



**American Orthotic &
Prosthetic Association**

AOPA in Advance

Breaking News for O&P Professionals

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Newsletter Feedback

We invite your comments and questions. Please contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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O&P NEWS

2010 AOPA Policy Forum Delivers

More than a hundred **AOPA** members from twenty six states gathered at the Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill in Washington DC to make the case to legislators to support the Prosthetic and Custom Orthotic Parity Act (H.R. 2575/S. 3223) and the Medicare Orthotic and Prosthetic Improvements Act (H.R. 2479).

Participants at the Policy Forum hit the ground running on Wednesday as the O&P PAC hosted a fundraiser for Rep. William Cassidy (R-LA), which was the first of three PAC events that day. The formal educational program started with an address by Rep. Cassidy about the new health care reform law, Medicare and the 2010 mid-term elections. Immediately following Rep. Cassidy was Charlene Brown-Frizzera, CMS Acting Administrator, who both spoke about accreditation and quality standards as well as issues associated with PECOS, consignment closets, competitive bidding for DME, and the PDAC. Further information on the health care reform law was provided to attendees through an in-depth presentation by Peter Thomas, Counsel to the O&P Alliance, called, "Health Care Reform-What Will it Mean to the Average O&P Business?"

The next portion of the afternoon was devoted to explaining to attendees the legislative initiatives on the state and federal levels that affect O&P. **AOPA** Executive Director Tom Fise and Senior Policy Advisor Stephanie Kennan, of **AOPA's** lobbying team at Alston and Bird, explained the current versions of the Medicare Orthotic and Prosthetic Improvements Act (H.R. 2479), introduced in the House of Representatives, and the Prosthetic and Custom Orthotic Parity Act, introduced in both the House and Senate. Mr. Fise and Ms. Kennan explained to the attendees what provisions are contained in the bills and also what tactics are most helpful for explaining the bills to congressional staffers and asking for a legislator's support. Lindsey Toohey, from AOPA's other lobbying firm Foley Hoag, followed later in the afternoon walking the Policy Forum audience through strategies that maximize the effectiveness of legislative advocacy on the Hill. The late afternoon section also included a presentation on state-based legislative initiatives and how efforts to pass state parity and state licensure laws are necessary but challenging endeavors.

The Wednesday educational session closed with an address by Rep. Jason Altmire (D-PA), who spoke about his own experience during the health care reform debates in 2009 and 2010. The day ended with two more O&P PAC fundraising meetings, one for Rep. Altmire and a second for Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), who along with Sen. Olympia Snowe introduced the Senate version of the Prosthetic and Custom Orthotic Parity Act of 2010.

Thursday morning, May 27, began with an early breakfast and attendees departed to Capitol Hill to make the case for O&P at more than 230 scheduled events, including constituent coffees, meetings with the health care staff of their House and Senate legislators, and meetings with House Representatives and Senators themselves.

The 2010 **AOPA** Policy Forum from the presenters to the attendees attest to the continued importance of political engagement. Even after a year of intense national health care debates, the issues that affect O&P, from parity and preventing Medicare fraud on the national level to licensure laws and Medicaid funding issues on the state level, continue to be vital and volatile and require all hands on deck from **AOPA**, membership, and the O&P industry at-large. If you didn't attend the 2010 **AOPA** Policy Forum, don't miss out next year. And in the interim, contact **AOPA** if you would like to coordinate with other members who are working on issues important to O&P in your state.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Other Opportunities Presented by Policy Forum

Beyond the events of the **AOPA** Policy Forum, there was an important collection of meetings that occurred around the periphery of the Forum. On Tuesday afternoon, May 25, a contingent representing the O&P Alliance (**AOPA** was represented by Board member Al Kritter and Executive Director Tom Fise) met with the next Deputy Administrator of CMS for Program Integrity, Dr. Peter Budetti, and underscored the industry's commitment-through legislation like H.R. 2479 (O&P Medicare Improvements Act), and other means, to help eliminate fraud, abuse and the bad actors who can give legitimate O&P providers a bad name with inappropriate practices and billing. Dr. Budetti listened avidly as the Alliance reps underscored keys to avoiding the kind of Medicare fraud reported in South Florida last fall by *60 Minutes*.

In the week preceding the **AOPA** Policy Forum, some members had expressed some concerns relating to reduced access of O&P practitioners to VA clinics, and some signs that this might be a harbinger of efforts to reduce the number of commercial sponsors. These concerns prompted efforts to seek a meeting with key VA leadership in Washington during the Policy Forum. As it worked out, with the short notice, no one from our VA Committee could arrange to attend the meeting with B.J. Randolph and Joe Miller at the VA on Wednesday morning. However, **AOPA** President Jim Kaiser, President-Elect Tom DiBello, and Treasurer Jim Weber took up the cause from the practice side, joining Kathy Dodson and Tom Fise as the **AOPA** contingent. B.J. Randolph led the conversation from the VA side. She explained the restrictions on practitioner "open access (in the absence of having a patient)" to clinics arose because of complaints by beneficiaries saying it was like a "meat market," and inappropriate comments by practitioners about their competition. She reiterated that VA offers the option to Veterans as to where they wish to receive their care--whether from VA personnel at clinics, or from contracted "partners." Of course, if the partners aren't there in person, the question is how do the beneficiaries know about their choices, and there were a fair amount of suggestion about concise, relevant information that could be made available to better inform the vets. Follow-up is being pursued around this important point. But the VA leadership disavowed any substantial, imminent move to shift the balance between services provided by VA practitioners and those from contracted partners. There was no discussion at all indicating any intent to try to have "inside" government personnel offered as any sort of option for Medicare.

Rounding out the related meetings last week, representatives of a number of patient advocacy groups within the disability field, including several groups with strong ties to orthotic care (and potential strong supporters for federal O&P) parity, met in the office of O&P Alliance Counsel Peter Thomas, together with representatives of the O&P Alliance organizations. It was a great kick-off to longer-term efforts to find common ground with these important advocates and potential partners.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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A Final Thank You to AOPA Policy Forum Sponsors

AOPA would like to recognize and thank the generous sponsors of the 2010 **AOPA** Policy Forum:

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Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Registration for the 2010 AOPA National Assembly Opens TODAY!



Registration is now open for the 93rd **AOPA** National Assembly. The **AOPA** National Assembly is *the place to be* (Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, Orlando, FL) for excellent O&P clinical and business education programming. Check out the program as a supplement to the June issue of the *O&P Almanac*. Or call (571) 431-0876 for a copy of the magazine and program supplement.

The blockbuster programming responds to your clinical and business management needs with an array of experts whose credentials and experience will dazzle and educate you far beyond your expectations. Inspirational and motivational speakers will jump start your enthusiasm for success. Social and networking events reach new heights.

You won't want to miss this year's all-star lineup of speakers, including:

- Cordell Atkins, PT, M.S., CWS, CDE, C.Ped.
- Marcus Besser, Ph.D.
- John H. Bowker, M.D.
- Susan Cassidy, M.D., J.D.
- Beverly Cusick, M.S. PT, COF
- Conal Doyle, Esq.
- Christian W. Ertl, M.D., FACS, FACCWS
- Maria Gerschutz, Ph.D.
- Andreas Kannenberg, Ph.D.
- John Markus, J.D.
- Adrian Oleck, M.D.
- Raymond L. Ownby, M.D., Ph.D., MBA
- Sam Phillips, Ph.D.
- Merhsheed Sinaki, M.D.
- Peter W. Thomas, Esq.
- Many, Many More

Tour the country's largest exhibit hall for the orthotics, prosthetics and pedorthics professions-filled with manufacturers, distributors and suppliers showcasing every significant O, P&P component, device, item of equipment and service that is critical to maintaining a successful patient care facility.

The 2010 **AOPA** National Assembly will be held at the luxurious Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. This beautiful property features an on-site golf course, spa, fine dining as well as more casual eateries. Enjoy golf, walking and nature trails, fish, hike or just enjoy the beautiful surrounding. All of the famous Orlando attractions are just a short ride away.

[Click here to register.](#)

The official headquarters hotel for the **AOPA** National Assembly is the beautiful Rosen Shingle Creek Resort-located just ten minutes from the Orlando International airport and convenient to the theme parks and major tourist attractions that Orlando is known for. Please make your hotel reservations directly with the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort by calling (866) 996-6338 - **AOPA** has contracted a limited number of rooms at a special rate of \$199. Reserve early as the hotel will likely sell out over the dates of the **AOPA** Assembly.

[Click here to learn more about this beautiful resort.](#)

Questions? Contact Kelly O'Neill at koneill@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0852; Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835; or Tina Moran at tmoran@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0810.

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Amputee Coalition of America Executive Director Joins MEDCAC

Executive Director of the Amputee Coalition of America Kendra Calhoun was invited to join the Medicare Evidence Development & Coverage Advisory Committee (MEDCAC). Among other things, the MEDCAC advises the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (the Secretary) and the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, as requested by the Secretary, whether medical items and services are "reasonable and necessary" and therefore eligible for coverage under Title XVIII of the Social Security Act. Ms. Calhoun will serve as a voting member of the board in her capacity as a patient advocate representative.

AOPA will keep members apprised of the decisions of MEDCAC as often as **AOPA** is updated by Ms. Calhoun regarding the actions of the committee.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Business Conditions Survey Results for April 2010

The Business Conditions Survey for April 2010 revealed a similar revenue picture as the March 2010 survey. 46.7 percent of respondents reported an April 2009-to-April 2010 increase in revenue compared with 47 percent in March. 20 percent of respondents had increases of more than 10 percent and 26.7 percent saw revenue increase of 1-5 percent. 26.7 percent of survey respondents noted a decrease in revenue of 1-5 percent and 13.3 percent reported a more than 10 percent decrease in revenue. This 40 percent of businesses reporting decreased revenues again tracks very closely with the results for March 2010, when 41.2 percent of businesses reported a revenue dip. Finally for April, 13.3 percent of survey participants reported no change in revenue.

When asked whether, from the perspective of the patient care providers, the recent Medi-Cal Medicaid struggle in the state of California seemed to be spreading to other states only 14.3 percent of participants answered yes. Specifically, they noted a debate about Medicaid cuts in the state of Michigan which at this point are still "to be determined."

The final question of the April 2010 survey related to potential hiring in the second half of 2010. 40 percent of O&P business owners expected to hire new staff. They identified the positions "Orthotist" and "Administrative Staff" as their most urgently recruited positions, followed by prosthetists and NCOPE residents.

If you are the primary business decision maker at your O&P facility and are not receiving these surveys, please email Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org.

The survey results presented here represent a compilation of information received from responding

member firms. It is not a statistical sample and is for use only as a guide. Information is also presented from prior surveys for comparative purposes. It is important to remember that there may be a different mix of firms responding in each survey. This would have some impact on survey averages.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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June 2010 Issue of *O&P Almanac* Shipping Now

The June issue of the [O&P Almanac](#) will be in AOPA members mail boxes soon. This month's content includes:

- the annual Buyer's Guide, a one-stop shopping resource for products and services;
- "Satisfaction Guaranteed" by Anya Martin, improving patient satisfaction is neither a complicated nor costly task;
- "How to Decrease Denials" by Deborah Conn, legal experts address the universal issue of denied reimbursement claims;
- "Ask the Expert" with Devon Bernard;
- Joe McTernan's reimbursement page;
- Tom Watson's Prosthetics and Orthotics Lab in the "Facility Spotlight" and;
- And much more!

If you have any questions about the *Almanac*, need to update your subscription, want to pitch a story, or give your input for future features, please contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Register now for June 9 Audio Conference: "When Disaster Strikes: Implementing a Contingency Plan"

Your office may be equipped to handle everyday challenges, but what happens when disaster strikes? Too often you do not understand how unprepared you are to handle unexpected situations until they happen and it is too late. **AOPA's** June 9 audio conference will help you understand the importance of contingency planning. Some of the topics to be discussed include:

- Development and implementation of a contingency plan
- Identifying key employees
- Preparing for natural disasters
- Dealing with technological failures
- Recovering from an office fire
- What to do if your office is burglarized
- Maintaining operations during an event

Attending this valuable one hour telephone session may help you to prepare for the things that no one likes to talk about. Don't be caught unprepared.

[Click here to register.](#)

The cost is just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for nonmembers) and any number of listeners may participate on a given line. Those seeking credit must return the provided quiz within 30 days and score at least 80 percent.

Questions? Contact Erin Kennedy at ekennedy@AOPAnet.org or (571)431-0876.

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Latest Issue of WHO Disability and Rehabilitation Newsletter Released

The World Health Organization released its tenth issue of its newsletter dedicated to disability and rehabilitation which is also available through the Disability and Rehabilitation website. The current issue includes information on the CBR Mexico Congress; a WHO update on Haiti; updates on the WHO Task Force on Disability; and more.

[Click here to download the WHO newsletter.](#)

The World Health Organization (WHO) Disability and Rehabilitation newsletter is produced three times a year and distributed via e-mail. Subscription/unsubscription requests should be sent to WHO's Disability and Rehabilitation Team (DAR) via: mackenzier@who.int.

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Ongoing Need in Haiti for O&P Volunteers

The Haitian earthquake tragedy may not be on front pages anymore or be the lead story on the evening news, but the human need continues. The [joint Web site](#) by AAOP and AOPA offers the opportunity for individuals and companies to make known their willingness to help sustain O&P services in Haiti through cash and equipment donations or volunteering of services.

[Click here to access the joint AAOP/AOPA Haiti Relief Site.](#)

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

Check the AOPA Job Board for New Opportunities

If you need a position filled at your business or are interested in looking at other job possibilities within the O&P field, check out the [AOPA Online Job Board](#). In the past month the Job Board has been viewed over a thousand times. If you want people to find out about a job opening at your facility or are interested in posting your resume for employers to view for potential openings, visit the [AOPA Online Job Board](#) today.

And remember: if you advertise on the Online Job Board and decide to also advertise in the *O&P Almanac*, then you'll receive a 5% discount on the cost of advertising in the *Almanac* and on the Job Board.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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2010 AOPA Coding Products Now Available

Don't get caught with out of date coding references. Update your AOPA coding products today. The 2010 AOPA coding products are now available through the AOPA bookstore and may be ordered by calling (571) 431-0835.

The 2010 *Illustrated Guide*, *Quick Coder* and *Coding Pro* include all of the newly released HCPCS codes that describe O&P items. In addition, the 2010 *Coding Pro* contains expanded medical policy references and the 2010 *Quick Coder* includes a new section that lists all of the current modifiers used in O&P billing.

As an added bonus, if you purchase all three **AOPA** coding products at the same time, you will receive a bundled discount of \$50 off the regular retail price of the three items as sold separately.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Is Your Practice Missing the BOAT?

AOPA's largest and most successful members use the Business Optimization and Analysis Tool (BOAT) and you should also. The BOAT will help you:

- Create budgets
- Track your finances
- Participate in the annual Operating Performance and Compensation survey-which provides you with a personal benchmark comparison study.
- Provide access to the new **AOPA** Patient Satisfaction Survey (required by certifying bodies).
- Examine the financial fitness of your business
- Help you identify and understand your competition, market conditions and referral sources
- Much more

Create your own secure and confidential Web pages on the BOAT which is specifically tailored to help O&P business owners manage their business for greater profit and quality patient care.

[Click here to explore the BOAT today.](#)

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Are You Registered for AOPA's 2010 Series of Medicare Audio Conferences?

Numerous offices have benefited from their participation in **AOPA's** Medicare Audio Conferences. These one hour sessions come to you in the comfort of your office on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm Eastern. This series provides an outstanding opportunity for you and your staff to stay abreast of the latest hot topics in O&P, as well as gain clarification and ask questions on topics that you may not understand as fully as you would like to.

Seminars are still priced at just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for non-members). Buy the series and get two free; members pay just \$990 and non-members pay \$1990. If you purchase all the conferences, all conferences from months prior to your purchase of the set will be sent to you as CDs.

These convenient one hour telephone seminars are designed to fit easily into your busy schedule. Any practitioners needing credit can get 1.5 per audio conference by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%. Billing staff and others who don't need credit nonetheless can gain information they will use right away. The topics for 2010 are:

- January 13: Red Flag Rules: Are You In Compliance? (Available on CD)
- February 10: Hints on Passing Your Supplier Standards Inspection (Available on CD)
- March 10: Billing for Refused/Returned Devices and Deluxe Features (Available on CD)
- April 14: Documenting for Success: Chart Notes, Prescriptions and Physicians' Records
- May 12: New Rules for HIPAA: Are You Still Compliant?

- June 9: When Disaster Strikes: Implementing a Contingency Plan
- July 14: Medicare Appeals Strategies
- August 11: Medicare's Knocking: How Good Is Your Compliance Plan?
- September 8: Missed Billing Opportunities: Are You Billing Everything You Can?
- October 13: You're Going To Pay Me WHAT?...Hints on Managed Care Contracting
- November 10: The Ins and Outs of Billing in a Part A Setting: Hospital, SNF and Hospice
- December 8: 2011 New Codes and Medical Policies

If you miss an audio conference, it will be available on CD after the fact. Cost is the same as if you participate live (\$99/\$199). We hope you'll be able to join us for this year's series.

[Click here to register for any or all of the 2010 AOPA audio conferences.](#)

Questions? Contact Erin Kennedy at ekennedy@AOPAnet.org or (571)431-0876.

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O&P INSIDER'S TRACK

The Only Up-to-the Minute O&P Newsline

People in the News

[Orthocare Innovations, LLC](#) announced the addition of two new clinical services staff members: **Michael Orendurff, MS** as Director of Activity Monitoring and Outcomes Services and **Courtney Moran, CP, MS** as Clinical Services Manager.

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Businesses in the News

[The Orthotic and Prosthetic Assistance Fund](#) (OPAF) updated its 2010 schedule for its First clinics:

- June 12 First Volley Tennis Clinic for Shriners Hospital/Philadelphia, Bucks County Racquet Club, Washington Crossing, PA. Sponsored by USTA.
- June 15 First Swing/Learn to Golf Clinic, Atlantic City Country Club, Northfield, NJ, Sponsored by Allied Orthotics & Prosthetics
- June 18 First Dive Intro to Scuba Clinic, The Dive Shop, Marietta, Georgia. Sponsored by The Dive Shop
- June 19 First Volley Tennis Clinic for University of Northern Iowa Adaptive Sports Camp, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Sponsored by USTA Missouri Valley Iowa District
- June 19 McKeever's First Ride, Chastain Horse Park, Atlanta, Georgia. Sponsored in part by the Wachovia Foundation, the Shaw Family Trust

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Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA in Advance** will arrive in your inbox on June 15. So if you have a new employee or a new office, tell us! Share your news with the over 15,000 readers of the *O&P Almanac* and **AOPA In Advance** newsletter. Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org

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AMERICAN ORTHOTIC & PROSTHETIC ASSOCIATION (AOPA)

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