Symposium Title:
Latest Advances in the Management of Hemianopia

Organizer: Dr Sara Ajina, Wellcome Clinician Scientist and Honorary Consultant in Neurological Rehabilitation, Queen Square Institute of Neurology, University College London, s.ajina@ucl.ac.uk

Symposium Description:
The main objective of this symposium is to inform audience members about the most recent discoveries in hemianopia management, and its likely advances over the next few years. Our speakers are all clinical and/or basic science researchers working in the field of neurorehabilitation for visual disorders after acquired brain injury. The talks will cover, (1) The neural basis for effective visual recovery training in hemianopia, and (2) Whether shrinkage of visual field deficits following training is maintained long-term after training is complete. (3) What are the different reading problems in hemianopia, how can they be identified, what interventions can be considered and what outcome measures might be relevant. (4) How does current clinical practice in the management of visual loss post-stroke in UK/USA compare to recent research advances, to guide future policy recommendations. This session will conclude with discussion time to consider the barriers and future steps required to facilitate translation to clinical care.

Rationale and relevance of Symposium:
Hemianopia, or rather 'homonymous visual field defects' (HVFDs) are a common consequence of stroke that reduce quality of life and independence but are notoriously difficult to treat. In recent years there has been a resurgence of research on hemianopia management, questioning best practice and long-term outcomes of this debilitating condition. This symposium brings together diverse recent evidence spanning neuroimaging, recovery and compensatory visual training, outcome measure development and current clinical standards. We will consider what is required to translate research findings to clinical care.

Learning Objectives:
1. What is the neurophysiological basis for effective visual recovery training in hemianopia.
2. How to evaluate reading problems in hemianopia, and new interventions designed to target it.
3. What policy changes do we all need to tackle, to better support stroke survivors with hemianopia.

Proposed Speakers & Presentations:
1. 'Neuroimaging markers to predict visual rehabilitation outcome in hemianopia recovery training', Dr Sara Ajina, University College London. Sara Ajina is a Wellcome Clinician Scientist specialising in research on visual disorders after acquired brain injury at Queen Square Institute of Neurology, University College London. She is also an Honorary Rehabilitation Medicine

(Neurological Rehabilitation) Consultant at The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery.

2. 'Persistence of training-induced visual improvements after occipital stroke', Dr Rebecca Millington-Truby, University of Oxford.
Rebecca Millington-Truby is a postdoctoral Academic Clinical Fellow in Clinical Neurophysiology at University of Oxford and Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

3. 'Advances in assessing and treating reading problems in people with hemianopia', Prof Dr Joost Heutink, University of Groningen and Royal Dutch Visio, The Netherlands.
Joost Heutink is Professor of Visual disorders after acquired brain injury at University of Groningen and Strategic Advisor to the Board of Royal Dutch Visio, Centre of Expertise for Visually Impaired and Blind people, Huizen, The Netherlands.

4. 'Reimagining Care: Policy recommendations to better support occipital stroke', Dr Hanna Willis, CNRS, Ecole Normale Supérieure, Paris.
Hanna Willis is a postdoctoral researcher at École Normale Supérieure (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) in Paris. Dr Willis's research focusses on human vision and understanding what happens when vision is impaired either in development or due to damage later in life.