

# The Use of Clinical Evidence in Commissioning Adult Strabismus Surgery

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## 1. Strabismus (Squint)

This is a misalignment of the eyes which may cause visual problems including double vision, loss of stereopsis (3D vision), eye strain, headaches or an abnormal head position. This may affect the ability to drive or cause an increased risk of falls. Even without visual symptoms strabismus in adults is associated with psychosocial issues including poor self-esteem, low mood, reduced quality of life, reduced employment opportunities, discrimination and psychiatric issues.

Many cases of adult strabismus cannot be managed conservatively and require surgery to achieve any improvement. There is good evidence to show that surgery is safe, cost-effective and can achieve measurable benefits in binocularity, function,

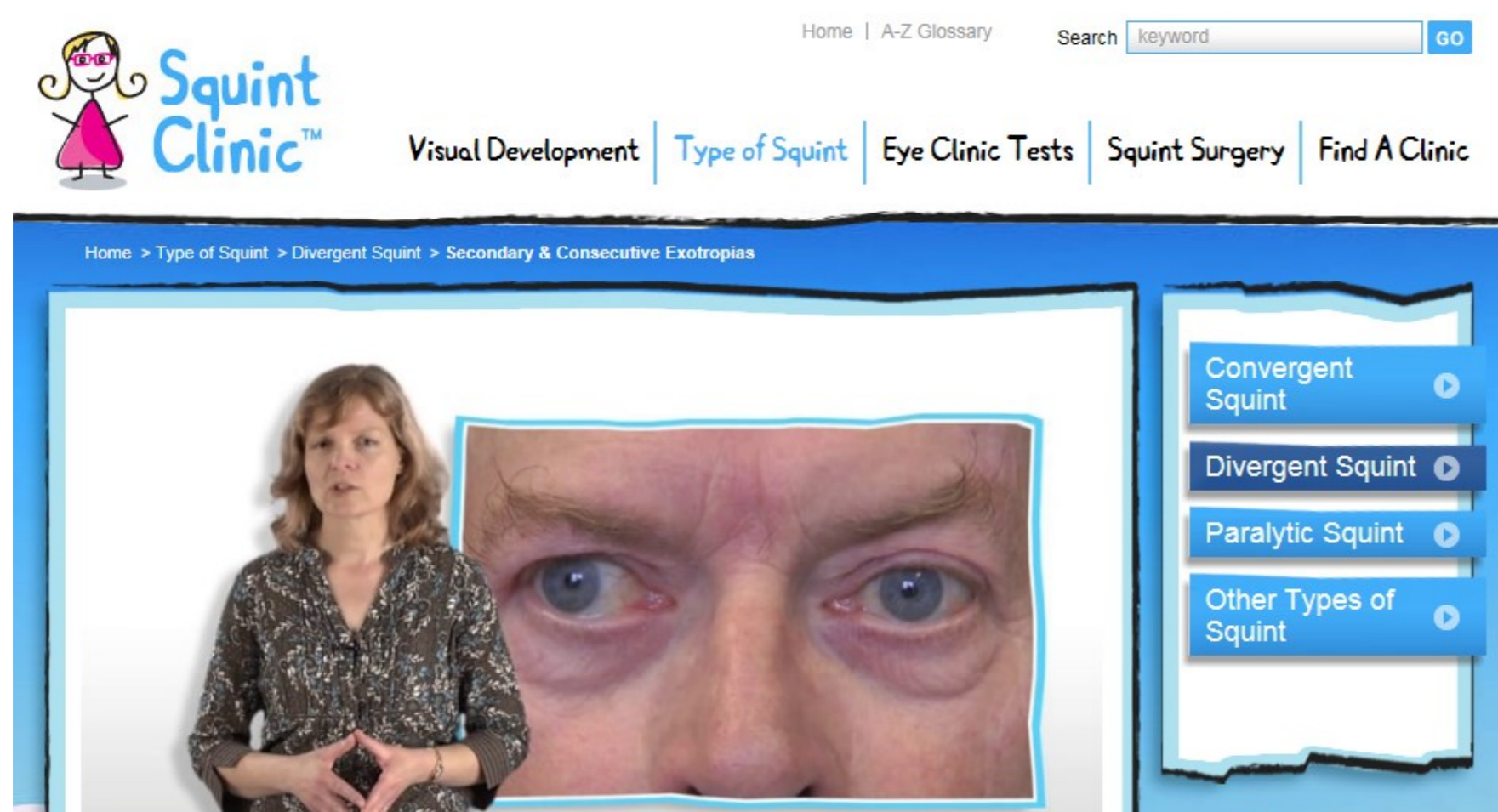
## 2. Commissioning Strabismus Surgery

Commissioning Groups nationally and in Gloucestershire had been reviewing policies and wanted to create a new rationale for commissioning adult strabismus surgery.

In 2018 a decision was made that “surgery to correct strabismus in adults is considered a low priority for funding and will only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Individual cases will only be funded following a full Independent Funding Request application.”

Using clinical data from Medisoft (an Electronic Patient Record system), AS-20 questionnaire results, Royal College of Ophthalmology guidelines and NICE recommendations we were able to present a robust case to the commissioners to reverse

3. Strabismus surgery aims to restore a patient’s normal appearance after their ocular appearance has been affected by a disease process. This is not the same as a cosmetic procedure.



## 4. Adult Strabismus Quality of Life Questionnaire (AS-20)

is a patient derived, health related quality of life questionnaire for adults with strabismus developed in 2008. It has been widely used to demonstrate the impact of squint on a person’s quality of life, psychosocially and functionally.

### Adult Strabismus Quality of Life Questionnaire (AS-20) Psychosocial section

3) I feel uncomfortable when people are looking at me because of my eyes

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
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4) I wonder what people are thinking when they are looking at me because of my eyes

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
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5) People don’t give me opportunities because of my eyes

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
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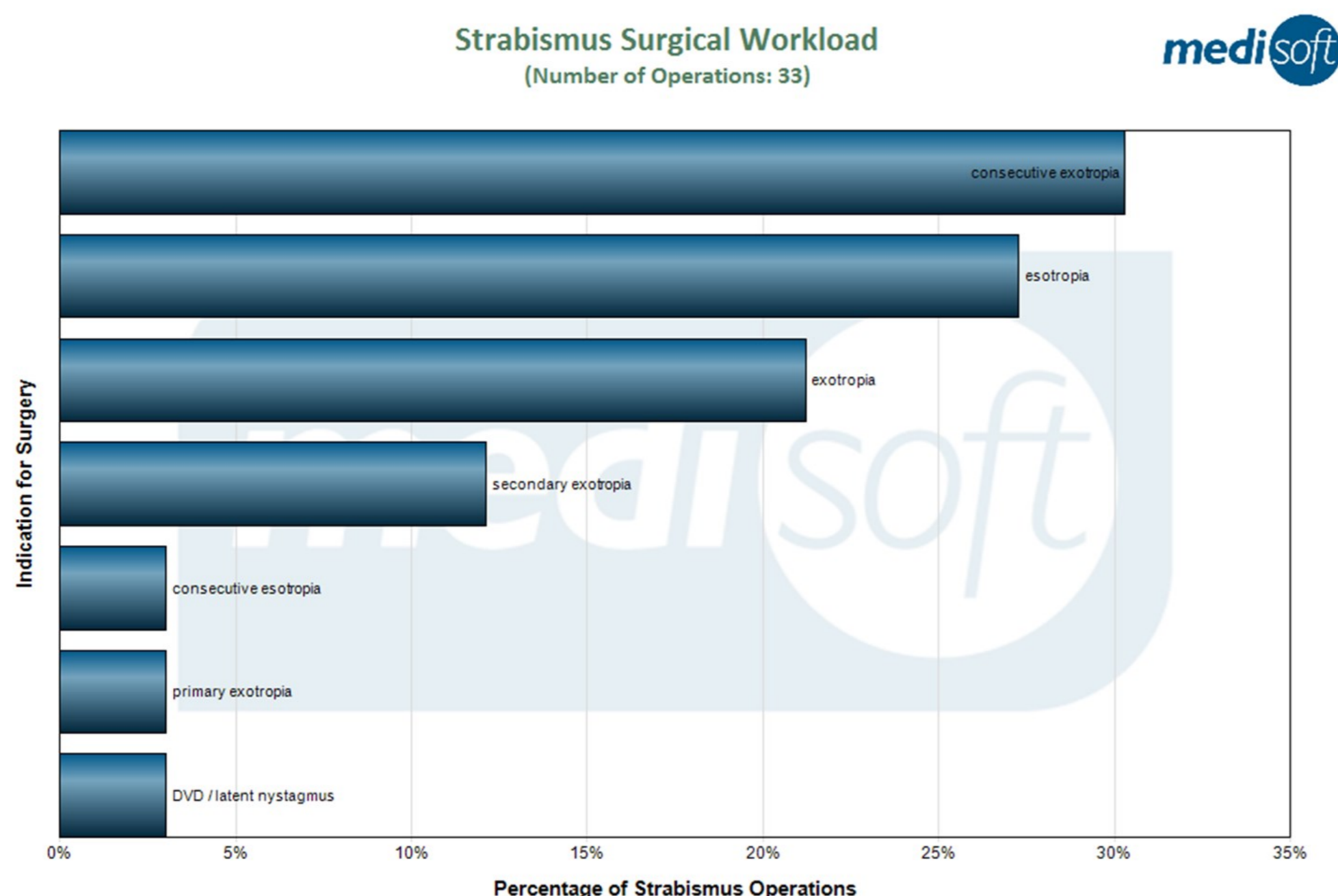
6) I am self-conscious about my eyes

## 5. Gloucestershire surgical activity

290 adults operated on over a 5 year period 105 without binocular functions  
Average 21 per year benefitting from restored ocular appearance.

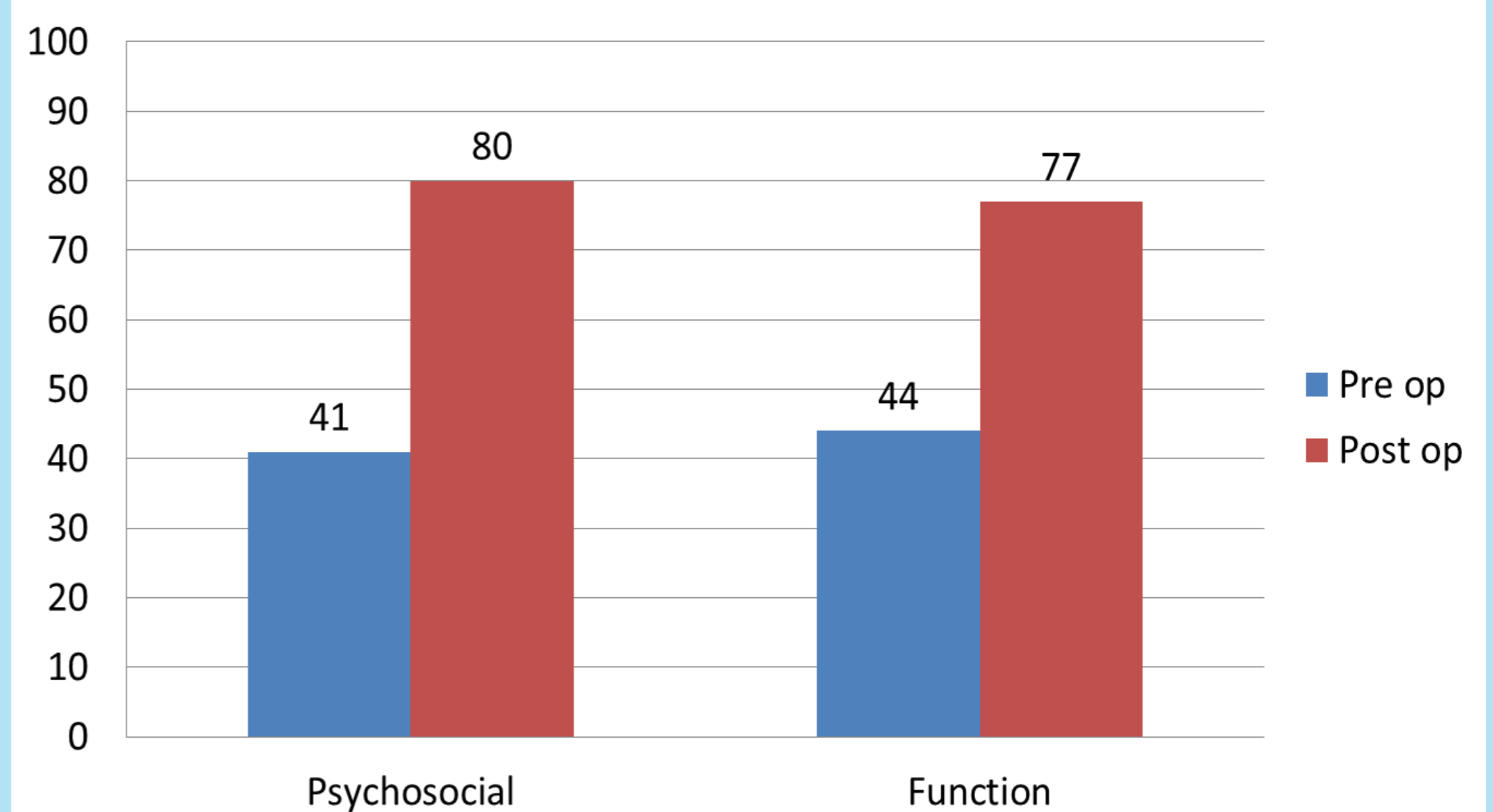
## 6. Medisoft Audit Suite

can be used to create instant audits of everyday clinical data. The example below was based on 2017 adult strabismus surgical data collected during routine recording of appointment episodes. Each bar can be analysed to give a “drill-through” to individual patient data.



Thanks to John Ferris, Consultant Ophthalmologist  
Andrew Robinson, Specialist Orthoptist

## AS-20 score results



## 7. Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs)

- 1 QALY = 1 year of life in perfect health
- Beauchamp et al - A majority of the patients interviewed would trade a significant portion of their life expectancy in return for being rid of strabismus and its associated effects
- Strabismus surgery is a highly cost-effective intervention with high QALYs reported
- NICE states that that interventions costing the NHS less than £20,000 per QALY gained are cost effective
- There is excellent cost-utility for strabismus surgery of £1011 per QALY

[https://public.jaeb.org/pedig/view/Forms\\_AS20](https://public.jaeb.org/pedig/view/Forms_AS20)

Ophthalmology 2009; 116: 139-144

Hatt S R, Leske D A, Bradley E A, Cole S R, Holmes J M

<https://www.rcophth.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Strabismus-surgery-for-adults-in-the-United-Kingdom-indications-evidence-base-and-benefits.pdf>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24390164>

Beauchamp CL, Beauchamp GR, Stager DR Sr, Brown MM, Brown GC, Feliuss J., (2006) The cost utility of strabismus surgery in adults. J AAPOS; 10(5);