

Joint Management of Cataract Surgery by Ophthalmologists and Optometrists

Jay C. Erie, MD,¹ David O. Hodge, MS,² Michael A. Mahr, MD¹

Purpose: To estimate the rate and geographic variation of cataract surgery that is managed jointly by ophthalmologists and optometrists in aging Americans.

Design: Database study.

Participants: United States fee-for-service (FFS) Medicare Part B beneficiaries and their providers.

Methods: Medicare Provider Utilization and Payment Data furnished by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid were used to identify cataract surgery claims among FFS Medicare Part B beneficiaries in all 50 states and the District of Columbia in 2012 and 2013. Payments and joint management rates of cataract surgery by ophthalmologists and optometrists were calculated for each United States state. Geographic variations were evaluated by using the extremal quotient and coefficient of variation (CV).

Main Outcome Measures: Medicare allowed payments for cataract surgery (Current Procedural Terminology codes 66982 and 66984) and number of unique FFS Medicare Part B beneficiaries undergoing cataract surgery.

Results: The overall national rate of joint management of cataract surgery by ophthalmologists and optometrists among FFS Medicare Part B beneficiaries was 10.9% (range by state, 0%–75%) in 2012 and 11.1% (range by state, 0%–63%) in 2013. In 2013, the mean extremal quotient was 67 and the CV was 82.2, demonstrating very high variation in joint management between states. The Medicare allowed payment to optometrists in the joint management of cataract surgery was 2.1% of the total Medicare allowed payments for cataract surgery codes in 2012 and 2013. Twenty percent and 24% of all Medicare-participating optometrists submitted 10 or more Medicare claims in the joint management of cataract surgery in 2012 and 2013, respectively.

Conclusions: The overall rate of joint management of cataract surgery by ophthalmologists and optometrists among Medicare beneficiaries was 10.9% in 2012 and 11.1% in 2013. Very high geographic variation was documented, with joint management rates ranging from 0% to 63% across states in 2013. *Ophthalmology* 2016;123:505–513 © 2016 by the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

Over the past several decades, the field of optometry has succeeded in expanding its scope of practice by legislating for the rights to prescribe therapeutic medications and, in some states, to include laser surgery. The expanded optometric scope of practice has led, in some instances, to management arrangements in which the ophthalmologist surgeon and the optometrist share jointly in the management of patients who have undergone cataract surgery. However, the issue of co-management of cataract surgery by ophthalmologists and optometrists remains delicate and complex.

The American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery jointly published position papers offering guidance to ophthalmologists.^{1–3} The first position paper, issued in 2000² and applicable in 2012 and 2013, took a firm stance against routine co-management, especially if it was motivated predominantly by financial factors. The position paper identified criteria that needed to be fulfilled before co-management is instituted, including, in part, that co-management be the result of what is best for the patient and that the ophthalmic surgeon has primary responsibility

for postoperative care. In September 2015, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery issued an updated joint position paper that did not preclude co-management in certain circumstances if co-management arrangements followed revised criteria laid out in the updated joint position paper.³

Peer-reviewed^{4,5} and commercial, non-peer-reviewed^{6–8} estimates of practice patterns are available. However, estimates of joint management rates of cataract surgery by ophthalmologists and optometrists are relatively few.^{7,9,10} In an effort to increase the transparency of practice variation and physician use, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) publically released 2012 and 2013 Medicare claims data detailing the volume and nature of medical services provided by United States healthcare workers and how much they are paid under Medicare Part B Fee-for-Service (FFS).¹¹ By using these publicly accessible Medicare databases, our study's aim was to estimate the rate and geographic variation of cataract surgery that is managed jointly by ophthalmologists and optometrists among FFS Medicare Part B beneficiaries in 2012 and 2013.

Table 1. Fee-for-Service Medicare-Allowed Cataract Surgery Payments and Fee-for-Service Medicare Beneficiaries Undergoing Cataract Surgery* in 2012 and 2013 by Provider State and by Ophthalmology and Optometry

State	Fee-for-Service Medicare Allowed Cataract Surgery Payments, \$ (%)				Fee-for-Service Medicare Cataract Surgery Beneficiaries, No. (%)*			
	2012		2013		2012		2013	
	Ophthalmology	Optometry	Ophthalmology	Optometry	Ophthalmology-Only Managed	Jointly Managed [†]	Ophthalmology-Only Managed	Jointly Managed [†]
AL	22 505 728 (93.6)	1 527 651 (6.4)	20 463 066 (93.6)	1 410 582 (6.4)	15 902 (69.9)	7138 (31)	16 315 (68.6)	7469 (31.4)
AK	1 765 531 (95.5)	83 177 (0.5)	1 570 971 (93.6)	107 279 (6.4)	966 (77.8)	275 (22.2)	986 (72.9)	367 (27.1)
AR	16 071 177 (96.4)	594 140 (3.6)	14 204 458 (95.9)	610 613 (4.1)	14 604 (82.7)	3018 (17.3)	14 710 (80.6)	3532 (19.4)
AZ	26 764 446 (99.1)	242 892 (0.9)	24 620 468 (99.0)	239 811 (1.0)	23 182 (95.3)	1130 (4.7)	23 970 (95.1)	1245 (4.9)
CA	107 286 726 (99.4)	595 066 (0.6)	99 118 377 (99.5)	486 765 (0.5)	95 097 (97.1)	2840 (2.9)	99 230 (97.5)	2536 (2.5)
CO	16 577 209 (98.3)	292 659 (1.7)	15 036 455 (97.7)	353 946 (2.3)	14 583 (91.3)	1384 (8.7)	14 367 (88.7)	1824 (11.3)
CT	16 432 529 (99.9)	15 080 (0.1)	14 123 958 (99.7)	37 302 (0.3)	13 572 (99.5)	62 (0.5)	13 117 (98.8)	161 (1.2)
DE	6 139 418 (98.6)	86 143 (1.4)	5 207 939 (98.5)	76 935 (1.5)	4936 (93.5)	329 (6.5)	4934 (92.5)	402 (7.5)
FL	101 806 835 (98.7)	1 349 930 (1.3)	87 883 496 (98.8)	1 098 969 (1.2)	78 420 (93.2)	5715 (6.8)	77 872 (93.6)	5349 (6.4)
GA	37 537 373 (97.7)	885 870 (2.3)	10 637 325 (97.2)	903 192 (2.8)	30 407 (88.6)	3925 (11.4)	31 197 (87.1)	4638 (12.9)
HI	4 456 619 (99.8)	8873 (0.2)	4 247 514 (99.8)	8223 (0.2)	4102 (98.2)	76 (1.8)	4203 (99.1)	40 (0.9)
ID	4 708 373 (93.6)	321 493 (6.4)	4 519 352 (93.0)	340 361 (7.0)	3869 (72.0)	1505 (28.0)	3892 (68.7)	1770 (31.3)
IL	63 148 212 (98.4)	1 027 587 (1.6)	54 847 736 (98.4)	893 176 (1.6)	49 691 (91.1)	4826 (8.9)	49 932 (91.2)	4820 (8.8)
IN	34 526 443 (96.5)	1 253 258 (3.5)	29 825 848 (96.6)	1 062 322 (3.4)	27 249 (79.7)	6949 (20.3)	27 074 (79.8)	6835 (20.2)
IA	17 500 441 (93.4)	1 232 926 (6.6)	15 093 504 (93.1)	1 122 321 (6.9)	12 158 (66.5)	6123 (33.5)	11 909 (64.9)	6429 (35.1)
KS	16 627 777 (95.8)	732 424 (4.2)	14 410 085 (95.5)	682 432 (4.5)	14 340 (78.3)	3982 (21.7)	14 119 (77.1)	4205 (22.9)
KY	21 965 605 (95.9)	944 992 (4.1)	17 850 740 (95.7)	801 044 (4.3)	16 858 (74.2)	5862 (25.8)	15 543 (74.0)	5451 (26.0)
LA	19 740 787 (98.6)	278848 (1.4)	17 410 197 (98.4)	274 312 (1.6)	16 955 (2.6)	1352 (7.4)	17 152 (91.8)	1527 (8.2)
ME	7 815 410 (96.1)	320 616 (3.9)	6 832 496 (96.4)	258 248 (3.6)	7376 (81.1)	1718 (18.9)	7136 (80.2)	1571 (18.0)
MD	28 283 566 (99.7)	80 605 (0.3)	26 386 760 (99.7)	89 164 (0.3)	24 544 (98.4)	392 (1.6)	25 327 (98.2)	457 (1.8)
MA	31 056 134 (99.4)	185 215 (0.6)	27 462 887 (99.4)	152 874 (0.6)	28 248 (96.7)	949 (3.3)	28 440 (97.1)	855 (2.9)
MI	51 065 885 (98.6)	701 179 (1.4)	43 511 228 (98.5)	641 644 (1.5)	41 620 (92.1)	3584 (7.9)	41 617 (91.9)	3650 (8.1)
MN	14 309 810 (97.1)	428 428 (2.9)	11 453 382 (96.9)	361 419 (3.1)	11 692 (84.3)	2174 (15.7)	10 670 (84.2)	1994 (15.8)
MS	16 090 984 (95.7)	719 759 (4.3)	14 130 510 (95.7)	639 524 (4.3)	12 813 (79.0)	3414 (21.0)	12 692 (78.3)	3523 (21.7)
MT	5 589 004 (95.0)	297 251 (5.0)	5 267 764 (95.0)	276 467 (5.0)	4076 (76.7)	1241 (23.3)	4309 (76.6)	1315 (23.4)
MO	29 124 578 (96.6)	1 038 302 (3.4)	25 865 486 (96.5)	946 751 (3.5)	24 635 (82.5)	5213 (17.5)	24 115 (81.8)	5367 (18.2)
NE	9 769 769 (95.4)	466 700 (4.6)	8 839 411 (95.3)	439 432 (4.7)	8968 (78.2)	2502 (21.8)	9367 (78.4)	2584 (21.6)
NV	9 565 395 (96.3)	369 645 (3.7)	9 173 285 (97.0)	283 466 (3.0)	6635 (79.8)	1683 (20.2)	7402 (83.5)	1457 (16.5)
NH	6 164 130 (99.6)	22 485 (0.4)	5 701 133 (99.6)	21 811 (0.6)	5692 (97.3)	158 (2.7)	6065 (97.0)	190 (3.0)
NJ	43 271 594 (99.6)	185 579 (0.4)	37 996 220 (99.6)	171 686 (0.4)	35 439 (96.8)	1188 (3.2)	35 783 (96.9)	1161 (3.1)
NM	7 446 637 (99.0)	76 788 (1.0)	6 299 023 (98.8)	75 084 (1.2)	7067 (94.4)	416 (5.6)	6588 (93.2)	480 (6.8)
NY	65 718 401 (99.8)	104 852 (0.2)	58 329 419 (99.8)	114 319 (0.2)	56 313 (98.9)	612 (1.1)	56 994 (98.8)	709 (1.2)
NC	48 239 447 (95.6)	2 205 272 (4.4)	44 212 337 (95.6)	2 028 309 (4.4)	41 039 (79.3)	10 735 (20.7)	40 776 (78.1)	11 436 (21.9)
ND	5 109 376 (94.6)	293 797 (5.4)	4 045 747 (94.1)	252 527 (5.9)	4149 (73.6)	1489 (26.4)	4974 (72.5)	1407 (27.5)
OH	42 458 132 (98.9)	464 872 (1.1)	37 560 118 (98.9)	422 266 (1.1)	37 233 (94.1)	2325 (5.9)	37 641 (94.1)	2378 (5.9)
OK	19 388 035 (94.8)	1 058 664 (5.2)	16 674 518 (94.3)	1 013 237 (5.7)	13 552 (73.9)	4797 (26.1)	13 829 (72.4)	5271 (27.6)
OR	12 202 058 (97.3)	332 371 (2.7)	10 637 325 (97.2)	307 839 (2.8)	10 344 (86.2)	1660 (13.8)	10 127 (85.8)	1672 (14.2)
PA	51 986 082 (99.0)	506 678 (1.0)	45 647 763 (98.9)	490 250 (1.1)	44 502 (94.5)	2497 (5.5)	45 655 (94.3)	2753 (5.7)
RI	3 659 541 (97.9)	77 516 (2.1)	3 494 417 (98.7)	45 763 (1.3)	3432 (90.2)	373 (9.8)	3903 (93.1)	289 (6.9)
SC	25 370 158 (97.6)	622 299 (2.4)	22 193 015 (97.8)	503 501 (2.2)	22 883 (98.9)	2865 (11.1)	242 212 (89.5)	2618 (10.5)
SD	5 899 333 (95.0)	311 666 (5.0)	5 100 574 (95.1)	262 936 (4.9)	5530 (78.9)	1480 (21.1)	5408 (79.6)	1382 (20.4)
TN	31 550 290 (95.5)	1 487 940 (4.5)	27 650 264 (95.5)	1 311 761 (4.5)	23 942 (77.7)	6853 (22.3)	24 063 (77.9)	6823 (22.1)

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