Quality of life predicts outcome of deep brain stimulation in early Parkinson disease

W.M. Michael Schuepbach, MD, Lisa Tonder, MS, Alfons Schnitzer, MD, PhD, Paul Krack, MD, PhD, Joern Rau, Andreas Hartmann, MD, PhD, Thomas D. Härlig, M.D., Fanny Pineau, PhD, Andrea Falk, MD, Laura Paschen, MD, Stephen Paschen, MD, Jens Volkmann, MD, PhD, Haidar S. Dafsari, MD, Michael T. Barbe, MD, PhD, Gereon R. Fink, MD, PhD, Andrea Kühn, MD, Andreas Kupsch, MD, PhD, Gerd-H. Schneider, MD, PhD, Eric Seigneuret, MD, Valerie Fraix, MD, Andrea Kistner, MSc, P. Patrick Chaynes, MD, PhD, Fabienne Ory-Magne, MD, Christine Brefel-Courbon, MD, PhD, Jan Vesper, MD, PhD, Lars Wojtecki, MD, PhD, Stéphane Derrey, MD, David Malžete, MD, PhD, Philippe Damier, MD, PhD, Pascal Derkinderen, MD, PhD, Friederike Sixel-Döring, MD, Claudia Trenkwalder, MD, Alireza Gharabaghi, MD, PhD, Tobias Wächter, MD, Daniel Weiss, MD, PhD, Marcus O. Pinsker, MD, PhD, Jean-Marie Regis, MD, PhD, Tatiana Vitjas, MD, PhD, Stéphane Thobois, MD, PhD, Patrick Mertens, MD, PhD, Karina Knudsen, MD, Carmen Schade-Brittinger, Jean-Luc Houeto, MD, PhD, Yves Agid, MD, PhD, Marie Vidalhiet, MD, PhD, Lars Timmermann, MD, PhD, and Günther Deuschl, MD, PhD, for the EARLYSTIM study group

Correspondence
Dr. Deuschl
g.deuschl@neurologie.uni-kiel.de

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Abstract
Objective
To investigate predictors for improvement of disease-specific quality of life (QOL) after deep brain stimulation (DBS) of the subthalamic nucleus (STN) for Parkinson disease (PD) with early motor complications.

Methods
We performed a secondary analysis of data from the previously published EARLYSTIM study, a prospective randomized trial comparing STN-DBS (n = 124) to best medical treatment (n = 127) after 2 years follow-up with disease-specific QOL (39-item Parkinson’s Disease Questionnaire summary index [PDQ-39-SI]) as the primary endpoint. Linear regression analyses of the baseline characteristics age, disease duration, duration of motor complications, and disease severity measured at baseline with the Unified Parkinson’s Disease Rating Scale (UPDRS) (UPDRS-III “off” and “on” medications, UPDRS-IV) were conducted to determine predictors of change in PDQ-39-SI.

Results
PDQ-39-SI at baseline was correlated to the change in PDQ-39-SI after 24 months in both treatment groups (p < 0.05). The higher the baseline score (worse QOL), the larger the improvement in QOL after 24 months. No correlation was found for any of the other baseline characteristics analyzed in either treatment group.

Conclusion
Impaired QOL as subjectively evaluated by the patient is the most important predictor of benefit in patients with PD and early motor complications, fulfilling objective gold standard inclusion criteria for STN-DBS. Our results prompt systematically including evaluation of disease-specific QOL when selecting patients with PD for STN-DBS.

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High-frequency deep brain stimulation (DBS) of the subthalamic nucleus (STN) is a powerful treatment in selected patients with Parkinson disease (PD) and levodopa-induced motor complications. The benefit of STN-DBS has first been shown in advanced PD with severe motor fluctuations and dyskinesia but more recently, improvement of quality of life (QOL) and motor function have been shown with STN-DBS at an earlier stage. The EARLYSTIM study addressed STN-DBS in patients with PD under 61 years of age who had a good (i.e., ≥50%) response to levodopa but had had motor complications for up to 3 years (mean 1.5 ± 0.8 SD years). Intentionally permissive inclusion criteria were chosen that allowed a rather broad population of patients with PD with early motor complications to be included. This was decided to enable recruitment of a large cohort and to build a study population from which one would be able to draw conclusions for a clinical population of a reasonably broad range.

This, however, resulted in a study population of patients with PD with a range from early mild complications to moderately severe and advanced motor complications close to those for the conventional indication for DBS. Therefore, the question came up whether the beneficial effect of DBS in the EARLYSTIM cohort was (mainly or only) driven by a subgroup of the entire population, i.e., the relatively advanced patients. Doubts were uttered by critics of the study whether patients with milder motor complications would benefit from DBS. Indeed, it is possible that the more advanced patients contributed more to the overall beneficial effect of DBS found in the study than patients with very mild and early motor complications.

We therefore performed subgroup analyses to understand the effects of DBS in function of different variables prone to be related to outcome of STN-DBS. In particular, the relative contributions of age, duration of disease, and severity of disease to the effect of DBS on QOL were analyzed.

### Methods

The EARLYSTIM study was a prospective randomized study comparing STN-DBS with best medical treatment (BMT) to BMT alone over 2 years’ follow-up with QOL measured with 39-item Parkinson’s Disease Questionnaire summary index (PDQ-39-SI) as the primary endpoint. The protocol and statistical plan of the main study are available at nejm.org/doi/suppl/10.1056/NEJMoai1205158/suppl_file/nejmoa1205158_protocol.pdf. Hypotheses of predicting factors for outcome were formulated before secondary analyses were carried out. Baseline characteristics, including age, disease duration, duration of motor complications (motor fluctuations and dyskinesia), severity of motor parkinsonian signs “off” and “on” medication as measured with the Unified Parkinson’s Disease Rating Scale (UPDRS) motor part (III), severity of motor complications (UPDRS-IV), levodopa response, and baseline QOL (PDQ-39-SI) were expected to contribute to the outcome of QOL. To control for contribution of cognition and mood to the outcome in QOL, the baseline ratings for the Mattis Dementia Rating Scale (MDRS), the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI), and the Montgomery-Åsberg Depression Rating Scale (MÅDRS) were also analyzed as potential predictors for change on QOL. Univariate linear regression analyses of these baseline characteristics vs the change in QOL (PDQ-39-SI) were conducted. p Values ≤0.05 were considered statistically significant and no adjustments were made for multiple comparisons. A multivariate linear regression analysis of the STN-DBS group was then performed including the factors with a p < 0.25 in the univariate analysis.

A post hoc subgroup analysis was performed for the correlation of baseline PDQ-39-SI with the change in PDQ-39-SI over the 2 years using 4 subgroups of baseline PDQ-39-SI (<15, 15–30, 30–45, >45).

### Data availability statement and protocol standards

The study protocol and statistical plan is available at nejm.org/doi/suppl/10.1056/NEJMoai1205158/suppl_file/nejmoa1205158_protocol.pdf. Data will not be available on the web. Researchers can submit proposals for collaborative studies. The study has been approved by the Kiel and Paris University ethics committees. The trial is registered at ClinicalTrials.gov number, NCT00354133.

### Results

The change in QOL over the 2 years correlated with the baseline value of the PDQ-39-SI in a regression model for each treatment group (STN-DBS p < 0.001, medical group p < 0.001). However, this effect was more pronounced among patients who were treated with STN-DBS than in patients in the medical control group (p = 0.0262 for interaction) (figure 1).

If baseline PDQ-39-SI was used to define categories of severity of impairment due to PD, patients with very mild impairment of QOL, i.e., PDQ-39-SI values under 15, as a group did not benefit from STN-DBS as compared to...
patients in the control group with best medical treatment alone. However, in this group, patients with a very favorable as well as unfavorable outcome in terms of PDQ-39-SI were found. For the other categories with PDQ-39-SI ratings >15 at baseline, STN-DBS resulted in better QOL than best medical treatment alone (figure 2). The change from baseline to 5, 12, and 24 months for each patient with a change at each point (n = 241/251) by treatment group is shown in figure 3.

The change of QOL over the study duration of 2 years was independent of age, duration of PD, and duration of motor complications (motor fluctuations, dyskinesia) at baseline in a regression model. This was the case when analyzed separately by treatment group as well as in a multiple regression model including allocation to the treatment group.

The change of QOL over the 2 years was also independent of the severity of parkinsonian motor signs in the condition

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**Figure 1** Correlation between 39-item Parkinson’s Disease Questionnaire summary index (PDQ-39-SI) at baseline and change to 24 months

The relation between PDQ-39-SI at baseline and the improvement PDQ-39-SI between baseline and 24 months is shown. The correlation is more pronounced for the deep brain stimulation (DBS) group than for the best medical treatment (BMT) group.

**Figure 2** 39-Item Parkinson’s Disease Questionnaire summary index (PDQ-39-SI) by baseline category

Four categories of PDQ-39-SI baseline values were formed: 0–15, 15–30, 30–45, and >45 points. Higher values on the PDQ-39 scale mean worse quality of life. The ordinate indicates the change of PDQ-39-SI over the 2 years of the EARLYSTIM study period; negative values mean worsening of quality of life, positive values mean improvement. BMT = best medical treatment (i.e., control group); DBS = deep brain stimulation of the subthalamic nucleus plus best medical treatment; n = number of patients in each group. * DBS vs BMT statistically significant (adjusted model-based p values <0.05).
“off” and “on” medications as measured with the UPDRS-III, and independent of the severity of levodopa-induced complications measured with the UPDRS-IV, as well as “off” time at baseline. This was the case when analyzed separately by treatment group as well as in a multiple regression model including allocation to the treatment group.

The levodopa response of the motor score (UPDRS III) at baseline was not predictive for the change of the QOL outcome between baseline and 24 months in the DBS-group or in the BMT control group.

Cognitive assessment at baseline with the MDRS was not predictive of change in QOL in either treatment group. Self-assessment of mood using the BDI at baseline did not predict change of the PDQ-39-SI after 2 years among patients in the BMT group. However, higher baseline ratings on the BDI correlated with larger improvement of QOL among patients with STN-DBS. The same was
observed for mood assessed by the examiner as rated with the MÅDRS in patients with STN-DBS. On the other hand, lower ratings on the MÅDRS correlated with better improvement of the PDQ-39-SI in patients with BMT.

The multivariate regression model in patients with STN-DBS included 4 baseline factors with $p < 0.25$ in the univariate analysis: PDQ-39-SI ($p < 0.0001$), BDI ($p < 0.001$), MÅDRS ($p = 0.018$), and UPDRS-III "off" medication ($p = 0.216$). Only the PDQ-39-SI remained significant ($p < 0.0001$) as a baseline predictor for change in QOL in the multivariate model.

Discussion

The EARLYSTIM cohort was intended to broadly represent the group of relatively young patients with PD and early motor complications as seen in daily practice. In such a cohort, the potential for improvement may be more modest than in more advanced PD and patients' expectations are high for STN-DBS. Weighing surgery against BMT, knowledge about predictive factors for the improvement of QOL with either treatment is important. Moreover, in view of negative results of STN-DBS in patients with PD before the onset of motor complications, STN-DBS at a very early stage has been challenged, as the relative contributions of age, disease duration, and duration of presence of motor complications have so far not been disentangled.

QOL at baseline was positively correlated with the improvement of the PDQ-39-SI. This was true for both treatment groups, i.e., patients with worse QOL at baseline improved more over the 2 years' study period. This was, however, very much more pronounced among patients with STN-DBS than with BMT alone. Baseline impairment of QOL is therefore a reasonable aspect to consider for the decision to treat with STN-DBS. We wondered if there was a floor effect for the benefit from STN-DBS with a minimal PD-related suffering required to have a potential advantage from the intervention. Among patients with PDQ-39-SI ratings under 15, there was as a group no difference for the outcome in QOL between the treatment groups, and patients with STN-DBS even tended to have worse average outcomes. However, this post hoc secondary analysis must be taken with reserve, especially since the subgroup with PDQ-39-SI ratings under 15 was very small and some individuals in this group had an excellent improvement of QOL with STN-DBS and would wrongly have been barred from the beneficial treatment if a strict cutoff level for the indication of STN-DBS had been applied. In patients with very low baseline ratings on the PDQ-39-SI, the natural progression of impairment of QOL may outweigh the improvement achieved by STN-DBS. On the other hand, some patients with very modest impairment of their QOL seem to have less to gain from STN-DBS. If they choose to undergo neurosurgery, they may do it for the wrong reasons and have expectations that are unrealistic. Therefore they may end up disappointed with the result and show worse ratings on the PDQ-39-SI. Especially thorough assessment of the reasons to undergo neurosurgery and the expectations from STN-DBS are therefore needed if the impairment of QOL is very modest. For all other categories with higher PDQ-39-SI at baseline, STN-DBS resulted in improved QOL as compared to best medical treatment alone.

In contrast to the strong prediction of improvement of QOL by baseline PDQ-39-SI ratings, the change of QOL after 2 years is independent from age, disease duration, duration of motor complications, and severity of motor signs and motor complications at baseline. This finding differs from the observation in more advanced PD in patients with a higher age after 5–6 months where baseline cumulative daily “off” time was a predictor for improvement of the PDQ-39-SI and younger age was associated with better improvement of the PDQ-8. This difference could be partly related to the longer observation period of 2 years, the different patient profile (younger age, shorter disease duration at surgery) in the EARLYSTIM study, and to a lower variance as a result of the narrower inclusion criteria.

The discrepancy between health-related QOL and motor disease severity at baseline as predictors for the outcome of QOL can be explained by the individual amount of suffering attributed to a given motor impairment. Objective motor improvement does not equal subjective improvement of overall disease-specific QOL. Moreover, the PDQ-39 not only assesses motor aspects of PD, but affective, behavioral, cognitive, nonmotor, and psychosocial issues are also weighed with this instrument. It is known that motor signs are not the most important determinant of QOL in patients with PD. Indeed, nonmotor aspects also strongly influence the PDQ-39-SI and thus contribute decisively to the changes of QOL after STN-DBS. This is likely the reason why the l-dopa response of the UPDRS motor score at baseline is predictive for the motor outcome but not necessarily for the QOL outcome after 2 years. It has been shown that patients without dementia with borderline preoperative cognitive scores improve less in QOL than those with better cognitive ratings. However, only patients without dementia without severe depression were included in the EARLYSTIM study. It is therefore not surprising that baseline assessments of cognition (MDRS) and mood (BDI, MÅDRS) were not predictive for outcome. The association of higher ratings on the depression scales with better improvement of QOL among STN-DBS patients may indicate that these patients have a potential for nonmotor improvement to gain from surgery. However, the association was present only in univariate analyses and lost in the multivariate model, in which the PDQ-39-SI baseline score dominated all other factors.

An important limitation of our findings regarding generalization is the highly selected patient population. Indeed, the EARLYSTIM cohort consisted of young patients under 61
with a levodopa response of at least 50% as an inclusion criterion. STN-DBS has been established as a treatment for motor symptoms in advanced PD.\textsuperscript{1,2,21–24} Importantly, the response of motor parkinsonian signs to levodopa is an established predictor of the motor outcome of STN-DBS.\textsuperscript{16,25} Parkinsonism that does not respond to L-dopa will not benefit from STN-DBS.\textsuperscript{26} In other words, it is not the severity of the motor signs that predicts motor outcome, but their response to L-dopa. In the present study, levodopa response at baseline was not a predictor of improvement in QOL. Part of the explanation may be related to the fact that the same objective motor sign will not lead to the same subjective suffering, and in the same way improvement of motor symptoms that do not bother a patient will not lead to improvement in QOL, which by definition is subjective. A ceiling effect may also partly explain that no such association was found among our patients with STN-DBS, given the fact that levodopa response of at least 50% was defined as an inclusion criterion and that the operated patients in the EARLYSTIM study had an excellent average baseline levodopa response of 63.5% ± 16.2%. Therefore, poor QOL in patients with PD in the absence of L-dopa-responsive motor symptoms should not be regarded as an indication for surgery.

The relation between age, disease duration, and outcome may be different in older patients and in patients with a less pronounced response to levodopa. Better outcome of STN-DBS has been suggested among younger patients with shorter disease duration,\textsuperscript{25} and outcome among older patients has been reported as unfavorable.\textsuperscript{27} However, these patients were operated at a later stage for severe advanced PD. Our data cannot answer the question whether STN-DBS at an earlier stage will remain advantageous over BMT beyond the 2 years of the duration of the EARLYSTIM study. Uncontrolled open long-term observations on patients with STN-DBS, however, show benefits that last up to a decade.\textsuperscript{28}

The lack of correlations of age, disease duration, and disease severity with the change of QOL after STN-DBS leaves only baseline ratings of the PDQ-39-SI as a predictor for change of QOL. All patient groups above 15 points of PDQ-39-SI at baseline have on average a clinically meaningful improvement of their QOL (figure 2), which has been estimated to be ≥1.6 points.\textsuperscript{29} The majority of these patients is in the range of PDQ-39-SI >15 (n = 114). We therefore consider it very unlikely that the overall favorable outcome of STN-DBS in the EARLYSTIM study has been driven by only a subgroup of patients corresponding to the traditional indication with severe long-standing advanced complicated PD. The major and decisive explanation of the improvement of QOL comes from STN-DBS, i.e., the treatment itself across a broad range of patient age and clinical profiles within the EARLYSTIM inclusion criteria.

STN-DBS improves QOL in patients with PD and early motor complications who fulfill the EARLYSTIM inclusion criteria independently of age, disease duration, and disease severity. The subjective individual suffering as measured with the PDQ-39-SI should be taken into account as a predictive factor for outcome when selecting patients with early motor complications for STN-DBS.

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### Appendix 1 Authors

| Name                      | Location                                                                 | Role            | Contribution                                                                 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| W.M. Michael Schuepbach,  | Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris, Institut National de Santé et en  | Author          | Designed and conceptualized study, major role in acquisition of data, drafted the first version of the manuscript |
| MD                        | Recherche Médicale, Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Epinière, Centre  |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | d’Investigation Clinique 1422, Département de Neurologie, Hôpital Pitié- |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | Salpêtrière, Paris, France; Institute of Neurology, Konolfingen, Switzerland; Department of Neurology, University Hospital Bern and University of Bern, Switzerland |                 |                                                                             |
| Lisa Tonder               | Medtronic, Minneapolis, MN                                               | Author          | Analysis or interpretation of the data                                      |
| Alfons Schnitzler,        | Institute of Clinical Neuroscience & Medical Psychology and Department  | Author          | Designed and conceptualized study, major role in acquisition of data, drafted the manuscript for intellectual content |
| MD, PhD                   | of Neurology, Medical Faculty, Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Germany |                 |                                                                             |
| Paul Krack, MD, PhD       | Movement Disorder Unit, Neurology, CHU Grenoble Alpes; Université de | Author          | Designed and conceptualized study, major role in acquisition of data, drafted the manuscript for intellectual content |
|                           | Grenoble Alpes, Grenoble Institut des Neurosciences, GIN, and Inserm, U1216, France; Department of Clinical Neurosciences (Neurology), Faculty of Medicine, University of Geneva, Switzerland |                 |                                                                             |
| Joern Rau                 | Coordinating Center for clinical trials of the Philipp’s University of  | Author          | Designed and conceptualized study, analysis or interpretation of the data, drafted the manuscript for intellectual content |
|                           | Marburg, Germany                                                         |                 |                                                                             |
| Andreas Hartmann, MD, PhD | Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris, Institut National de Santé et en | Author          | Major role in acquisition of data                                          |
|                           | Recherche Médicale, Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Epinière, Centre |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | d’Investigation Clinique 1422, Département de Neurologie, Hôpital Pitié- |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | Salpêtrière, Paris, France                                               |                 |                                                                             |
| Thomas D. Hälbig, MD      | Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris, Institut National de Santé et en  | Author          | Major role in acquisition of data                                          |
|                           | Recherche Médicale, Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Epinière, Centre |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | d’Investigation Clinique 1422, Département de Neurologie, Hôpital Pitié- |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | Salpêtrière, Paris, France                                               |                 |                                                                             |
| Fanny Pineau, PhD         | Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris, Institut National de Santé et en | Author          | Major role in acquisition of data                                          |
|                           | Recherche Médicale, Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Epinière, Centre |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | d’Investigation Clinique 1422, Département de Neurologie, Hôpital Pitié- |                 |                                                                             |
|                           | Salpêtrière, Paris, France                                               |                 |                                                                             |
| Andrea Falk, MD           | Neurochirurgische Klinik im Neurozentrum, Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, Germany | Author          | Major role in acquisition of data                                          |

### Appendix 1 (continued)

| Name                      | Location                                                                 | Role            | Contribution                                                                 |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Laura Paschen, MD         | Neurologische Klinik im Neurozentrum, Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, Germany | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Stephen Paschen, MD       | Neurologische Klinik im Neurozentrum, Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, Germany | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Jens Volkmann, MD, PhD    | Neurologische Klinik im Neurozentrum, Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, Germany | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Haidar S. Dafsari, MD     | Department of Neurology, University Hospital Cologne, Germany            | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Michael T. Berbe, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, University Hospital Cologne, Germany            | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Gereon R. Fink, MD, PhD   | Department of Neurology, University Hospital Cologne; Research Centre Jülich, INM-3, Germany | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Andrea Kühn, MD           | Klinik für Neurologie, Campus Virchow, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Andreas Kupsch, MD, PhD   | Klinik für Neurologie, Campus Virchow, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany; Praxis Kupsch | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Gerd-H. Schneider, MD, PhD| Klinik für Neurochirurgie, Campus Virchow, Charité-Universitätsmedizin Berlin, Germany | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Eric Seigneuret, MD       | Service de Neurochirurgie, Hôpital Michallon, Centre Hospitalo-Universitaire, Grenoble, France | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Valerie Fraix, MD         | Grenoble Institut des Neurosciences GIN, INSERM U1216, Université Grenoble Alpes; Service de Neurologie, Hôpital Michallon, Centre Hospitalo-Universitaire, Grenoble, France | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Andrea Kistner, MSc       | Grenoble Institut des Neurosciences GIN, INSERM U1216, Université Grenoble Alpes, France | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| P. Patrick Chaynes, MD, PhD| Department of Neurosurgery, University Hospital of Toulouse, France       | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Fabienne Ory-Magne, MD    | Department of Neurology, University Hospital of Toulouse; ToNIC, Toulouse Neuroimaging Center, University of Toulouse, Inserm, UPS, France | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Christine Brefel Courbon, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, University Hospital of Toulouse; Department of Neurology, Department of Clinical Pharmacology, University Hospital of Toulouse; ToNIC, Toulouse Neuroimaging Center, University of Toulouse, Inserm, UPS, France | Author          | Major role in the acquisition of data                                      |
| Name                  | Location                                                                 | Role                | Contribution                                                                                   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jan Vesper, MD, PhD   | Department of Neurosurgery, Universitätsklinikum Düsseldorf, Germany      | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Lars Wojtecki, MD, PhD| Institute of Clinical Neuroscience & Medical Psychology and Department of Neurology, Medical Faculty, Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Germany | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Stéphane Derrey, MD   | Department of Neurosurgery, Rouen University Hospital and University of Rouen, France | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| David Malète, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Rouen University Hospital and University of Rouen; INSERM U1239, Laboratory of Neuronal and Neuroendocrine Differentiation and Communication, Mont-Saint-Aignan, France | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Philippe Damier, MD, PhD | Service de Neurologie, Hôpital Laennec, CHU Nantes, France                | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Pascal Derkinderen, MD, PhD | Service de Neurologie, Hôpital Laennec, CHU Nantes, France                | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Friderike Sixel-Döring, MD | Paracelsus-Elena-Klinik Kassel, Germany                                   | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Claudia Trenkwalder, MD, PhD | Paracelsus-Elena-Klinik Kassel, Germany; Department of Neurosurgery, University Medical Center Göttingen, Germany | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Alineza Gharabaghi, MD, PhD | Division of Functional and Restorative Neurosurgery and Centre for Integrative Neuroscience, Tübingen, Germany | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Tobias Wächter, MD    | Abteilung für Neurologie, Reha-Zentrum Bad Gogging, Passauer Wolf, Germany | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Daniel Weiss, MD, PhD  | Department for Neurodegenerative Diseases and Hertie Institute for Clinical Brain Research, University of Tübingen, Germany | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Marcus O. Pinsker, MD, PhD | Division of Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery, University Medical Center Freiburg, Germany | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Jean-Marie Regis, MD, PhD | Department of Functional and Stereotactic Neurosurgery and Radiosurgery, Timone University Hospital, INSERM, Marseille, France | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Tatiana Witjas, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Timone University Hospital, UMR 7289, CNRS Marseille, France | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Stephane Thoibois, MD, PhD | Institut des Sciences Cognitives Marc Jeannerod, CNRS, UMR 5229, Université de Lyon; Centre Expert Parkinson, Service de Neurologie C, Hôpital Neurologique Pierre Wertheimer, Hospices Civils de Lyon, Bron, France | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Patrick Mertens, MD, PhD | Department of Neurosurgery, University Hospital of Neurology and Neurosurgery, Hospices Civils de Lyon, Université de Lyon, France | Author              | Major role in the acquisition of data                                                            |
| Karina Knudsen, MD     | Neurologische Klinik im Neurozentrum, Christian-Albrechts-Universität Kiel, Germany | Author              | Designed and conceptualized study, major role in the acquisition of data                          |
| Carmen Schade-Brittinger | Coordinating Center for Clinical trials of the Philipps University of Marburg, Germany | Author              | Designed and conceptualized study, revised the manuscript for intellectual content               |
| Jean-Luc Houeto, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, INSERM-1402, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU) de Poitiers; University of Poitiers, France | Author              | Designed and conceptualized study, major role in the acquisition of data                          |
| Yves Agid, MD, PhD     | Département de Neurologie, Centre d’Investigation Clinique 1422, Hôpital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris, Institut National de Santé et en Recherche Médicale, Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Epinière, Paris, France | Author              | Design and conceptualized study, major role in the acquisition of data                            |
| Marie Vidalhêt, MD, PhD | Département de Neurologie, Centre d’Investigation Clinique 1422, Hôpital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Assistance Publique Hôpitaux de Paris, Institut National de Santé et en Recherche Médicale, Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Epinière, Paris, France | Author              | Design and conceptualized study, major role in the acquisition of data, drafted the manuscript for intellectual content |
## Appendix 2 Coinvestigators

| Name                  | Location                                                                 | Role             | Contribution                                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Virginie Czernecki, PhD | Federation of Neurology, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France        | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Helke Hesekamp, MD    | Federation of Neurology, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France        | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Niklaus Meier, MD     | Federation of Neurology, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France        | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Velina Negovanska, PhD | Federation of Neurology, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France        | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Marie-Laure Welter, MD, PhD | Federation of Neurology, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Jean-Christophe Corvol, MD, PhD | Federation of Neurology, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Philippe Cornu, MD, PhD | Department of Neurosurgery, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France  | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Soledad Navarro, MD   | Department of Neurosurgery, Hospital Pitié-Salpêtrière, Paris, France    | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Bettina Möller        | Department of Neurology, Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany   | Psychologist     | Psychological assessments, data collection        |
| Adelheid Nebel        | Department of Neurology, Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany   | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Karsten Witt, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany   | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Jan Raethjen, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany   | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |

## Appendix 2 (continued)

| Name                  | Location                                                                 | Role             | Contribution                                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Maximilian Mehdorn, MD, PhD | Department of Neurosurgery, Christian-Albrechts-University, Kiel, Germany | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Ingo G. Meister, MD, PhD | Department of Psychiatry, University Hospital, Cologne, Germany          | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Jens Kuhn, MD, PhD    | Department of Psychiatry, University Hospital, Cologne, Germany          | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Josef Kessler, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, University Hospital, Cologne, Germany            | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Doreen Gruber         | Department of Neurology, Charité, University Berlin, Germany               | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Katharina Faust, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Charité, University Berlin, Germany              | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Stephan Chabardes, MD | Department of Neurosurgery, Hospital Michallon, University Grenoble, France | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Pierre Pollak, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology and Psychiatry, University Grenoble, France       | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Oliver Rascol, MD, PhD | Department of Pharmacology, University Hospital, Toulouse, France         | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Christophe Arbus      | Department of Psychiatry, University Hospital, Toulouse, France            | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Lola Danet            | Department of Neurology, University Hospital, Toulouse, France             | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Romain Lefaucheur     | Department of Neurology, Rouen University Hospital and University of Rouen, France | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
| Isabelle Benatru      | Department of Neurology, University of Poitiers, France                   | Site investigator | Data collection                                  |
### Appendix 2 (continued)

| Name                  | Location                                                                 | Role            | Contribution                                                                 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Olivier Colin         | Department of Neurology, University of Poitiers, France                   | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Solene Ansquer        | Department of Neurophysiology, University of Poitiers, France             | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Stefan J. Groiss      | Department of Neurology, Institute of Clinical Neuroscience and Medical Psychology, Heinrich-Heine-University, Dusseldorf, Germany | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Saskia Elben, PhD     | Department of Neurology, Institute of Clinical Neuroscience and Medical Psychology, Heinrich-Heine-University, Dusseldorf, Germany | Psychologist    | Data collection, psychological testing                                      |
| Christian Hartmann, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Institute of Clinical Neuroscience and Medical Psychology, Heinrich-Heine-University, Dusseldorf, Germany | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Martin Südmeyer, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Institute of Clinical Neuroscience and Medical Psychology, Heinrich-Heine-University, Dusseldorf, Germany | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Florian Amtage, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, University Hospital Freiburg, Germany         | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Rejko Krueger, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, University of Tübingen, Germany                  | Site investigator| Data collection, design and conceptualization of genetic substudy           |
| Severine Ledily       | Department of Neurology, Hospital Laennec, University Nantes, France     | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Anne Sauvaget         | Department of Psychiatry, Hospital Laennec, University Nantes, France    | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |

### Appendix 2 (continued)

| Name                  | Location                                                                 | Role            | Contribution                                                                 |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wenke Schmidt         | Paracelsus-Elena-Klinik, Kassel, Germany                                  | Psychologist    | Psychological assessments, data collection                                  |
| Alexandro Eusebio, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Hospital Timone, Marseille, France             | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Jean Philippe Azulay, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Hospital Timone, Marseille, France             | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Gustavo Polo, PhD     | Department of Neurosurgery, University Lyon 1, France                    | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Serge Pinto, PhD      | Department of Laboratory Word and Language, University Aix-Marseille, France | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Johannes Levin, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, University Munich-Großhadern, Munich, Germany | Site investigator| Data collection                                                             |
| Wolfgang H Gertel, MD, PhD | Department of Neurology, Philips University, Marburg, Germany        | BMT committee   | Quality management of the BMT                                               |

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Quality of life predicts outcome of deep brain stimulation in early Parkinson disease
W.M. Michael Schuepbach, Lisa Tonder, Alfons Schnitzler, et al.
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DOI 10.1212/WNL.0000000000007037

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Disputes & Debates: Editors’ Choice

Steven Galetta, MD, FAAN, Section Editor

Editors’ note: Practice guideline update recommendations summary: Disorders of consciousness: Report of the Guideline Development, Dissemination, and Implementation Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology; the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine; and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

In their American Academy of Neurology (AAN) practice parameter, Giacino et al. provided a thorough review of the available evidence pertaining to the care of patients with impaired consciousness. The expert panel provided level of recommendations (LORs) regarding the discussion of long-term care needs, pain management strategies, and techniques for neuroprognostication in patients with disorders of consciousness. In response to these consensus recommendations, Phan et al. highlight 1 potential limitation of the LOR classification system that was used. Historically, the highest LOR (level A) was afforded only to recommendations based on 1 or more randomized clinical trials. However, this requirement was amended by the Institute of Medicine in 2011 as well as the 2011 AAN Clinical Guideline Practice Manual, as the authors emphasize in their response. After 2011, a level A recommendation was permitted as long as there was strong and consistent related evidence and inferences could be drawn. Therefore, a higher LOR could be assigned to recommendations with less explicit substantiation from large randomized clinical trials. By using this classification schema, some recommendations may be generalized to patients who are likely to benefit from such guidance.

James E. Siegler III, MD, and Steven Galetta, MD
Neurology® 2019;92:1163. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000007660

Reader response: Practice guideline update recommendations summary: Disorders of consciousness: Report of the Guideline Development, Dissemination, and Implementation Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology; the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine; and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Thanh G. Phan (Clayton, Australia), Udaya Seneviratne (Clayton, Australia), and Henry Ma (Clayton, Australia)
Neurology® 2019;92:1163–1164. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000007668

We read with interest the disorders of consciousness guideline1 but found issues with the recommendations. Some of the recommendations are classified as level A (recommendations 3, 9, and 11). For example, “When prognosis is poor, long-term care must be discussed (level A)….”1 The references cited did not come from a randomized control trial. Typically, level A is based on one or more randomized control trial and is prefaced by a statement about the class of evidence. We cannot find references to any trials on which these recommendations were made.1,2 Can the authors reassess the use of the level of recommendation in this guideline?
Author response: Practice guideline update recommendations summary: Disorders of consciousness: Report of the Guideline Development, Dissemination, and Implementation Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology; the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine; and the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research

Melissa J. Armstrong (Gainesville, FL), Joseph T. Giacino (Boston), Douglas I. Katz (Braintree, MA), Nicholas D. Schiff (New York), John Whyte (Elkins Park, PA), Eric J. Ashman (Kalamazoo, MI), Stephen Ashwal (Loma Linda, CA), Richard Barbano (Rochester, NY), Flora M. Hammond (Indianapolis), Steven Laureys (Liège, Belgium), Geoffrey S.F. Ling (Baltimore), Risa Nakase-Richardson (Tampa, FL), Ronald T. Seel (Richmond, VA), Stuart Yablon (Jackson, MS), Thomas S.D. Getchius (Washington, DC), and Gary S. Gronseth (Kansas City, KS)

American Academy of Neurology (AAN) guidelines comply with the AAN Institute Board-approved guideline methodology referenced within the systematic review/guideline. Compliance is ensured by a methodologist working on each project and multiple rounds of AAN Guideline Development, Dissemination, and Implementation Subcommittee review. We believe that Phan et al. are referencing the 2004 recommendation methodology. The disorders of consciousness guideline used the 2011 AAN guideline manual, as amended, based on 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) standards for evidence-based guidelines. In this process, recommendations are based not only on a systematic review of the evidence but also on strongly related evidence, principles of care, and inferences. The level of obligation for each recommendation is determined by the strength of these premises and a risk–benefit assessment, with adjustments based on outcome importance, patient preference variability, feasibility/availability, and patient costs. Consensus is determined by a modified Delphi voting process in accordance with prespecified rules, as described in the systematic review. This IOM-compliant approach improves recommendation usability. The modified Delphi tables and the premise types for each recommendation rationale are available in the online appendices, NPub.org/m5ii8i ("rationale profiles" for recommendations 3, 9, and 11 are on pages 190, 204, and 206, respectively).

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Editors’ note: Clinical Reasoning: A 54-year-old woman with confusion and visual disturbances

Rossi et al. presented the unusual case of a 54-year-old woman with cirrhosis who developed oculomotor apraxia, optic ataxia, impaired smooth pursuit, and horizontal nystagmus in all directions of gaze. The neuroimaging and electrographic diagnosis was nonconvulsive status epilepticus resulting in Bálint syndrome. Dr. Pollak also suspects an epileptic origin of the horizontal, alternating nystagmus pattern, given the bilateral MRI and EEG findings. However, Dr. Pollak notes that a normal optokinetic nystagmus would be unusual during seizure activity. Rossi et al. attribute this to the fluctuating nature of the patient’s condition and the intermittent epileptiform activity on EEG. Resolution of the cortical diffusion abnormalities on MRI would also have supported seizures as the cause of the patient’s symptoms, as Dr. Pollak writes. Unfortunately, this could not be confirmed as the patient was lost to follow-up.

James E. Siegler III, MD, and Steven Galetta, MD
Neurology® 2019;92:1165. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000007671

Reader response: Clinical Reasoning: A 54-year-old woman with confusion and visual disturbances

Lea Pollak (Ness Ziona, Israel)
Neurology® 2019;92:1165. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000007670

In the Resident & Fellow Clinical Reasoning paper by Rossi et al.,1 the authors described an unusual case of Bálint syndrome caused by focal nonconvulsive status epilepticus in a patient with cirrhosis and hyponatremia. I am curious about the nature of the clinical finding: “…horizontal nystagmus in all directions including on primary gaze.”¹

Horizontal nystagmus in all directions localizes to the brainstem/cerebellum; however, in this case,¹ the lesions were parieto-occipital. Hyponatremia, if accompanied by hypomagnesemia, would cause a downbeat nystagmus. Could the nystagmus thus be an epileptic nystagmus of cortical origin? The bilaterality of the epileptic foci might explain the bilateral direction of the nystagmus. The authors describe an intermittent eye deviation on video during EEG recording; the mechanism is, therefore, probably due to epileptic alternative eye deviation with quick corrective saccades. It would be interesting to know the direction of the nystagmus, since this may elucidate whether the underlying activated mechanism of the eye deviations was saccadic or pursuit. Furthermore, the finding of a normal optokinetic nystagmus in Bálint syndrome and during seizures is mostly unusual. Also, can the authors please comment on the radiologic follow-up of this patient as the parieto-occipital T2 hyperintensities should resolve with time if attributed to seizure activity?

1. Rossi KC, Brandstätter R, Fields MC, Leong J, Shin S. Clinical Reasoning: a 54-year-old woman with confusion and visual disturbances. Neurology 2018;91:363–367.

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Author disclosures are available upon request (journal@neurology.org).
Author response: Clinical Reasoning: A 54-year-old woman with confusion and visual disturbances

Kyle C. Rossi (New York), Rachel Brandstadter (New York), Madeline C. Fields (New York), and Susan Shin (New York)

Neurology® 2019;92:1166. doi:10.1212/WNL.0000000000007672

We thank Dr. Pollak for the thoughtful comments on our article.1 The nature of the nystagmus was variable over the clinical course. Our earliest notes described direction-changing horizontal gaze-evoked nystagmus on left and right end gaze and primary gaze. The mechanism of epileptic nystagmus is poorly understood with most available literature being from case reports, often reporting the fast phase of nystagmus away from the seizure focus.2–4 Here, the bilateral foci could explain the direction changing nature of the nystagmus. Of note, the case was confounded by metabolic derangements, potentially contributing to brainstem dysfunction and eye movement abnormalities. Although epileptic nystagmus is possible, it is difficult to conclude with certainty.

The intact optokinetic nystagmus (OKN) reflex could be related to the fluctuating nature of the symptoms given an epileptic origin as opposed to a fixed structural origin. Additionally, Baloh et al.5 reported on the structural pathways involved in the OKN reflex, suggesting a complicated 2-pathway mechanism and showing that many parietal lesions do not obliterate all parts of the OKN response uniformly.

Regarding follow-up imaging, the patient was unfortunately lost to follow-up from a neurology perspective; the plan for follow-up imaging was not completed at our institution.

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3. Ma Y, Wang J, Li D, Lang S. Two types of isolated epileptic nystagmus: case report. Int J Clin Exp Med 2015;8:13500–13507.
4. Bhai S, Malik AN, Bakhadirov K, Prasad S. Alternating ictal and postictal nystagmus. Neurol Clin Pract 2014;4:522–523.
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Quality of life predicts outcome of deep brain stimulation in early Parkinson disease

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In the article “Quality of life predicts outcome of deep brain stimulation in early Parkinson disease” by Schuepbach et al.,1 published online ahead of print on February 8, 2019, Dr. Hälbig’s name should have included a middle initial: Thomas D. Hälbig. The corrected name appears in the March 5 issue. The editorial office regrets the error.

Reference
1. Schuepbach WMM, Tonder L, Schnüttler A, et al. Quality of life predicts outcome of deep brain stimulation in early Parkinson disease. Neurology 2019;92-e1109-e1120.