



AOPA In Advance SmartBrief
Breaking News
January 2nd, 2013

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**Now's a great time...
To renew your membership for 2014!**

Renew online at www.AOPAnet.org and prevent any disruption to your valuable benefits.

Continue access to our coding and billing experts, members-only LCodeSearch.com, UPS discounts, free online education, and member pricing on educational products, seminars, and the 2014 National Assembly in Las Vegas.

Explore all the member-only resources on AOPAnet.org! Get all of our latest press releases, updates on our litigation against CMS, regulatory news, as well as Essential Health Benefits, the FDA manual, and other resources.



Please contact AOPA at 571/431-0876 for a copy of your invoice or AOPAnet login information.

Mastering Medicare: Advanced Coding and Billing Techniques

FEBRUARY 10-11, 2014 • ROYAL SONESTA HOTEL • NEW ORLEANS, LA

During this two-day seminar, O&P Practitioners and O&P Office Billing Staff will learn the most up-to-date information on Medical Policies, documentation, compliance and how to audit your charts. Participate in break-out sessions and interactive discussions.

In the breakout session practitioners will cover:

- Coding Principles
- How to code complex devices
- Coding of repairs and adjustments
- Usage of '99 codes
- Mutually exclusive codes

In the breakout session billing staff will cover:

- The Quality and Supplier Standards
- Strategies for handling appeals and denials
- How to handle unique billing situations
- Documentation Requirements
- Medicare as Secondary Payer



AOPA has reserved a block of hotel rooms at the Royal Sonesta at the rate of \$159 per night for reservations made before January 20, based on availability. Hotel reservations can be made by calling 866-766-3782 or 504-586-0300. For more information on the Coding & Billing seminars, [please visit AOPA's website here.](#)

Questions? Contact Betty Leppin at bleppin@AOPAnet.org or 571/431-0876

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People in the News: OPAF Announces New Board Members

OPAF, the Orthotic & Prosthetic Activities Foundation is pleased to announce the addition of two new board members. Angela Courtade, CPO, LPO and Reggie Showers each begin a three year term of service on the OPAF Board of Directors, effective December 1. “We are excited for the new energy and vision that both Angela and Reggie will bring to OPAF & The First Clinics. Each brings special talents and perspective and we welcome them aboard” said Scott Williamson, OPAF President.

Angela Courtade, CPO, LPO is an instructor at the J.E. Hanger College of Orthotics and Prosthetics at St. Petersburg College in Florida. She has also worked as a clinician for a small practice and with a large organization. In both settings she had had the pleasure of sharing the field of Orthotics and Prosthetics with many different health care professionals. As a national member of a Lower Extremity Specialist team, she traveled to different parts of the country to evaluate patients to ensure that they had the best prosthesis to meet their needs and activity levels. Through meetings and information sessions she has established interdisciplinary teams that worked together to assist our patients to achieve the best possible outcome for their rehabilitative process. These team members included doctors, physical therapists, insurance companies, nursing staff, administrators and occupational therapists. “I have worn a prosthesis for 39 years and have experienced the advancements of this industry that have allowed me to join activities that previously I was unable to participate in both safely and with comfort of my prosthesis,” said Courtade.



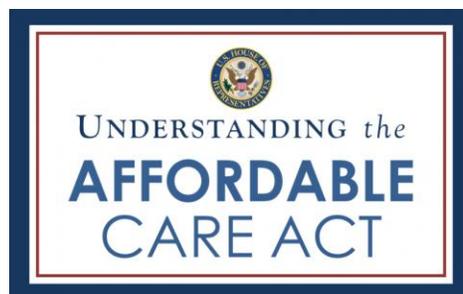
Reggie Showers is the CEO of RS Group Motorsports in Philadelphia as well as an instructor with the Urban Youth Stem Academy of Philadelphia and a member of the American Association of Snowboard Instructors, Rocky Mountain Division. He is also a two time World Champion in motorcycle drag racing and a noted motivational speaker. “As an entrepreneur, I am well aware of the ongoing economic challenges faced with providing the programs that you do. Coming from a professional motorcycle racing background, I have an extensive relationship with corporate sponsors. I hope to use my existing relationships as well as develop new ones to attract the resources needed to further support OPAF’s vision. For 35 years I have lived as a bilateral below knee amputee. In the early years I tried hard to conceal that fact. I didn’t want to be labeled as “handicapped” or less than. In my mind that meant that I was weak, when I knew I was strong. I believed that people would judge me on my condition before they got a chance to see that I was capable of anything that I set my mind to. As I matured and gained more personal confidence, I began to disclose my condition to the general public, and the overwhelming response was one of positivity and love” said Showers.

OPAF officers for 2014 will be Scott Williamson as OPAF President, James O Young, CP, LP, FAAOP, as OPAF Vice President and Justina Shipley, CO, BOCPO, MEd, FAAOP as OPAF Treasurer.

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Affordable Care Act Grace Period Holds Perils for Providers

Under the Affordable Care Act, Qualified Health Plans (QHP) are prohibited from terminating coverage for enrollees receiving advance premium tax credits on the grounds of non-payment of premiums during the grace period. Enrollees have a 90 day grace period after the initial non-payment of the individual's portion of the premium to pay past due premiums. After 90 days the QHP is allowed to terminate coverage.



That's a problem for O&P and other providers. Providers may be told a patient is covered by the insurer prior to providing services not realizing that the patient's failure to pay the premium could leave providers holding the bag. QHPs must pay all appropriate claims for service rendered to the enrollee during the first month of the 90-day grace period but the current HHS guidance only requires the QHP to notify providers of a lapsed enrollee after a provider has submitted a claim. QHPs may pend claims for services rendered to the enrollee in the second and third months of the grace period.

For providers that accept patients and administer health care services on the basis that the patient currently has QHP coverage at the time of service, this allowance for the "pending" of claims during the second and third months of the 90-day grace period presents serious concerns.

So a patient receiving advance payment tax credits with ongoing needs may be verified as appropriately insured when services are initially delivered but if the patient fails to pay premiums during the grace period the QHP may use its discretion as to when a "potentially affected" provider should be notified of a coverage lapse.

The Medical Group Management Association (MGMA) asserts that a QHP should be required to provide an eligibility determination anytime a physician requests. But, what about the rest of the provider world?



Further complicating the situation and adding additional perils is the widespread decision by many insurance companies to give consumers an extra ten days to pay their first-month premium. So with a coverage start date of January 1, a patient may be determined eligible for services delivered on January 5th but on January 11th that eligibility could end for patients not receiving advance premium tax credits.

So what should an O&P provider do? At this time the best advice is "vigilance" and continued checking on any patient's eligibility who is insured under a Qualified Health Plan.

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Register now for the 2014 AOPAversity Audio Conference Series

AOPA has confirmed the dates and topics for its 2014 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.



[Buy the Series and Get Two FREE!](#)

Jan 8th: New Year, New Opportunity: Are You Billing For All That You Can?

Feb 12th: Billing for Diabetic and Orthopedic Shoes, Mastectomy Services, and Surgical Dressings

March 12th: The ABC's of Audits: What to Expect and How to Respond

April 9th: How to Use Advanced Beneficiary Notices (ABNs) Effectively

May 14th: Modifiers: How and When to Use Them

June 11th: The Self Audit: A Useful Tool

July 9th: The OIG: Who Are They and Why Are They Important

August 13th: AFO/KAFO Policy: Understanding the Rules

September 10th: Urban Legends in O&P: What to Believe

October 8th: Medicare Enrollment, Revalidation, and Participation

November 12th: Gifts: Showing Appreciation without Violating the Law

December 10th: New Codes and Changes for 2015

Visit the AOPA Website, 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 in the form of an MP3. Seminars are priced at just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for non-members).

[Registration online here!](#)

<http://bit.ly/aopa2014audio>

Questions? Contact Betty Leppin at bleppin@AOPAnet.org or 571/431-0876.

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2014 Medicare Open Enrollment Period: Deadline Extended

The deadline to change your participation status with Medicare for 2014 has been extended, the open enrollment period will end on January 31, 2014 instead of December 31, 2013. This open enrollment period is your only opportunity to change your Medicare participation status for 2014.



If you elect to be a participating provider, your company will be listed in the Medicare provider directory, any claims involving a Medigap supplement policy will be automatically crossed over by the DME MACs, and you will be paid directly by Medicare. However, as a participating provider you agree to accept assignment on all Medicare claims as long as the participation agreement remains in effect and therefore you can never bill any balances.

If you choose to be non-participating, you may decide on a claim-by-claim basis whether you will accept assignment. This allows you to collect your full charge on non-assigned claims, even if it exceeds Medicare's allowable.



If your company has a participation agreement in effect for 2013 and you wish to be non-participating for 2014, you must submit a written notice to the National Supplier Clearinghouse (NSC). Your written notice must be postmarked by January 31, 2013. The letter must have an original signature of your offices' authorized representative on file with the NSC. The letter should be sent to:

National Supplier Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 100142
Columbia, SC 29202-3142

If, however, you are currently enrolled in Medicare as a non-participating provider and you wish to change your company's status to participating, you must complete a Medicare Participation Agreement for 2014, form CMS 460.

[Click here to access the CMS 460 form.](#)

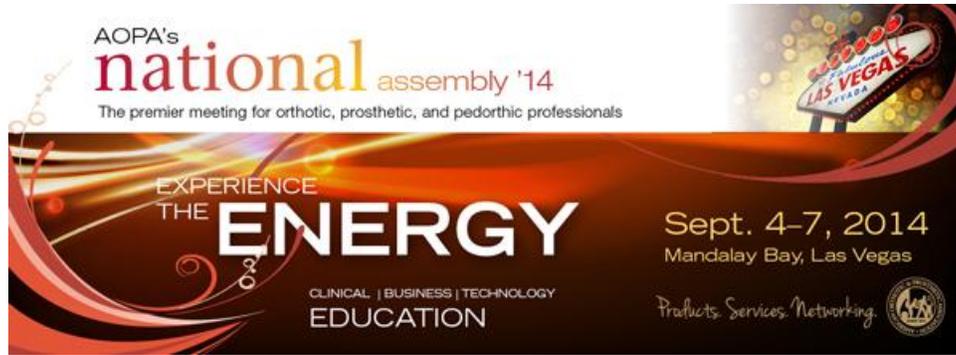
If you do not wish to make any changes to your participation status, it is not necessary to do anything during the open enrollment period.

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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Become a Presenter at the 2014 AOPA National Assembly!



Share Your Expertise ▪ Advance Your Career ▪ Improve Patient Care

Become a Presenter at the 2014 AOPA National Assembly to be held September 4-7 at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas. Your clinical submissions, based on sound research and strong empirical data, will set the stage for a broad curriculum of highly valued business, technical and scientific offerings at the 2014 AOPA National Assembly.

The Call for Papers requests that all interested presenters submit an abstract of their proposed scientific paper or description of their proposed business or technical paper.

1. All free paper abstracts for the 2014 AOPA National Assembly must be submitted electronically using the online form at: <https://aopa.wufoo.com/forms/2014-call-for-free-papers/>. Submission sent by e-mail or fax will not be considered.
2. If you are interested in organizing a scientific symposium at the 2014 AOPA National Assembly, please complete the online submission form no later than March 10, 2014 for consideration. <https://aopa.wufoo.com/forms/2014-call-for-symposia/>

The review committee will grade each submission based on the criteria below and reach a decision regarding acceptance of the abstracts.

- * Relevance, level of interest in topic
- * Quality of Scientific Content
- * Quality of Clinical Content

Important Dates

Monday, March 10	Deadline for abstract and symposia submissions
Tuesday, April 10	Notice of Acceptance or Rejection
Friday, August 1	Electronic version of handouts due
Thursday, Sept 4	AOPA National Assembly begins

Should you have questions about the submission process or the National Assembly in general, please contact AOPA Headquarters at (571) 431-0876 or tmoran@AOPAnet.org

To participate or obtain additional information visit www.AOPAnet.org or contact Tina Moran at (571) 431-0808 or tmoran@AOPAnet.org

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CMS Announces a New Date for PECOS Implementation

CMS has announced that Medicare claims with a date of service on or after January 6, 2014 will be subject to edits that will ensure that the referring/ordering physician has an active profile in the Provider Enrollment Chain Ownership System (PECOS). Claims where there is no PECOS record for the referring/ordering physician will be denied.



The Affordable Care Act established the PECOS requirement for referring providers but implementation has been delayed. Since 2009, claims that involved a non-PECOS enrolled physician have been processed with a warning message that the referring provider was not in PECOS. On or after January 6, 2014, these claims will be denied.

[The official announcement from CMS is contained in MedLearn Matters Article SE1305 which may be viewed here.](#)

[Click here for a direct link to the CMS ordering/referring list.](#)

Questions regarding this issue may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@aopanet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@aopanet.org

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New Business Education Programs for 21st Century Entrepreneurs

Survive and Thrive

Bottom-line, profit-oriented business programs for O&P

If you missed the 2013 O&P World Congress, don't let this opportunity to participate in these important programs pass you by.

1. **Everything You Need to Know to Survive RAC and Prepayment Audits in a Desperate Environment**
2. **Competitive Bidding: Devastation to Orthotic Patient Care OR Just a Passing Storm?**
3. **Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Compliance for Patient Care Facilities, Manufacturers and Distributors**
4. **Your Mock Audit: Are You Ready for the Auditor to Examine Your Claims Record?**

You and your staff can now have a private viewing of business saving strategies and earn CE credits at the same time. Learn more about each session [here](#).

One low price for your entire staff

- « Review the videos as many times as you'd like.
- « No travel expenses
- « Dependable, factual information from a reliable source
- « Only \$59 (AOPA Members or \$99 Non Members) per session
- « Special Offer. Buy three, get one **free**



Questions? Contact Betty Leppin at bleppin@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876
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**New Year, New Opportunities: Are You Billing For All That You Can?
January Audio Conference**



Are you billing for all that you can? New codes and modifier changes are effective January 1st, 2014. Do you have a plan in place? As we welcome a new year, join AOPA January 8th for an AOPAiversity Mastering Medicare Audio Conference that will focus on billing opportunities that you may have overlooked, and why it's an important part of your business operation. During the Audio Conference, an AOPA expert will address how to bill for:

- Deluxe or upgraded features
- Refused or returned items
- For patient evaluations
- Miscellaneous codes
- Repairs and adjustments

The cost of participating is always just \$99 for AOPA members (\$199 for nonmembers) and any number of employees may listen on a given line. Listeners can earn 1.5 continuing education credits by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%.

[Register online here!](#)

Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or 571/431-0854 with content questions.

Contact Betty Leppin at bleppin@AOPAnet.org or 571/431-0876 with registration questions.

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Upcoming Events

Jan 8, 2014 *New Year, New Opportunity:
Are you billing for all that you can?*
Telephone Audio Conference
[Learn more or register online here](#)

Feb 12, 2014 *Billing for Diabetic & Orthopedic
Shoes, Mastectomy Services, and
Surgical Dressings*
Telephone Audio Conference
[Learn more or register online here](#)

Mar 12, 2014 *The ABC's of Audits:
What to Expect and How to Respond*
Telephone Audio Conference
[Learn more or register online here](#)

January 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	