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Calculating target Cataract Surgical Rates for Africa.

Cataract remains the leading cause of blindness in Africa and planning for its treatment is a priority of the World Health Organization's VISION 2020 initiative. The cataract surgical rate (CSR), the number of operations done per million population, is a convenient indicator for planning and monitoring. However, estimating what the CSR needs to be to eliminate blindness requires one to take into account a number of factors and assumptions. The recently developed Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) survey uses a population-proportional-to-size sampling technique to select a representative group of people over 50 years old to receive a standard eye exam. We use current data from RAAB surveys in Africa to model the epidemiology of visually significant cataract and to estimate the incidence of cataract causing loss of visual acuity at different age levels. In this talk, I describe our method of estimating incidence from prevalence and how this information can be used to help set target CSR's for various geographical locations in Africa, taking into account important differences among populations. (Received September 21, 2009)