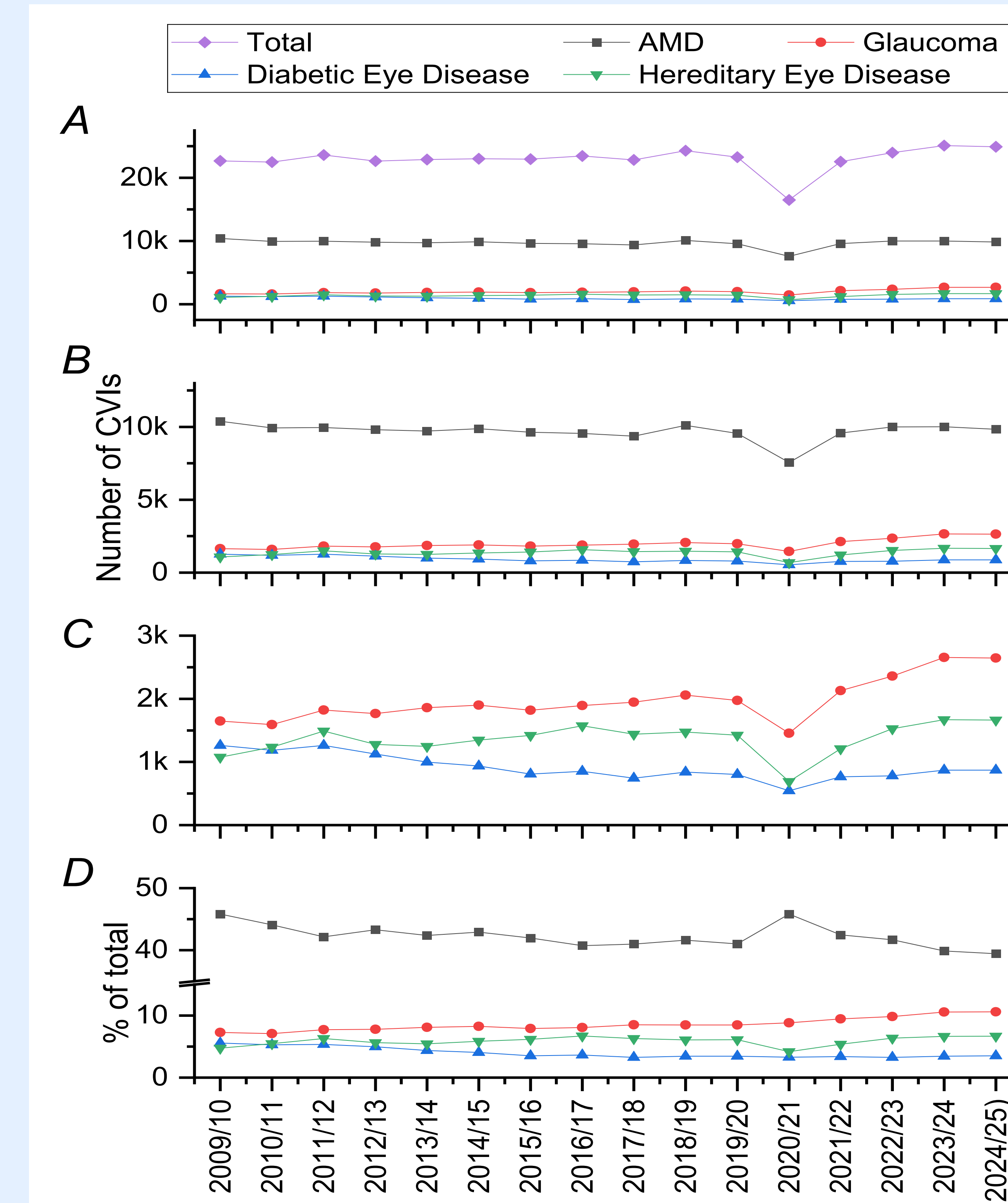


Figure 1 (left). Data for CVIs from 2009/10 to 2023/24 (with provisional data for 2024/25).

A, Numbers of CVIs issued in total and for each of the 4 main causes. A decline in 2020/21 is seen relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

B, Expanded y-axis scale showing data by main cause. AMD certifications accounted for more than the combined numbers for the other 3 causes. Over the period, there was an overall fall in AMD certifications.

C, Further expanded y-axis scale showing the 3 non-AMD causes. There was an overall numerical increase in certifications from glaucoma and HED, but a fall in certifications from DED. From 2010/11 onwards, HED certifications exceeded those from DED.

D, Y-axis shows each cause as proportion (%) of total numbers of CVIs. The proportions from AMD and DED fell over the period overall, whilst those from HED and glaucoma increased. Interestingly, during 2020/21 (when absolute numbers fell), the proportion from AMD rose, whilst the proportion from HED fell.

Discussion

- All numbers fell during 2020/21, suggesting a potential impact of the pandemic in delaying access to support.
- The contrasting changes in AMD and HED proportions in that year might reflect a relative prioritisation of maintaining AMD patient care, including surveillance for neovascular AMD, together with postponing of HED patient appointments (given the typically slow progression associated with hereditary conditions).
- As well as reflecting trends in vision impairment and potential success in treating specific causes, these data can also reflect differences in accessibility for different disease groups.

References

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