



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Malpractice payments by optometrists in the United States: An analysis of the National Practitioner Data Bank from 1996 to 2023

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ABSTRACT

Purpose

To analyze trends in malpractice payments made on behalf of U.S. optometrists from 1996 to 2023 using National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) data, and to assess whether state-level scope-of-practice expansions are associated with increased liability risk.

Methods

Publicly available NPDB data were reviewed for malpractice payments involving optometrists between 1996 and 2023. Variables included number and value of payments, provider age, patient demographics, geographic distribution, and allegation category. Nationwide trends were analyzed using the Mann–Kendall test; pre- and post-scope expansion comparisons in 11 states were evaluated using the Mann–Whitney rank-sum test. All monetary values were



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