



**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

PECOS Updates: Implementation Delay and Searchable Database Now Available

CMS has just announced a delay in the implementation of rejections that we expected to start occurring on April 4, 2010 for any services ordered by physicians who are not in PECOS. **The new implementation date is January 3, 2011.** Suppliers will continue to get warnings on their remittance notices when your referring physician is not in PECOS, but claim rejections will not happen until next year. At some point during 2010, CMS will send letters directly to any physician not in PECOS, telling them that they must reenroll or they will not be able to make referrals. CMS staff also has indicated that the PECOS system will become available for DMEPOS supplier enrollment some time in 2010. We will notify you of any new information as it is announced.

Additionally, Paul Prusakowski of oandp.com has created a PECOS search engine that will greatly aid in searching the PECOS directory released by CMS. He has made it available and given free access to all of O&P for its use. [Click here to access the searchable version of the PECOS database.](#)

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854 or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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UPDATE: O&P Outreach to Haiti Continues

AOPA and the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (AAOP) campaign to assist coordination of relief materials and services to the victims of the Haiti earthquake continues. In addition to donating \$15,000 to be distributed among Healing Hands for Haiti, Doctors Without Borders, and the Amputee Coalition of America (to assist with the costs of transferring used prosthetic equipment to Haiti), **AOPA** and AAOP is also coordinating an industry-wide effort by providing both the [AOPA](#) and [AAOP](#) Web sites as access points to a unified Haiti Relief Web site where people and companies can register cash, component and resource donations that will support amputee patients.

Al Ingersoll, CP, of Winkley Prosthetics, Orthotics & Pedorthics in Golden Valley, Minnesota, is currently in Haiti and has given **AOPA** permission to post this on-the-ground account of the coordination of materials and care; an outline of the protocols that are being developed to provide care to disaster victims; and instructions as to how O&P can further donate time, talent, and materials to this outreach effort. [Click here to read the letter from Al Ingersoll, CP.](#) Additionally, **AOPA** has received [this photograph](#) of Frank Shirley, CO, from Boston, and Al Ingersoll at Port au Prince's General Hospital, working with a young amputee. As **AOPA** receives more information from Mr. Ingersoll we will continue to post the updates for the public.

Please click [here](#) to read Al Ingersoll's analysis of the Haiti situation and also to fill out this form to join this much-needed effort.

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

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Make Sure Your Company Information in the 2010 AOPA Yearbook is Correct!

By now all 2010 **AOPA** members should have received a 2010 Data Verification Form, which displays the information **AOPA** has in its records for your company. *If you have not yet returned this form*, please do so immediately. This is every AOPA member's opportunity to make sure that the

company's listing (address, phone and fax, email, Web site, and employees) is complete and correct. Forms were supposed to be returned by January 8, but many are still outstanding. Please make any necessary changes, or indicate that there are no changes at this time, and fax the form to AOPA at (571) 431-0899 as soon as possible.

If you haven't received a Data Verification Form, please call us at (571) 431-0876 to have one sent to you.

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KO Policy Update

The KO Policy has been revised and the revisions are currently in effect. The revised policy has three key changes: coverage criteria for an L1810 and L1820, increased coverage for an L1832, and documentation requirements for knee instability.

An L1810 or L1820 will be covered if the patient is ambulatory and has a weakness or deformity of the knee, and this weakness/deformity requires stabilization. Previous policy didn't provide specific coverage criteria for the L1810 and L1820.

If a patient is ambulatory and has a knee instability due to Multiple Sclerosis (340), Hemiplegia (342.90), Infantile Cerebral Palsy (343.9), Paraplegia (344.1), or Mononeuritis (355.0 and 355.2), an L1832 will now be covered. In the previous policy these diagnoses were only acceptable when providing an L1843 or an L1845.

Lastly, the policy now states that when you are providing a KO to a patient due to knee instability, you must document the knee instability. This documentation must be objective (what type of instability?), and be the result of an examination of the patient. In other words just writing that the patient has knee instability will not suffice.

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854 or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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LSO/TLSO Policy Update

For claims with a date of service on or after January 1, 2010 the following change in policy is in effect.

When an LSO/TLSO described by HCPCS codes L0450, L0454, L0621, L0625, and L0628 is primarily made of elastic material the device must be coded as an A4466, and is a non-covered service. The reason the devices are non-covered is because they don't meet the Medicare definition of a brace, they are not rigid or semi-rigid in construction.

Also, as an early warning, the LSO/TLSO policy includes a change that will not take effect until July 1st of this year. This change will require devices described by codes L0450-L0492 and L0625-L0640 to be reviewed by the Pricing Data Analysis Coding Contractor (PDAC) and listed on their website. If the item has not been verified and listed by the PDAC it must be billed as an A9270, a non-covered service.

AOPA is currently speaking with the DME MAC Medical Directors to seek clarification on the PDAC verification requirement. **AOPA** is trying to determine if a brace is fabricated in house must it be verified by the PDAC, or are only devices made by manufactures to be verified by the PDAC. **AOPA** will keep you informed of future policy developments.

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854 or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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CMS Rescinds Proposed Change to Rules Regarding Consignment Closets

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has rescinded a policy change involving consignment closets that was scheduled to go into effect on March 1, 2010.

A traditional consignment closet arrangement involves a supplier of DMEPOS providing a physician's office with a stock of medical equipment or devices that the physician may dispense to patients who have an immediate need for the equipment. The device is billed by the supplier who maintains the stock of equipment at the physician's office.

In August, 2009, CMS released Change Request 6528 which would require the physicians to take title of the equipment upon delivery from the supplier and also take responsibility for billing for the item(s) provided. Initially scheduled for implementation in September 2009, the implementation was pushed back until March 1, 2010 to allow for input from the provider and supplier community. As a result of the many comments that CMS has received from **AOPA**, the O&P Alliance and others, it has rescinded the change request to consider future implementation of this policy change.

For the immediate future, consignment closets remain an acceptable arrangement for Medicare suppliers and providers as long as they are intended for patient convenience and not to disguise an illegal "kick-back".

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854 or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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AOPA Announces 2010 Pilot Grant RFP

Last week **AOPA** initiated the 2010 Request for Pilot Grant Proposals in five potential areas of Orthotic and Prosthetic (O&P) research. For 2010-2011, the association is seeking proposals for one-time grants in amounts up to \$7,500 for one year. Areas for submission are:

- a. AFO treatment of stroke - appropriateness of the 5 custom criteria for custom device use
- b. Microprocessor Knees and functional value for K 2 patients
- c. Residual limb and socket interface selection criteria
- d. Vacuum assisted socket research
- e. Prosthetic Foot/ankle mechanisms assessment of current functional classifications

The leadership of **AOPA**, working in conjunction with the Center for Orthotics and Prosthetics Learning and Outcomes/Evidence-Based Practice (COPL), understands that currently there is only a modest amount of original evidence-based or outcomes research in orthotics and prosthetics. Consequently, **AOPA** is interested in funding original pilot research that will lead to larger trials that may qualify for government or other research funding support.

There will be preference given to grants that address evidence-based clinical application in orthotics and prosthetics. To learn more about eligibility requirements for this RFP, [click here](#), or contact Thomas F. Fise at tfise@AOPAnet.org or call 571-431-0802. Please post this RFP and share it with your colleagues.

The deadline for proposals under the Request for Pilot Grant Proposals is Friday, April 30, 2010.

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

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AOPA Ask For Change to McKesson Software

Recently, **AOPA** has received complaints from around the country about the use of McKesson software by private insurers. This software program apparently limits frequencies to 1 per claim line item, causing many unnecessary denials and subsequent appeals. When insurers are questioned about these denials, they indicate that this software echoes Medicare guidelines and is therefore correct.

After review of some of the McKesson parameters, this appears to be inaccurate. Therefore, **AOPA** has contacted McKesson, protesting this blanket policy of 1 frequency per line item and asking that they use Medicare's Medically Unlikely Edits guidelines instead. We have also copied the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, Humana, Aetna, CIGNA and United Healthcare. We will keep you posted as this situation progresses.

[Click here to read a copy of the letter.](#)

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854 or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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March 10 Audio Conference: "Billing for Refused/Returned Devices and Deluxe Features"

The next **AOPA**iversity audio conference, "Billing for Refused/Returned Devices and Deluxe Features," will be held on Wednesday, March 10 from 1-2 p.m. EST. Refusals and returns are unpleasant, but they can and will happen to you from time to time. Join us for this informative session to:

- Learn how to bill for items that a patient wants to return
- Deal with unforeseen circumstances prior to delivery such as:
 - Patient death
 - Patient refusal of delivery
 - Changes in patient condition
- Learn how to bill for deluxe features of an O&P device
- Understand the difference between returned devices and refused devices
- Get tips on determining salvage value of refused/returned devices

The cost of participation is just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for non-members). Any number of employees may listen on a given line. Those needing continuing education can earn 1.5 credits by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%.

[Click here to register.](#)

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

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Take the January Business Conditions Survey Today!

The Business Conditions Survey for January 2010 is now available. This month's survey asks questions about revenue comparisons, reimbursement from Medicare as a percentage of revenue, and

plans for employment during the next six months.

[Click here to take the January Business Conditions Survey.](#)

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.

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

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O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

Prepare Yourself with the Best Tools of the Trade: AOPA's 2010 Illustrated Guide

This easy-to-use reference manual provides an illustrated guide to the coding system in use for orthotics and prosthetics, including an illustration and the official Medicare descriptors for each code. Cost for **AOPA** Members is \$185. Cost to non-members is \$425.

[Click here visit the AOPA Bookstore and order the Illustrated Guide.](#)

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

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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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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?
- February 10: Hints on Passing Your Supplier Standards Inspection
- March 10: Billing for Refused/Returned Devices and Deluxe Features
- 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, 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

[Touch Bionics](#) announced the hiring of **Davie Mendelsohn** as its national sales director.

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Businesses in the News

[Cascade Orthopedic Supply](#) announced that it has moved into a new distribution facility in Lancaster, PA.

[Institute for Defense and Government Advancement](#), will host its Military Medical Technology Summit on April 1 and 2 at the Sheraton Premiere at Tysons Corner Hotel in Vienna, VA.

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Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA in Advance** will arrive in your inbox on March 9. 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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2/24/2010

AOPA in Advance: February 23, 2010, V...

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