Letters to the Editors

A Video Educational and Consenting System for ROP

To the Editors:

Retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) remains a major cause of childhood blindness worldwide. The ophthalmologists who provide ROP staging and treatment services face substantial time constraints but still need to provide constructive education and consent information for parents even if they are remote from the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at the time of consent for urgent ROP treatment.

We developed a video education process for parents and NICU staff and surveyed its merits with the approval of the Providence Hospital institutional review board. The video (http://www.ropcheck.com/parents.html) features a brief (5:51 minute) overview of ROP pathophysiology with sequential retinal image videos from Dr. Anna Ells1 and an additional 4:43 minute segment on ROP treatment. A survey was constructed with four levels of understanding ranked from 0 (no understanding) to 3 (sufficient understanding) (Figure 1). The survey was used to query ROP knowledge before and after video viewing from parents and NICU staff. These data were compared by Wilcoxin signed rank test.

Thirteen parents and 29 NICU staff took the initial survey, watched the educational ROP DVDcribside, and then completed the after video part of the survey. The level of understanding of ROP increased for parents \(Z = -2.5, \ P = .01\) and for NICU staff \(Z = -4.1, \ P < .0001\). The degree of improved understanding was slightly greater for those with less NICU experience (Figure 1).

In conclusion, parents and staff reported increased understanding of ROP after watching a short educational DVD; this decreased face-to-face education time for the ophthalmologist and appeared to improve the consent process for treatment. Internet access to the material afforded similar educational opportunity to parents unable to be physically present in the NICU when their infant reached threshold for ROP treatment.

REFERENCE


Robert W. Arnold, MD
Anchorage, Alaska

Dr. Arnold is a board member of Glacier Medical Software, which develops and markets ROP-Check monitoring software.

doi: 10.3928/01913913-20120804-01

Figure 1. Impact of watching educational the ROP-Check video on perceived knowledge about retinopathy of prematurity (3 = adequate knowledge, 2= average, 1 = minimal, 0 = none) distributed by months of neonatal intensive care unit experience for parents and staff.