A major shift in ophthalmic surgical care in the United States from hospital outpatient departments to ambulatory surgery centers over the past decade

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Purpose
• Utilization of ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs) is an alternative to traditional hospital outpatient departments (HOPDs) for ophthalmic surgery.
• The purpose of this study is to explore trends over the past decade in use of ASCs versus HOPDs for various types of ophthalmic surgeries among enrollees in a nationwide managed care network.

Methods
• Claims data from 2001-2014 capturing patients enrolled in a large U.S. managed-care network were analyzed to identify all patients undergoing incisional ophthalmic surgery (cataract surgery, strabismus surgery, cornea surgery, glaucoma surgery, and retina surgery).
• For each type of ophthalmic surgery, we identified whether it took place at an ASC or HOPD.
• Each year from 2001-2014, we determined the proportion of each type of ophthalmic surgery performed at ASCs versus HOPDs.

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Results
• A total of 413530 patients underwent ≥1 type of incisional ophthalmic surgery during 2001-2012.
• The mean number of cataract, strabismus, cornea, glaucoma, and retina surgeries performed annually were 41526, 2626, 2381, 1096, and 5503, respectively.
• From 2001 to 2012, the proportion of cataract, glaucoma, cornea, strabismus, and retina surgeries performed at ASCs increased.

Conclusions
• Over the past decade the proportion of ophthalmic surgeries performed at ASCs has increased substantially.
• Over two thirds of cataract surgeries are now performed at ASCs and surgeons are increasingly using ASCs for subspecialty ophthalmic surgeries as well.
• Future analyses need to explore the impact of this shift in care on patient outcomes, patient satisfaction, and costs.