

1 **Clinical characterization of *CNGBI* related autosomal recessive retinitis**
2 **pigmentosa**

3
4 Sarah Hull MA, FRCOphth, PhD ^{*1,2}; Marcella Attanasio MD ^{*,1,3}; Gavin Arno PhD ^{1,2}; Keren
5 Carss PhD^{4,5}; Anthony G. Robson, MSc, PhD^{1,2}; Dorothy A Thompson MCOptom, PhD⁶; Vincent
6 Plagnol MSc, PhD⁷; Michel Michaelides MD(res), FRCOphth^{1,2}; Graham E Holder MSc, PhD ^{1,2};
7 Robert H Henderson MD(Res), FRCOphth^{1,6}; F Lucy Raymond MA, D Phil, FRCP^{5,7}; Anthony T
8 Moore MA, FRCOphth^{1,2,9}; Andrew R Webster MD(res), FRCOphth ^{1,2}

9
10 * These authors contributed equally to this work

11 ¹ Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, UK

12 ² University College London Institute of Ophthalmology, London, UK

13 ³ Ospedale Sacrocuore-Don Calabria, Negrar, Italy

14 ⁴ Department of Haematology, University of Cambridge Cambridge, UK

15 ⁵ NIHR BioResource - Rare Diseases, Cambridge University Hospitals, Cambridge Biomedical
16 Campus, Cambridge, United Kingdom

17 ⁶ Ophthalmology, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, London, UK

18 ⁷ University College London Genetics Institute, London, UK

19 ⁸ Department of Medical Genetics, Cambridge Institute for Medical Research, University of
20 Cambridge Cambridge, UK

21 ⁹ Ophthalmology Department University of California San Francisco Medical School, San
22 Francisco, USA

23
24 **ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE:** Prof Andrew Webster, UCL Institute of
25 Ophthalmology, 11-43 Bath St, London, EC1V 9EL, UK. Tel: 0044 207566 2260. Email:
26 Andrew.webster@ucl.ac.uk

27 **RUNNING HEAD:** *CNGBI* related retinitis pigmentosa

28 **Abstract word count: 348**

29 **Text word count: 2947**

32 KEY POINTS:

33

34 Question: What can a detailed clinical and molecular genetic study of patients with CNGB1-related
35 retinitis pigmentosa reveal about the disease presentation and progression?

36

37 Findings: This case series of 10 patients identified childhood onset of nyctalopia with preserved
38 visual acuity and central photoreceptors into adulthood.

39

40 Meaning: This case series suggests RP due to variants in CNGB1 is slowly progressive with a long
41 potential treatment window.

42

43

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

51

52

53

54

55

56 **Abstract**

57 **IMPORTANCE:** There is limited published data on the phenotype of retinitis pigmentosa (RP)
58 related to *CNGBI* variants. These data are needed both for prognostic counseling of patients and for
59 understanding potential treatment windows.

60 **OBJECTIVE:** To describe the detailed clinical and molecular genetic findings in a series of RP
61 patients with likely pathogenic variants in *CNGBI*.

62 **DESIGN, SETTING AND PARTICIPANTS:** Ten patients from nine families underwent full
63 ophthalmologic examination. Molecular investigations included whole exome analysis in 6 patients.
64 The study was conducted from April 17, 2013 to March 3, 2016 with final follow-up completed on
65 March 2, 2016 and data analyzed from October 27, 2014 to March 29, 2016.

66 **MAIN OUTCOMES:** Results of ophthalmologic examination and molecular genetic analysis of
67 *CNGBI*.

68 **RESULTS:** Seven females and three males from 9 families with a mean age of 47.4 ± 13.2 years old
69 were included in this study having been identified to have *CNGBI* variants; there was a mean
70 follow-up length of 3.7 ± 2.8 years. The first clinical presentation was with nyctalopia in childhood
71 with visual field loss documented later at a mean age of 33.2 ± 8.0 years. All patients had preserved
72 visual acuity into adulthood with a mean of 0.1 LogMAR, Snellen equivalent 20/25 in each eye
73 (range 0 to 0.3, Snellen 20/20 to 20/40 in the right eye and -0.1 to 0.3, Snellen 20/16 to 20/40 in the
74 left eye). Fundus examination revealed mid-peripheral retinal pigment epithelial atrophy and intra-
75 retinal pigment migration. Optical coherence tomography of the macula demonstrated complete
76 preservation of the inner segment ellipsoid band in one patient with variable lateral extent in others,
77 corresponding with the diameter of a paracentral ring of increased fundus autofluorescence.

78 Electrophysiological testing in 6 patients confirmed a rod-cone dystrophy phenotype.

79 Molecular investigations identified a previously reported missense variant (p.N986I) and 7 variants
80 not previously reported in disease including 4 nonsense (p.(Q88*), p.(Q222*), p.(Q318*),
81 p.(R729*)), 2 frameshift (p.(A1048fs*13), p.(L849Afs*3)) and a splice site variant (c.761+2T>A).

82 CONCLUSIONS AND RELEVANCE: These data suggest that visual acuity and foveal structure
83 are preserved into adult life such that a lengthy window of opportunity should exist for intervention
84 with novel therapies."

85

86

87 **Introduction**

88 Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP) is an inherited disorder characterized by a progressive retinal dystrophy
89 with primarily rod photoreceptor dysfunction at presentation. It is highly heterogeneous and affects
90 about 1 in 4000 individuals worldwide.¹⁻⁴ Clinically, RP is characterized by night blindness,
91 progressive constriction of peripheral visual fields and ultimately, in the majority of patients,
92 reduced visual acuity. The fundus typically shows mid-peripheral intra-retinal pigment migration
93 associated with retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) atrophy, attenuated retinal vessels and pallor of
94 the optic nerve head.⁴⁻⁶

95 Approximately 15–20% of cases are autosomal dominant, 15% recessive, 7% are X-linked, 43% are
96 sporadic/simplex cases the majority of which are most likely to be autosomal recessive and 15% are
97 unknown.^{6,7} Rarely, RP may be caused by mutations in mitochondrial DNA.⁴ Genes associated with
98 RP encode proteins that have a key role in retinal structure and function including
99 phototransduction or the visual cycle. Some are ubiquitously expressed but have a phenotype
100 confined to the eye.^{6,8,9}

101 Variants in genes encoding the two rod cyclic nucleotide-gated (CNG) channel subunits have been
102 associated with arRP.^{8,10} CNG channels are non-selective cation channels localized to the plasma
103 membrane of rod and cone photoreceptors which translate light-mediated changes of second
104 messenger cyclic guanosine monophosphate (cGMP) into voltage signals.^{11,12} CNG channels in rods
105 form heterotetramers consisting of three α -subunits (CNGA1) and one β -subunit (CNGB1);
106 whereas the cone channel is formed by two α -subunits (CNGA3) and two β -subunit (CNGB3).^{13,14}

107 Variants in *CNGB1* are an uncommon cause of RP, accounting for approximately 4% of arRP cases;
108 there are limited reports describing the associated phenotypes.^{10,15-20} The present report describes
109 the detailed clinical features of ten affected patients harboring likely pathogenic variants in *CNGB1*.

110

111 ***Materials and Methods:***

112 **Patients**

113 Ten patients from nine families were ascertained from the inherited retinal clinics of Moorfields
114 Eye Hospital and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. Informed written consent and
115 peripheral blood samples were obtained for genetic analysis from all subjects according to approved
116 protocols of the Research Management Committees of Moorfields Eye Hospital and Great Ormond
117 Street Hospital for Children, in agreement with the Declaration of Helsinki.

118 An accurate family history of each patient was recorded and all underwent a complete ophthalmic
119 examination, which included best-corrected visual acuity (BCVA), slit-lamp biomicroscopy of the
120 anterior segment and dilated fundus examination. Retinal fundus photographs were obtained by
121 conventional 35° fundus color photographs (Topcon Great Britain Ltd) and in one patient by ultra-
122 widefield (up to 200°) confocal laser scanning ophthalmoscopy (Optos plc, Dunfermline, Scotland).
123 FAF imaging (30° and 55°) was performed with a confocal scanning laser ophthalmoscope (OCT-
124 SLO Spectralis, Heidelberg Retina Angiograph 2, Heidelberg Engineering, Dossenheim, Germany).
125 An optically pumped solid-state laser (488 nm) was used for excitation and a 500 nm barrier filter
126 was used to modulate the reflected light. Spectral-domain OCT was performed with the OCT-SLO
127 Spectralis, Heidelberg Retina Angiograph (Heidelberg Engineering, Dossenheim, Germany). OCT
128 imaging was acquired by a broadband 870-nm superluminescent diode that scanned the retina at
129 40,000 A-scans per second with an optical depth resolution of 7 μm . In particular, the central
130 subfield thickness (CST) and morphology of the inner segment ellipsoid (ISE) band of the
131 photoreceptors were assessed in the maculae of both eyes of all patients. CST was measured using
132 the automated Heidelberg Spectralis viewing module (version 6.3.4.0) with slices visually inspected
133 for segmentation accuracy.

134 Full-field electroretinography (ERG, 6 patients) and pattern electroretinography (PERG, 5 patients)
135 were performed to incorporate the ISCEV Standards.^{21,22} ERGs were recorded under dark-adapted
136 (DA) conditions to flash strengths of 0.01 and 10.0 cd.s.m^{-2} ; light-adapted (LA) ERGs to flash
137 strength of 3.0 cd.s.m^{-2} (30Hz and 2Hz). An additional larger field PERG (30° x24°) was recorded in

138 2 patients as previously described.²³

139

140 **Molecular investigation**

141 Genomic DNA was isolated from peripheral blood lymphocytes using the Puregene kit (Gentra
142 Puregene Blood Extraction Kit, QIAGEN, Manchester, UK). Whole exome sequencing was
143 performed on patients 1-5 and 9 as part of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)
144 BioResource funded Specialist Pathology: Evaluating Exomes in Diagnostics (SPEED) study
145 (Cambridge Biomedical Centre, UK). As part of this study, more than 600 unrelated patients from
146 Moorfields Eye Hospital and Great Ormond Street Hospital with a range of inherited retinal
147 diseases underwent whole-exome sequencing or whole-genome sequencing with patients 1-5 and 9
148 all from the exome cohort. Exome enrichment was performed using ROCHE NimbleGen SeqCap
149 EZ 64 Mb Human Exome Library version 3.0 (ROCHE NimbleGen, Inc., Madison, WI, USA). The
150 libraries were sequenced on an Illumina HiSeq 2000. Reads were aligned to the GRCh37 reference
151 genome using novoalign version 2.08.03. Duplicate reads were marked using Picard tools
152 MarkDuplicates. Calling was performed using the haplotype caller module of GATK
153 (<https://www.broadinstitute.org/gatk>, version 3.3-0), creating gVCF formatted files for each sample.
154 The individual gVCF files for the exomes discussed in this study, in combination with
155 approximately 3,000 clinical exomes (University College London exomes consortium), were
156 combined into merged VCF files for each chromosome containing on average 100 samples each.
157 The final variant calling was performed using the GATK GenotypeGVCFs module jointly for all
158 samples (cases and controls). Variant quality scores were then re-calibrated according to GATK
159 best practices separately for indels and SNPs. Resulting variants were annotated using ANNOVAR
160 based on Ensembl gene and transcript definitions. Candidate variants were filtered based on
161 function (non synonymous, presumed loss-of-function or splicing, defined as intronic sites within 5
162 bp of an exon-intron junction) and minor allele frequency (< 0.5% minor allele frequency in our

163 internal control group, as well as the NHLBI GO Exome Sequencing Project dataset, EVS,
164 available at <http://evs.gs.washington.edu/EVS/>).

165 Next generation sequencing of the coding regions of 105 genes for patients 7 and 8 and more
166 recently for 176 retinal genes for patient 10 was performed at the Manchester Centre for Genomic
167 Medicine (Manchester, UK) with enrichment using a SureSelect Target Enrichment Kit (Agilent
168 Technologies Inc., Santa Clara, USA) then run on a SOLiD 4 sequencer (Life Technologies, Grant
169 Island, NY, USA).²⁴ More than 500 unrelated patients with a range of inherited retinal dystrophies
170 recruited from Moorfields Eye Hospital have undergone this molecular investigation.

171 Confirmatory bi-directional Sanger sequencing of *CNGBI* was performed in all probands and
172 available family members. DNA was amplified using specifically designed primers by polymerase
173 chain reaction (PCR) and the resulting fragments sequenced using standard protocols.

174 Variant nomenclature was assigned in accordance with GenBank Accession number NM_001297.4
175 with nucleotide position 1 corresponding to the A of the ATG initiation codon. Variants were
176 identified as novel if not previously reported in the literature and if absent from dbSNP (available at
177 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/projects/SNP/>); EVS; and the Exome Aggregation Consortium database
178 (ExAC, available at <http://exac.broadinstitute.org>) containing 61,486 exomes, all accessed 21st
179 March 2016. Where relevant, potential splice site disruption was assessed using Splice Site
180 Prediction by Neural Network (available at http://www.fruitfly.org/seq_tools/splice.html).

181

182 **Results**

183 **Clinical Evaluation**

184 The series consisted of 10 patients (7 females and 3 males). Eight were Caucasian British, one
185 Bangladeshi (patient 4) and one Afghani (patient 9). The clinical findings are summarized in Table
186 1, with family pedigrees and identified variants shown in Figure 1. Mean age at last review was

187 47.4 ± 13.2 years (range 15-65) with a mean follow-up of 3.7 ± 2.8 years (range 0-11). The initial
188 symptom in all patients was nyctalopia with onset from infancy to 14 years of age. No patient
189 reported photophobia. A fine nystagmus was observed in one patient (patient 9). Symptomatic
190 peripheral visual field loss occurred later, at a mean age of 33.2 ± 8.0 years (range 13-40), although
191 it was detectable on formal kinetic perimetry in patient 9 at age 12 years. Six of 10 patients
192 developed visually significant posterior subcapsular lens opacities in both eyes during follow-up
193 with subsequent cataract surgery.

194 Mean BCVA was 0.1 LogMAR (20/25 Snellen) in the right eye (range 0 to 0.3, Snellen 20/20 to
195 20/40) and 0.1 LogMAR in the left eye (range -0.1 to 0.3, Snellen 20/16 to 20/40). Myopic
196 refractive errors were present in three of the patients for whom data were available. Confrontation
197 visual field testing demonstrated variable peripheral field loss in all subjects. There was sparing of
198 the central 20-30 degrees in 7 patients; sparing of the central 10-20 degrees in 1 patient; and sparing
199 of the central 5-10 degrees in 2 patients, with documented slow progression during follow-up.

200 Fundus examination of all but patient 9, revealed arteriolar attenuation, optic disc pallor, retinal
201 pigment epithelium (RPE) atrophy and mid-peripheral intra-retinal pigment migration. For patient
202 9, the youngest patient, narrow retinal vessels and mid-peripheral RPE mottling were the only
203 observable abnormalities at age 18 years. (Figure 2) Peri-foveal RPE atrophy was additionally
204 present in patients 1, 4 and 10.

205 FAF imaging showed a loss of autofluorescence in the mid-periphery with macular or perimacular
206 rings of increased autofluorescence in all patients. Patient 9 with initial preserved autofluorescence
207 developed a macular ring of increased autofluorescence over a 5-year follow up period (Figure 2).

208 Three patients (patients 1, 4 and 10), had an additional patchy peri-foveal ring of reduced
209 autofluorescence corresponding to their peri-foveal RPE atrophy.

210 One patient with a large paracentral ring of FAF had complete preservation of the inner segment
211 ellipsoid (ISe) band evident on OCT (Figure 2, patient 8). In others the lateral extent of the ISe band
212 corresponded with the diameter of the ring of increased signal on FAF with the most severe loss of

213 ISe band in patients 1 and 10. In addition, both eyes of patient 3, 6 and the left eye of patient 7 had
214 an epiretinal membrane; patient 5 had bilateral vitreomacular traction (VMT) associated with
215 macular edema and patient 10 a small left lamellar macular hole without apparent VMT. Interval
216 OCT imaging over a 5 year period in patient 9 demonstrated a marked reduction in the diameter of
217 the ISe band (Figure 2). Mean CST thickness, excluding patient 5 (macular edema) and patient 9
218 (information unavailable), was $302.3 \mu\text{m} \pm 35.0 \mu\text{m}$ in the right eye and $295.3 \pm 33.0 \mu\text{m}$ in the left
219 eye compared to mean normative values of $270.2 \pm 22.5 \mu\text{m}$.²⁵ Excluding those patients with all
220 concurrent macular pathology resulted in similar values for the CST for patients 1, 2, 4, 7 (RE), 8
221 and 10 (RE) of $297.7 \pm 37.1 \mu\text{m}$ in the right eye and $291.8 \pm 42.8 \mu\text{m}$ in the left eye.
222 Full-field ERG and PERG were performed in 6 patients at the mean age of 40 ± 13.2 years old.
223 Full-field ERG performed in patient 9 at the age of 13 years old showed profoundly attenuated rod-
224 specific responses (dark-adapted 0.01) with subnormal and delayed cone responses. In the other 5
225 patients, rod-specific responses (dark-adapted 0.01) were undetectable bilaterally; the brighter flash
226 dark-adapted ERGs (dark-adapted 3.0 and dark-adapted 10.0) showed markedly reduced or
227 undetectable function from both eyes (figure 3). Light-adapted 30Hz flicker ERGs and single-flash
228 cone ERG b-waves were delayed and subnormal in most, subnormal without delay in patient 8 and
229 with only a residual single flash cone ERG detectable in patient 7. The PERG P50 responses in 5
230 patients ranged from undetectable to normal (table 1, figure 3). Patients 7 and 8 underwent large
231 field PERG testing with lack of enlargement of the response for patient 7 indicating marked
232 paracentral retinal dysfunction and the expected enlargement relative to the standard PERG for
233 patient 8 indicating relative preservation of paracentral macular function (figure 3).

234

235 ***CNGBI* Screening**

236 Likely pathogenic variants in *CNGBI* were identified in all 9 probands and, after segregation
237 analysis, in a further 3 affected family members, one of whom was also available for examination
238 (patient 6). One previously reported variant, c.2957A>T (p.(N986I)) in exon 29, was identified in

239 patients 2, 3, 5, 7 and 8 (Figure 1).¹⁶ Four novel variants were detected; 3 nonsense, c.262C>T
240 (p.(Q88*)) in exon 3, c.664C>T (p.(Q222*)) in exon 10, c.2185C>T (p.(R729*)) in exon 22 and
241 one splice site variant c.761+2T>A in intron 10 predicted to abolish the canonical splice donor site.
242 These were all absent from the ExAC database. In addition 3 variants were detected not previously
243 reported in an affected patient before but present at a very low allele frequency in the ExAC
244 database; c.952C>T (p.(Q318*)) in exon 13 (1/120768 alleles), c.3142_3143insGTGG
245 (p.(A1048fs*13)) in exon 31 (2/120522 alleles) and c.2544dupG (p.(L849Afs*3)) in exon 26
246 (4/120644 alleles). For patient 3 (GC19136) and patients 5-6 (GC635), further segregation to
247 establish phase was not possible from either antecedents or children; however the 2 variants found
248 did segregate with additional affected individuals in both families (Figure 1).

249

250 **Discussion**

251 This report describes the findings in 10 patients (7 female, 3 male) from 9 families with a typical
252 RP phenotype and likely pathogenic variants in *CNGBI*. Seven likely pathogenic variants not
253 previously reported in an affected patient were identified.

254 There are limited published data of the *CNGBI* retinal phenotype.^{10,15-20} To our knowledge, only 7
255 families have been identified with recessive RP due to *CNGBI* comprising 3 missense variants, 3
256 splice site variants and 1 frameshift variant. Of the 4 families with clinical detail, there was a
257 childhood onset of nyctalopia with a later development of peripheral visual field loss reported in 4
258 patients at ages 10, 20 and 30 (2 patients) years.^{10,15,17,19} Severe loss of visual acuity was present in
259 3 patients at age 24, 57 and 67 years. There were fundus abnormalities typical of RP with mid-
260 peripheral RPE atrophy and intra-retinal bone-spicule pigmentation and variable macular atrophy.
261 Two patients had undetectable rod responses on ERG and severely abnormal cone responses aged
262 24 and 30 years; 1 patient had undetectable ERG responses at age 44 years. PERG was not
263 performed. The patients in the present series had similar features; onset of nyctalopia was in
264 childhood with symptomatic visual field loss occurring later; central visual acuity was preserved

265 well into adult life; there were fundus abnormalities consistent with RP; and electrophysiology
266 demonstrated a rod-cone dystrophy phenotype. Pattern ERGs showed variable degrees of central or
267 paracentral macular involvement and could be relatively preserved in patients with ERG evidence
268 of severe generalized photoreceptor dysfunction.

269 This is the first report to describe retinal imaging (other than fundus appearance); all patients
270 demonstrated reduced mid-peripheral autofluorescence with macular rings of increased
271 autofluorescence corresponding to the size of remaining ISe band. Abnormal para-foveal rings of
272 increased FAF have been reported in approximately 59% of RP patients.²⁶ All patients in the
273 present series demonstrated such abnormal rings, the largest FAF ring surrounded an area that
274 included most of the vascular arcades in a patient with OCT evidence of preserved outer retina
275 (patient 8, figure 2) and relatively preserved PERG (figure 3). The diameter of smaller FAF rings
276 corresponded with the lateral limit of the remaining OCT ISe band, consistent with previous studies
277 of RP patients that have shown spatial correspondence or correlation between these parameters.^{27,28}

278 Central subfield thickness was within normal limits. The findings of our study suggest that RP
279 associated with variants in *CNGBI* has a good prognosis for central vision despite the early onset of
280 night blindness. The good visual prognosis is reflected by preserved central macular thickness and
281 morphology of the inner segment ellipsoid band of the photoreceptors even in adult patients.

282 A total of 8 different variants in *CNGBI* were identified. The previously reported missense variant,
283 p.(N986I), was detected in 5 patients, all British Caucasian, suggesting it to be a common *CNGBI*
284 variant in this population.¹⁶ It is found in 133/120,752 alleles with no homozygotes in the ExAC
285 database (minor allele frequency, MAF 0.0011), including 84/66,728 non-Finnish European alleles
286 (MAF 0.0013). Patient 1, bi-allelic for nonsense variants, had a more severe phenotype compared to
287 the other patients; the BCVA was 0.3 LogMAR (Snellen 20/40) at age of 47 years old and the
288 visual field was restricted to the central 10 degrees in both eyes. This patient is predicted
289 nullizygous for *CNGBI* due to nonsense mediated decay of the transcribed mRNA as are patients 4,
290 9 and 10 suggesting that there is no direct correlation between predicted nullizygous variants and

291 phenotype severity.²⁹ Of the previously reported patients with clinical detail, 2 had splice site
292 variants (c.413-1G>A and c.3444+1G>A) and visual loss at ages 24 and 67 years respectively; 2
293 with missense variants had preserved central vision in to at least their 4th decades.^{10,15,17,19} The
294 splice site variants have both been shown *in vitro* to lead to aberrant splicing and premature
295 termination codons.^{19,30} At this time, there is no demonstrable genotype-phenotype correlation.
296 Further functional work and larger numbers of patients may help elucidate potential associations.

297

298 The slowly progressive RP phenotype in *CNGBI* patients is consistent with the prior canine and
299 murine model studies.^{31,32,33} In Papillon dogs with a homozygous frameshift variant in *CNGBI*,
300 there was marked reduction or absence of rod ERG responses with a partial preservation of cone
301 ERGs.³¹ OCT imaging of the central macula, when fully developed (approximately 8 weeks of age),
302 showed retinal layer thickness comparable to a normal control with a gradually progressive thinning
303 of the outer nuclear layer with age, confirming a slow retinal degeneration. In *Cngbl*^{-/-} mice, a
304 progressive loss of rod photoreceptor function was noted with a later degeneration of cone
305 photoreceptors.³² The degeneration was slow with loss of 20-30% of rods at 4 months, 30-50% at 6
306 months and 80-90% at 1 year. Although the rods degenerated early, cone photoreceptors started to
307 degenerate only at 6 months, and were still present at 11 months.^{32,33}

308

309 To conclude, this report expands the phenotype of patients with RP due to variants in *CNGBI* and
310 describes 7 additional pathogenic variants. The phenotype, similar to previous reports and animal
311 models, indicates slow degeneration and there is therefore a lengthy window of opportunity for
312 therapeutic intervention. The results from proof of concept gene therapy studies in a *Cngbl*
313 knockout mouse model leads to optimism that human RP associated with variants in *CNGBI* may
314 ultimately be treated successfully using a similar approach.³⁴

315

316

317 **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

318 The authors would like to acknowledge the National Institute for Health Research BioResource-
319 Rare Diseases consortium for the molecular investigations performed in this report as part of the
320 UK national SPEED study.

321 **Financial disclosures/conflicts of interest:** The authors have no proprietary or commercial interest
322 in any materials discussed in this article. No conflicting relationship pertinent to the subject matter
323 or materials discussed in this paper exists for any author.

324 **Funding Sources:** The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) England for supporting the
325 NIHR BioResource–Rare Diseases and Biomedical Research Centres at Moorfields Eye Hospital
326 and the UCL Institute of Ophthalmology; The Foundation Fighting Blindness; Fight For Sight;
327 Moorfields Eye Hospital Special Trustees; Rosetrees Trust; Research to Prevent Blindness USA.

328

329 Funding bodies did not have any specific role in the design and conduct of the study; collection,
330 management, analysis, and interpretation of the data; preparation, review, or approval of the
331 manuscript; nor decision to submit the manuscript for publication.

332 **Access to data statement:** SH and MA had full access to all of the data in this study and takes
333 responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis.

334 **Author contributions:** SH, MA and AW designed the study; all authors acquired, analyzed or
335 interpreted data; SH and MA drafted the manuscript; all authors critically revised the manuscript for
336 important intellectual content.

337 **References**

- 338 1. Fahim AT, Stephen PWeleber, Richard G. *Retinitis Pigmentosa Overview*. Seattle: University of
339 Washington; 2013.
- 340 2. Wang DY, Chan WM, Tam PO, et al. Gene mutations in retinitis pigmentosa and their clinical
341 implications. *Clin Chim Acta*. 2005;351(1-2):5-16.
- 342 3. Jacobson SG, Voigt WJ, Parel JM, et al. Automated light- and dark-adapted perimetry for evaluating
343 retinitis pigmentosa. *Ophthalmology*. 1986;93(12):1604-1611.

- 344 4. Hartong DT, Berson EL, Dryja TP. Retinitis pigmentosa. *Lancet*. 2006;368(9549):1795-1809.
- 345 5. Fishman GA. Retinitis pigmentosa. Genetic percentages. *Arch Ophthalmol*. 1978;96(5):822-826.
- 346 6. Hims MM, Diager SP, Inglehearn CF. Retinitis pigmentosa: genes, proteins and prospects. *Dev*
347 *Ophthalmol*. 2003;37:109-125.
- 348 7. Bocquet B, Lacroux A, Surget MO, et al. Relative frequencies of inherited retinal dystrophies and
349 optic neuropathies in Southern France: assessment of 21-year data management. *Ophthalmic*
350 *Epidemiol*. 2013;20(1):13-25.
- 351 8. Dryja TP, Finn JT, Peng YW, McGee TL, Berson EL, Yau KW. Mutations in the gene encoding the
352 alpha subunit of the rod cGMP-gated channel in autosomal recessive retinitis pigmentosa. *Proc*
353 *Natl Acad Sci U S A*. 1995;92(22):10177-10181.
- 354 9. Tanackovic G, Ransijn A, Ayuso C, Harper S, Berson EL, Rivolta C. A missense mutation in PRPF6
355 causes impairment of pre-mRNA splicing and autosomal-dominant retinitis pigmentosa. *Am J Hum*
356 *Genet*. 2011;88(5):643-649.
- 357 10. Bareil C, Hamel CP, Delague V, Arnaud B, Demaille J, Claustres M. Segregation of a mutation in
358 CNGB1 encoding the beta-subunit of the rod cGMP-gated channel in a family with autosomal
359 recessive retinitis pigmentosa. *Hum Genet*. 2001;108(4):328-334.
- 360 11. Biel M, Michalakakis S. Function and dysfunction of CNG channels: insights from channelopathies and
361 mouse models. *Mol Neurobiol*. 2007;35(3):266-277.
- 362 12. Kaupp UB, Seifert R. Cyclic nucleotide-gated ion channels. *Physiol Rev*. 2002;82(3):769-824.
- 363 13. Zheng J, Trudeau MC, Zagotta WN. Rod cyclic nucleotide-gated channels have a stoichiometry of
364 three CNGA1 subunits and one CNGB1 subunit. *Neuron*. 2002;36(5):891-896.
- 365 14. Peng C, Rich ED, Varnum MD. Subunit configuration of heteromeric cone cyclic nucleotide-gated
366 channels. *Neuron*. 2004;42(3):401-410.
- 367 15. Kondo H, Qin M, Mizota A, et al. A homozygosity-based search for mutations in patients with
368 autosomal recessive retinitis pigmentosa, using microsatellite markers. *Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci*.
369 2004;45(12):4433-4439.
- 370 16. Simpson DA, Clark GR, Alexander S, Silvestri G, Willoughby CE. Molecular diagnosis for
371 heterogeneous genetic diseases with targeted high-throughput DNA sequencing applied to retinitis
372 pigmentosa. *J Med Genet*. 2011;48(3):145-151.
- 373 17. Bocquet B, Marzouka NA, Hebrard M, et al. Homozygosity mapping in autosomal recessive retinitis
374 pigmentosa families detects novel mutations. *Mol Vis*. 2013;19:2487-2500.
- 375 18. Maria M, Ajmal M, Azam M, et al. Homozygosity mapping and targeted sanger sequencing reveal
376 genetic defects underlying inherited retinal disease in families from pakistan. *PLoS One*.
377 2015;10(3):e0119806.
- 378 19. Saqib MA, Nikopoulos K, Ullah E, et al. Homozygosity mapping reveals novel and known mutations
379 in Pakistani families with inherited retinal dystrophies. *Sci Rep*. 2015;5:9965.
- 380 20. Maranhao B, Biswas P, Gottsch AD, et al. Investigating the Molecular Basis of Retinal Degeneration
381 in a Familial Cohort of Pakistani Decent by Exome Sequencing. *PLoS One*. 2015;10(9):e0136561.
- 382 21. McCulloch DL, Marmor MF, Brigell MG, et al. ISCEV Standard for full-field clinical
383 electroretinography (2015 update). *Doc Ophthalmol*. 2015;130(1):1-12.
- 384 22. Bach M, Brigell MG, Hawlina M, et al. ISCEV standard for clinical pattern electroretinography
385 (PERG): 2012 update. *Doc Ophthalmol*. 2013;126(1):1-7.
- 386 23. Lenassi E, Robson AG, Hawlina M, Holder GE. The value of two-field pattern electroretinogram in
387 routine clinical electrophysiologic practice. *Retina*. 2012;32(3):588-599.
- 388 24. O'Sullivan J, Mullaney BG, Bhaskar SS, et al. A paradigm shift in the delivery of services for diagnosis
389 of inherited retinal disease. *J Med Genet*. 2012;49(5):322-326.
- 390 25. Grover S, Murthy RK, Brar VS, Chalam KV. Normative data for macular thickness by high-definition
391 spectral-domain optical coherence tomography (spectralis). *Am J Ophthalmol*. 2009;148(2):266-
392 271.
- 393 26. Murakami T, Akimoto M, Ooto S, et al. Association between abnormal autofluorescence and
394 photoreceptor disorganization in retinitis pigmentosa. *Am J Ophthalmol*. 2008;145(4):687-694.
- 395 27. Robson AG, Tufail A, Fitzke F, et al. Serial imaging and structure-function correlates of high-density
396 rings of fundus autofluorescence in retinitis pigmentosa. *Retina*. 2011;31(8):1670-1679.

- 397 28. Greenstein VC, Duncker T, Holopigian K, et al. Structural and functional changes associated with
398 normal and abnormal fundus autofluorescence in patients with retinitis pigmentosa. *Retina*.
399 2012;32(2):349-357.
- 400 29. Lejeune F, Maquat LE. Mechanistic links between nonsense-mediated mRNA decay and pre-mRNA
401 splicing in mammalian cells. *Curr Opin Cell Biol*. 2005;17(3):309-315.
- 402 30. Becirovic E, Nakova K, Hammelmann V, Hennel R, Biel M, Michalakis S. The retinitis pigmentosa
403 mutation c.3444+1G>A in CNGB1 results in skipping of exon 32. *PLoS One*. 2010;5(1):e8969.
- 404 31. Winkler PA, Ekenstedt KJ, Occelli LM, et al. A large animal model for CNGB1 autosomal recessive
405 retinitis pigmentosa. *PLoS One*. 2013;8(8):e72229.
- 406 32. Hüttl S, Michalakis S, Seeliger M, et al. Impaired channel targeting and retinal degeneration in mice
407 lacking the cyclic nucleotide-gated channel subunit CNGB1. *J Neurosci*. 2005;25(1):130-138.
- 408 33. Zhang Y, Molday LL, Molday RS, et al. Knockout of GARPs and the β -subunit of the rod cGMP-gated
409 channel disrupts disk morphogenesis and rod outer segment structural integrity. *J Cell Sci*.
410 2009;122(Pt 8):1192-1200.
- 411 34. Michalakis S, Koch S, Sothilingam V, et al. Gene therapy restores vision and delays degeneration in
412 the CNGB1(-/-) mouse model of retinitis pigmentosa. *Adv Exp Med Biol*. 2014;801:733-739.

413
414
415
416
417
418
419
420
421
422
423
424
425
426
427
428
429
430
431
432
433
434
435
436
437
438
439
440
441
442
443
444
445
446
447
448

449
450
451
452
453
454

Table 1. Summary of Clinical Findings in *CNGB1* patients.

Patient (family)	Age at last review, years	Length review, years	Age of onset (symptoms)	Latest BCVA		Visual Field to confrontation	OCT	Age in years at electrophysiology, findings
				RE	LE			
1 (GC2533)	54	4	8yrs (night blindness) 30yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.3 (20/40)	0.3 (20/40)	5°-10° central	Centrally preserved ISe band	Not performed
2 (GC20388)	40	-	childhood (night blindness) 30yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.3 (20/40)	0.2 (20/32)	20°-30° central	Centrally preserved ISe band	Not performed
3 (GC19136)	55	3	childhood (night blindness) 40yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.0 (20/20)	-0.1 (20/16)	20°-30° central	Centrally preserved ISe band BE ERM	Subnormal PERG; undetectable rod ERG, subnormal cone ERG (ERG performed and reported elsewhere)
4 (GC19695)	50	4	childhood (night blindness) 39yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.0 (20/20)	-0.1 (20/16)	20°-30° central	Centrally preserved ISe band	38, subnormal RE PERG, normal LE PERG; undetectable rod ERG, subnormal bright flash ERG; subnormal & delayed cone ERGs
5 (GC635)	65	3	childhood (night blindness) 38yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.2 (20/32)	0.2 (20/32)	20°-30° central	Centrally preserved ISe band BE CMO BE VMT	53, undetectable PERG; undetectable rod ERG; subnormal bright flash ERG; delayed & subnormal cone ERGs
6 (GC635)	60	4	childhood (night blindness) 40yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.0 (20/20)	-0.1 (20/16)	10°-20° central	Centrally preserved ISe band	Not performed
7 (GC20934)	43	1	childhood (night blindness) 40yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.0 (20/20)	0.0 (20/20)	20°-30° central	Centrally preserved ISe band LE ERM	42, subnormal PERG; undetectable rod ERG; undetectable bright flash and flicker ERG; residual single flash cone ERG
8 (GC21053)	40	2	childhood (night blindness) 32yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.2 (20/32)	0.2 (20/32)	30° central	ISe band preserved throughout macula	39, subnormal PERG; undetectable rod ERG, subnormal bright flash ERG, subnormal cone ERGs.

9	18	5	infancy (night blindness) 13 yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.1 (20/25)	0.1 (20/25)	25°-30° central	Centrally preserved ISe band	13, PERG not performed; profoundly attenuated rod ERGs, subnormal & delayed cone ERGs
10 (GC17300)	49	11	childhood (night blindness) 30yrs (loss of peripheral vision)	0.0 (20/20)	0.18 (20/30)	5°-10° central	Centrally preserved ISe band LE LMH	Not performed

455 BE, both eyes; RE right eye; LE left eye; BCVA best corrected visual acuity LogMAR (Snellen); OCT
456 optical coherence tomography; PERG pattern electroretinography; ERG electroretinography; ERM epiretinal
457 membrane; ISe, inner segment ellipsoid; CMO cystoid macular edema, VMT vitreomacular traction, LMH
458 lamellar macular hole

459

460 **Figure legends**

461

462 **Figure 1**

463 **Title: Pedigrees of 9 families with variants**

464

465 **Figure 2**

466 **Title: Retinal imaging in *CNGB1* related retinal dystrophy**

467 Color fundus photographs, fundus autofluorescence (FAF) imaging and optical coherence
468 tomography (OCT) for patients 3, 4, 5, 8 and 9. (A) patient 3, (B) patient 4 and (C) patient 5, all
469 right eye (RE): mid-peripheral retinal pigment epithelium (RPE) atrophy with bone spicule
470 hyperpigmentation, reduced autofluorescence in mid-periphery with ring of increased macula
471 autofluorescence corresponding to preserved inner segment ellipsoid (ISe) band on OCT; patient 3
472 epiretinal membrane also present on OCT; patient 4 reduced peri-foveal dots of autofluorescence
473 also present; patient 5 vitreomacular traction with retinal cysts of inner nuclear layer also present on
474 FAF imaging and OCT. (D) patient 8 left eye (LE), mid-peripheral RPE atrophy and pigmentary
475 change as before but with a large ring of increased autofluorescence outside of the macula on FAF

476 imaging, anterior to which reduced autofluorescence is present, and on OCT imaging, preserved
477 retinal layers. (E) patient 9 RE and LE color fundus imaging from 2011 demonstrates narrowing of
478 the vessels only, FAF imaging normal in 2011 but in 2016, rings of increased autofluorescence
479 present in both eyes, partially preserved ISe band in 2011 with reduction in size demonstrated in
480 2016

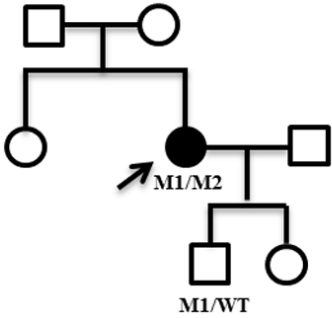
481

482 **Figure 3**

483 Title: **Electroretinography in *CNGBI* related retinitis pigmentosa.** Full-field and pattern ERGs
484 in patients 4 (age 38 years), 5 (age 53 years), 7 (age 42 years) and 8 (age 39 years) and traces from
485 a representative normal subject for comparison. The ERGs showed a high degree of interocular
486 symmetry and are shown for one eye only; responses are consistent with rod-cone dystrophy. PERG
487 was normal in one eye of case 4 (mildly subnormal in the other eye; data not shown) and showed
488 reduction indicating symmetrical mild-severe macular dysfunction in the other patients.

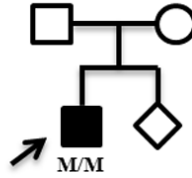
Patient 1 (GC2533)

M1: c.262C>T (p.(Q88*))
M2: c.664C>T (p.(Q222*))



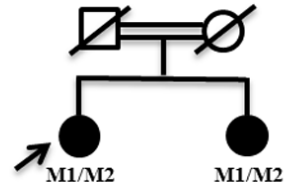
Patient 2 (GC20388)

M: c.2957A>T (p.(N986I))



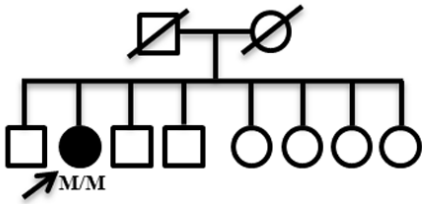
Patient 3 (GC19136)

M1: c.2957A>T (p.(N986I))
M2: c.3142_3143insGTGG (p.(A1048fs*13))



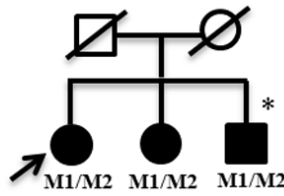
Patient 4 (GC19695)

M: c.761+2T>A



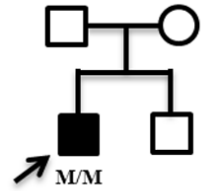
Patient 5 - Patient 6* (GC635)

M1: c.952C>T (p.(Q318*))
M2: c.2957A>T (p.(N986I))



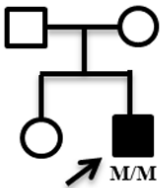
Patient 7 (GC20934)

M: c.2957A>T (p.(N986I))



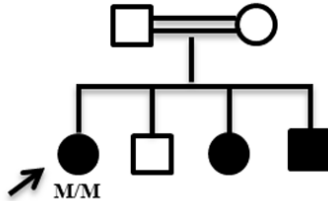
Patient 8 (GC21053)

M: c.2957A>T (p.(N986I))



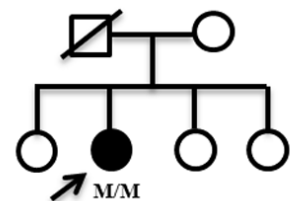
Patient 9

M: c.2185C>T (p.(R729*))

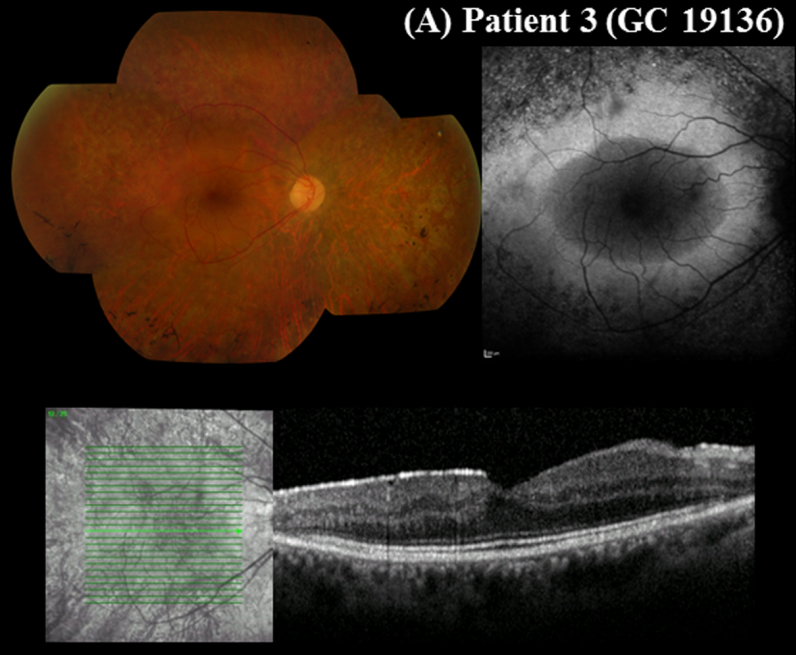


Patient 10 (GC17300)

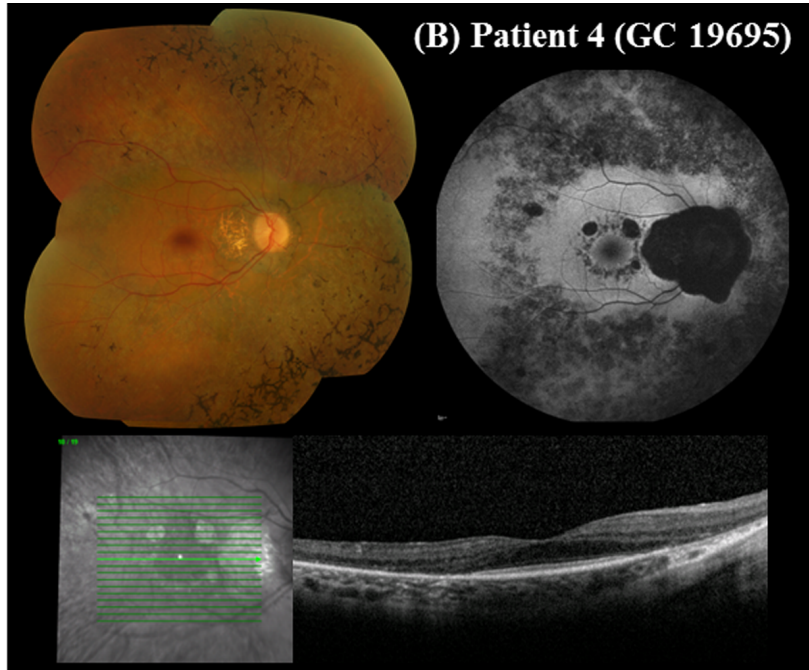
M: c.2544dupG (p.(L849Afs*3))



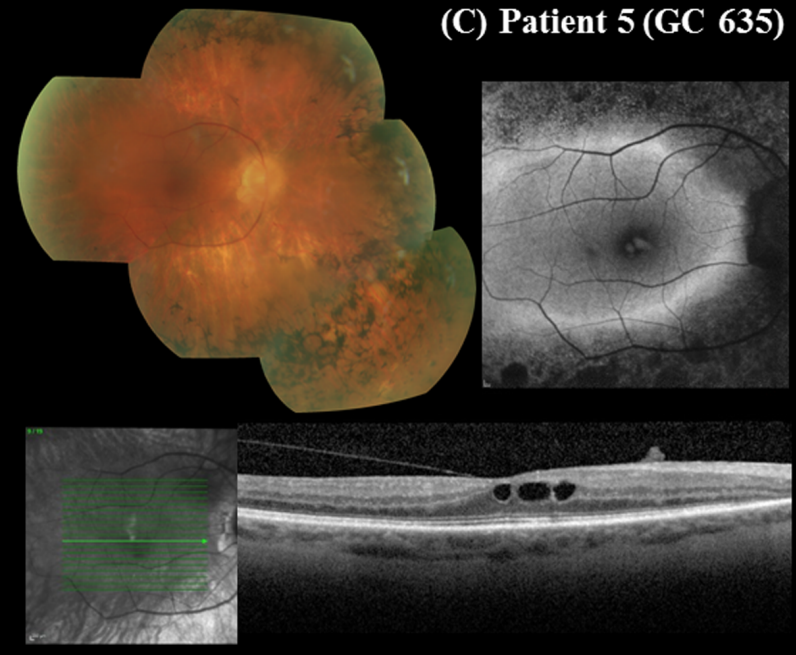
(A) Patient 3 (GC 19136)



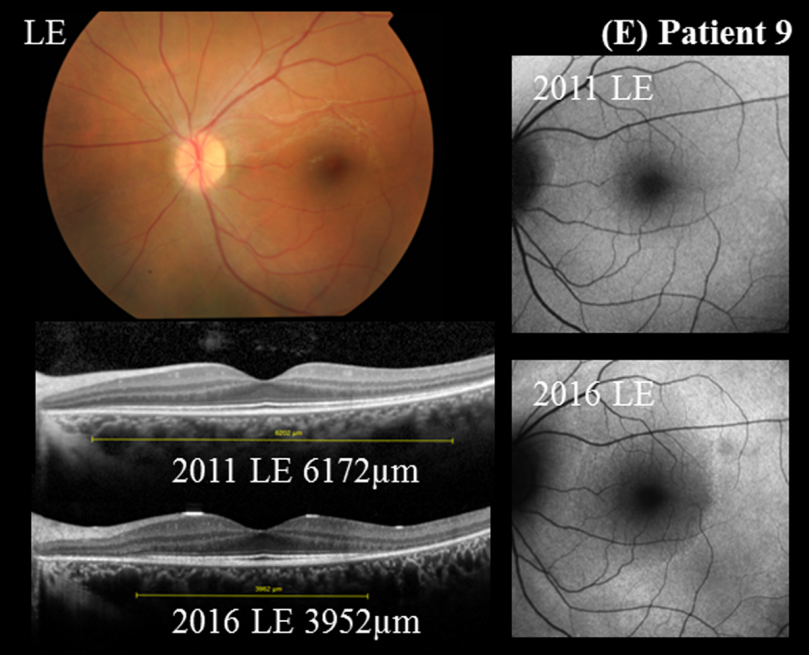
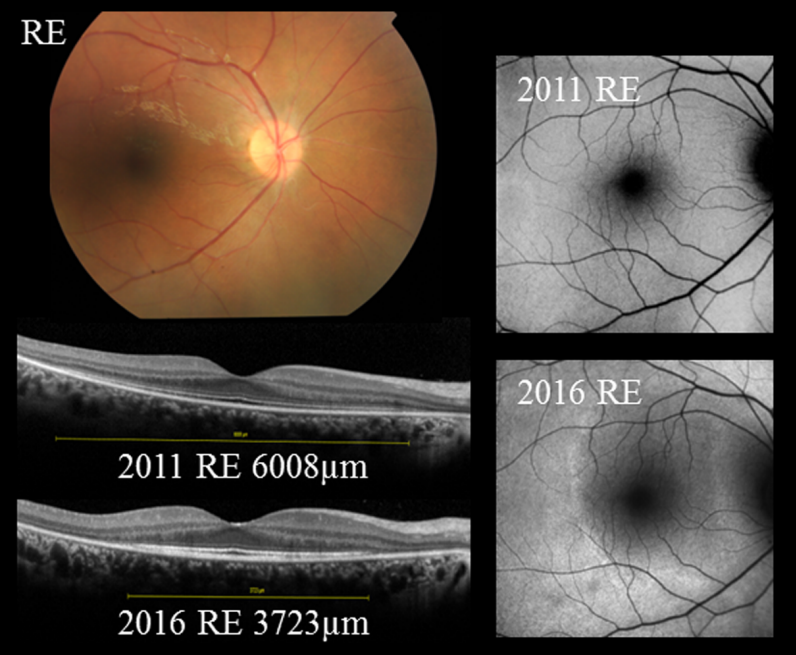
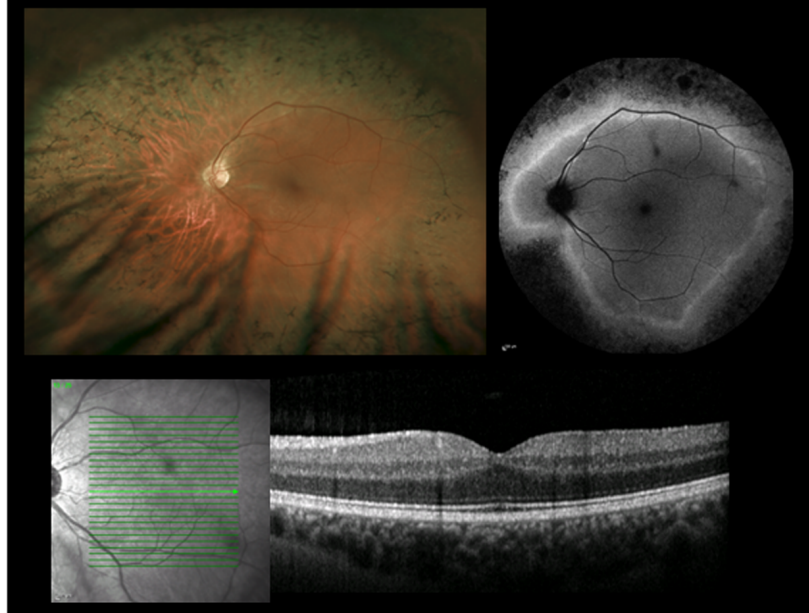
(B) Patient 4 (GC 19695)



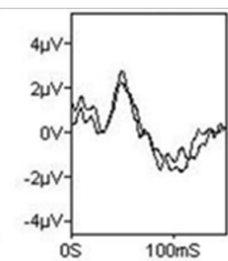
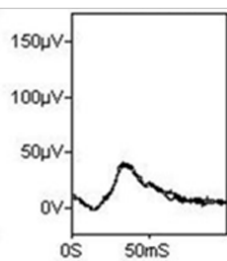
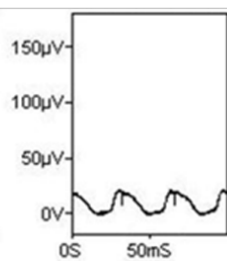
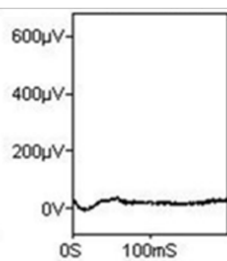
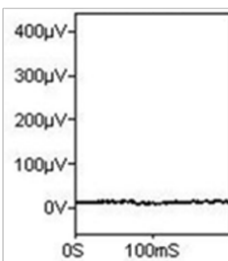
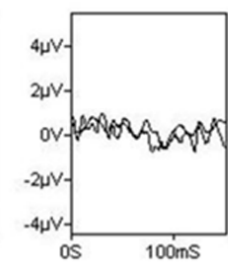
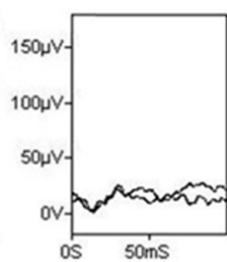
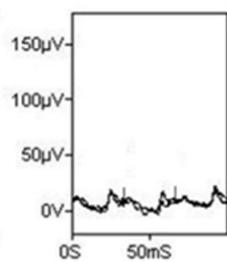
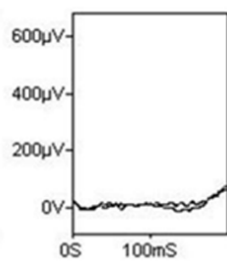
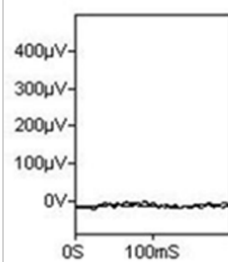
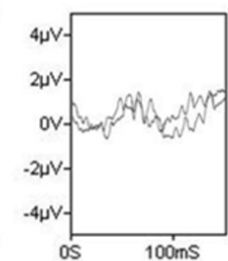
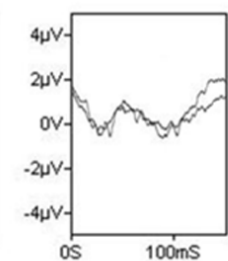
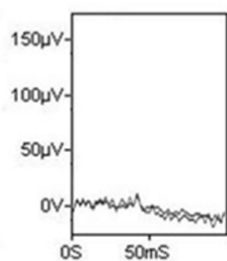
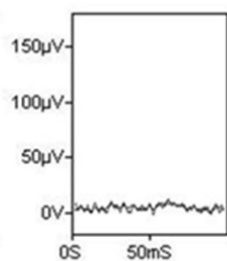
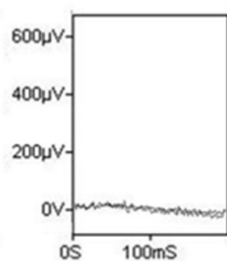
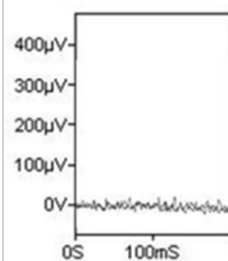
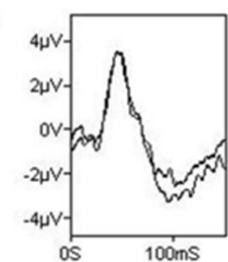
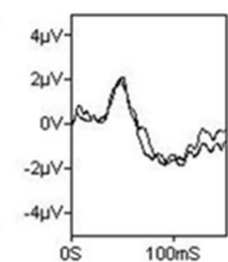
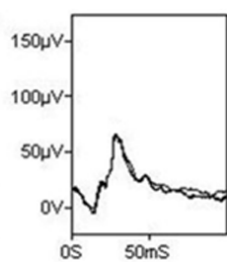
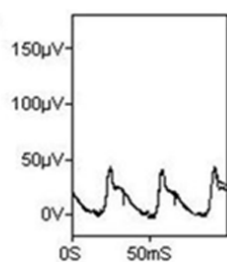
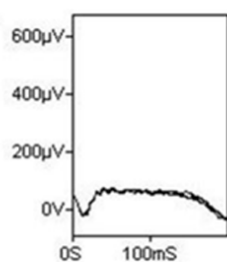
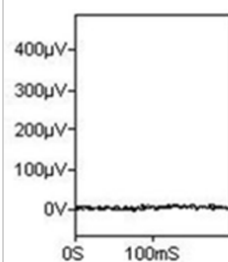
(C) Patient 5 (GC 635)



(D) Patient 8 (GC 21053)



(E) Patient 9

DA 0.01**DA 10.0****LA 3.0 30Hz****LA 3.0****PERG****LF PERG****Patient 4****Patient 5****Patient 7****Patient 8****Normal**