



AOPA In Advance SmartBrief  
Breaking News  
February 18th, 2014

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### **Spotlight on Master's O&P Education**

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), at his press conference yesterday threw a spotlight on O&P Education and its crucial contribution to veterans care school of Prosthetics and Orthotics at the University of Hartford. The school is one of nine institutions offering a Master of Science in Prosthetics and Orthotics that is eligible for grant money for expanding their O&P programs. Senator Blumenthal became an original co-sponsor of legislation (S. 522) introduced by Sen. Richard Durbin (D-IL), which provided funding opportunities for O&P teaching institutions. This bill has been in the works for four years under the direction of AOPA's consulting firm, Linchpin Strategies headed by Catriona Macdonald. Provisions of S. 522 (\$10 million in grant money) were subsequently included in the VA Appropriations bill, S. 1950, now pending in the Senate. AOPA members have been urged to contact their Senators and Representative urging passage. ([Read about the press conference here](#))



**Go to [AOPAVotes](#) and [Contact your Senators or Representative to support expansion of advanced education in O&P!](#)**

**2014 AOPA Policy Forum Dates have been Announced – *Make a Difference!***



***April 2-3, 2014***

***Special Extended Programming Available April 3-4, 2014***

***Renaissance Hotel – Washington, DC***

April is Limb Loss Awareness Month, what better way to support the profession than to participate in the Annual Policy Forum, April 2-3 at the Renaissance Washington DC Hotel, with extended educational programs being offered April 3-4.

The Policy Forum is your best opportunity to learn the latest legislative and regulatory happenings and how they will affect you, your business and your patients. Once you are armed with the facts, we as a profession will educate our Members of Congress to offer common sense solutions and share how the O&P profession restores lives and puts people back to work. Your Congressional appointments will be organized by AOPA staff and lobbyist.

**Policy Forum attendees will participate in enlightening sessions, such as:**

- *The Horrific RACs Era for Prosthetics, Where Are We, and Where/When (If Ever) Might It End?*
- *Hear the latest on CMS, OTS Orthotics, What the Statute Says on Minimal Self-Adjustment, What CMS Says, Competitive Bidding and/or Other Directions for OTS Orthotics*
- *Competitive Bidding—Off the Shelf (OTS), New HCPCS Codes—How Does It All Make Sense?*
- *Medicare O&P Improvements Act, H.R. 3112*
- *Appropriations, Funding for Research & Education, S 521/S.522*
- *Emerging RAC Fairness Legislation*
- *Amputee Veterans Bill of Rights, H.R. 3408*
- *Federal Insurance Fairness for Amputees Bill (H.R. 3020)*

**Quick Links**

- [About the Policy Forum](#)
- [Extended Education Modules](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [Location & Hotel Reservations](#)
- [Schedule](#)



The Policy Forum ends on Thursday, April 3rd with advocacy visits with elected representatives and their staffs. AOPA's staff and lobbyists schedule these meetings for attendees.

The low registration fee of \$150 and a location close to Capitol Hill make it easy and convenient to participate. Join us in 2014 to make a difference for the entire profession and, visit the monuments, the museums and all the attractions our nation's capital has to offer – all just minutes from the hotel.

**[Register Now!](#)**

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## Extended 2014 Policy Forum – Education Modules on April 3-4!

To maximize your time away from the office, the Policy Forum has been reformatted for 2014 to offer you additional learning opportunities on important and pertinent topics. To make this experience even more beneficial, you can customize your schedule and register for the additional modules you are most interested in.



### **Module I, Thursday, April 3, 5:00 – 8:00 PM**

A Closer Look at How Washington WILL Impact your Business. (Includes dinner)

- Understanding Congressional Appropriations, How Does Money Get Out of Washington for Research, Educational & Other Programs
- CBO — What is the Congressional Budget Office, How Does It Work and Why is It Important?
- Special Programs That Will Impact Your Future: ACOs, DRGs, Post Acute Care Bundling & CMS's Office of Innovation
- Let's Sue the Bastards: A Primer About Suing the Medicare Program

### **Module II, Friday, April 4, 2014, 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM**

Special Business and Clinical Educational Program Begins: Coding, RAC, OTS Coding, Appealing to the ALJ & FDA Educational Program Segments (Includes breakfast and lunch)

- Coding and Reimbursement Segment (2 hours)
  - o Primer: Steps You Can Take to Avoid RAC/Pre-Payment Audits and Succeed If You Get Them
  - o New Off-the-Shelf Orthotic Codes—Guide to Avoid Becoming a Witness Against Yourself.
- Taking Your Claims All the Way to the ALJ: How to Do It, and Win (1 hour)
- FDA: Has O&P Awakened a Sleeping Regulatory Giant—Overview of GMPs, Unique Device Identifiers, Complaint Files and Central Fabrication Compliance issues (1-1/2 hours)

[Registration is available by clicking here!](#)

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## Special Invitation – 2014 Research Funding Update

The House and the Senate have adopted the essence of S. 521 when they accepted the proposal by Senator Durbin, and included in the defense portion of the budget bill a provision instructing DoD to invest **\$10 million dollars in the coming fiscal year, to support new outcomes research initiatives on O&P research topics.**

If you are interested in learning more about the appropriated moneys for outcomes research in O&P, AOPA invites you to participate in two important events.

1. This Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 PM ET, Catriona McDonald, the primary lobbyist on these bills will present a conference call. [Register for the call here.](#)
2. April 3rd at 5:00 PM, AOPA will host a post Policy Forum event that will include an in-depth session on the Appropriations Money. [To learn more, check out the Policy Forum here.](#)

The call will take place:

***Thursday, February 20th, 2014 - 1:00 PM Eastern.***

[Register Now!](#)



## Distance Learning Opportunities Through AOPA

### **Webcasts – AOPA offers two webcast series:**

1. *Mastering Medicare: Coding & Billing Basics and Principles* contains nine modules is a recommended prerequisite to the Advanced Coding and Billing Techniques Seminar.
2. *Practice Management: O&P Administration Services* contains three modules, 1. Establishing an O&P Practice; 2. Acquiring an existing O&P Practice; and 3. Enrolling in Medicare and Medicaid.



Learn more at <http://www.aopanet.org/education/webcasts/>

**Audio Conferences** – During these one-hour sessions, AOPA experts provide the most up-to-date information on a specific topic. Perfect for the entire staff--one fee per conference, for all staff at your company location (\$99 Member/\$199 Non-Member). A great team-building, money-saving, educational experience! Sign up for the entire series and get two conferences FREE. Entire Series (\$990 Members/\$1,990 Non-Members). The fee is per location and there is no limit on the number of staff you can assemble in one location.

Learn more at <http://www.aopanet.org/education/audio-conferences/>

**Video Learning Library** – AOPA's video learning library offers many different types of high level education. Clinical, business, motivational and more. Many of the videos have been approved for CE credits. After viewing the educational video in its entirety, complete and submit the quiz continuing education (CE) credits. On a quarterly basis AOPA will transmit the information to both ABC and BOC for those with passing grades of 80% or higher. Those not passing the quiz will be notified.

Peruse the complete library at <https://www.aopanetonline.org/education>

**O&P Almanac** – AOPA is pleased to announce that beginning with the January 2014 edition of the *O&P Almanac* you can earn CE credits associated with the monthly Reimbursement Page and the Quarterly Compliance Corner. Because of the highly educational content of the *O&P Almanac's* Reimbursement Page and Compliance Corner, *O&P Almanac* readers can now earn 2 Business Continuing Education (CE) Credits each time you read these articles and pass the accompanying quiz.



Peruse the online 2014 Almanac Library here: <http://bit.ly/2014OPalmanac>  
Take the quizzes here: <http://www.aopanet.org/publications/op-almanac-magazine/>

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## People in the News: Active Brace & Limb Welcomes Steve Corlew

**Active Brace and Limb** would like to welcome Steve Corlew, ABC CO, O&P Clinic Manager, Board Eligible Certified Prosthetist, to the Petoskey office.

Steve is a Northern Michigan native; whom attended Western Michigan University, receiving a Bachelor's of Science in Education, and later went on to receive his Masters in Prosthetics and Orthotics at Eastern Michigan University. As a former US kayak team member, Steve continues to enjoy the many outdoor activities than Northern Michigan has to offer. Steve will be residing in the Petoskey area with his wife of nine years, and his two children. Steve is excited and proud to serve Northern Michigan residents, and bring his vast knowledge and skills to the community!



Active Brace and Limb has three locations that include Petoskey, Traverse City, and Cadillac. Each office is staffed with knowledgeable professionals who are available to help patients with all of their orthotic and prosthetic needs, as well as post mastectomy services and supplies.

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## People in the News: Joe Hofmeister Replaces Owner as CEO of Tamarack



Joe Hofmeister will replace J. Martin (Marty) Carlson, MS, CPO, FAAOP as CEO of **Tamarack Habilitation Technologies, Inc.**

Already on-board as COO, Joe will now assume Tamarack's day-to-day management responsibilities as CEO, as well as lead the medtech innovator's strategic commercialization efforts. Marty Carlson, Tamarack's founder, will maintain an active role at Tamarack, working as the company's Chief Engineer.

Joe brings a significant background in global medtech technology commercialization to Tamarack and we're very excited about Tamarack's future under his leadership.

Marty Carlson is enthusiastic about Joe's new senior leadership role, saying, "Joe's background matches Tamarack's existing opportunities perfectly. Joe's experience spans the spectrum from IP licensing for a University to coordinating the global commercialization of emerging medical technologies. He has worked with and for small & large corporations and, at mid-career, is taking this top management role in a small technology company with a potentially big future. I am very happy to have Joe 'on board' and anxious to see what he and the team accomplish."



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## 2014 AOPA Quick Coders Are Available!

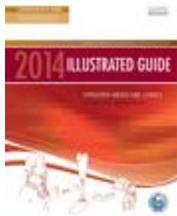
With the vast changes, over 80 plus changes, to the 2014 Medicare codes, don't be left out in the cold!

The 2014 AOPA Quick Coders are now available for purchase. The 2014 Quick Coders are new and improved. With the new and improved Quick Coder there is no more need to search through numerous pages of HCPCS codes and modifiers. All the codes and modifiers used by O&P practitioners can be located in a single compact format. The color coded sections allow you to rapidly find an orthotic code or a prosthetic code. The 2014 Quick Coder also includes a quick reference page for modifiers, each prosthetic code has its appropriate K-level functional modifier indicated, **indicates what items require PDAC coding verification and has the added feature of a quick reference tool for inpatient billing.**

The laminated pages ensure that the Quick Coder will hold up to everyday use and abuse. Its durability and size mean it can easily be stored on a clipboard, in an examining room or the front desk. To order your 2014 AOPA Quick Coder, [visit the AOPA Bookstore!](#)

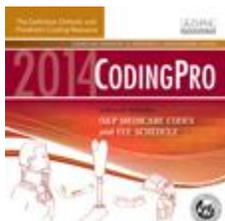


*Pre-order other 2014 Coding Products Today*



### 2014 Illustrated Guide

This easy-to-use reference manual provides an illustrated guide to the coding system in use for orthotics, prosthetics, and shoes, including the HCPCS code, the official Medicare descriptor and an illustration for each code.



### 2014 Coding Pro Software SU/NV

The Coding Pro is O&P's comprehensive guide to Medicare codes, reimbursement, and medical policies. This is the single-source reference for all your coding needs! The Coding Pro CD-ROM provides updated Medicare fee schedules for all 50 states and allows you to customize and import other fee schedules used by your office. Illustrations of the codes allow you to quickly sort codes. And writing prescriptions just got easier with the prescription writing tool. Network Version for use on multiple office terminals.

(Anticipated Delivery is March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014)

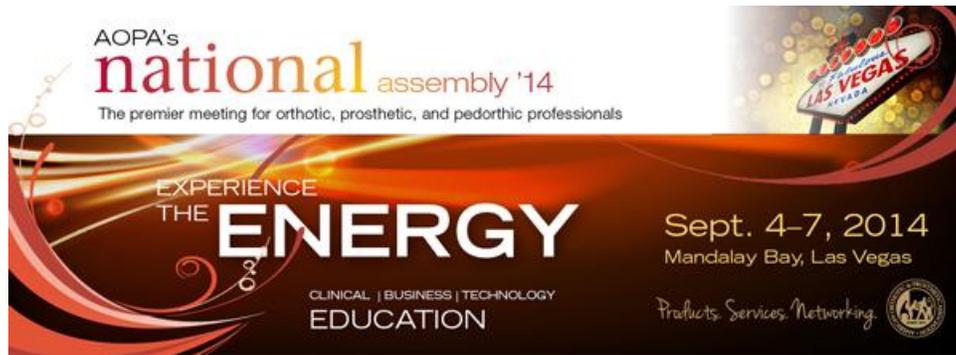
[Visit the AOPA Bookstore and order your 2014 Coding Products today!](#)

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## Submit an Abstract for the 2014 AOPA National Assembly!

*Share Your Expertise ▪ Advance Your Career ▪ Improve Patient Care*



Don't gamble with your valuable time, financial resources or continuing education—attend the show that provides the biggest return on your investment—The AOPA National Assembly.

No other meeting offers the high-quality venue, business education, top-notch speakers, networking opportunities or the massive trade show that is part of the National Assembly. Mark your calendar today to attend the country's oldest and largest meeting for orthotics, prosthetics and pedorthics!

### Experience the Energy in 2014!

If you are interested in submitting a free paper abstract or organizing a Symposium for the 2014 AOPA National Assembly, please review the information below and the [model abstract](#) before proceeding to the online submission form(s). We look forward to your participation.

- [Free Papers](#)
- [Symposia](#)
- [Technical Papers](#)
- [Important Dates](#)
- [Contacts](#)

Questions? Contact AOPA headquarters at (571) 431-0808 or [tmoran@AOPAnet.org](mailto:tmoran@AOPAnet.org)

## Attention 2014 AOPA National Assembly Exhibitors

**Manufacturers' Workshop & Product Preview Theater** opportunities are now available for the 2014 AOPA National Assembly. Back by popular demand we are offering the opportunity to host either a 2 or 4 hour workshop presentations.

Sign up to participate before March 21<sup>st</sup> to have your Workshop and/or Product Preview Theater be included in the Preliminary Program which gets distributed to over 15,000 O&P Professionals.

2014 Manufacturers' Workshop Application:

<https://aopa.wufoo.com/forms/2014-manufacturers-workshop/>

2014 Product Preview Theater (PPT) Application:

<https://aopa.wufoo.com/forms/2014-product-preview-theater-ppt/>

Please contact Kelly O'Neill (571) 431-082 or [koneill@AOPAnet.org](mailto:koneill@AOPAnet.org) with any questions.

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**The ABC's of Audits: What to Expect & How to Respond**  
**March Audio Conference**



Audits have arrived and they are here to stay. An auditor's job is to seek out questionable Medicare payments made in the past and recoup as much money for the Medicare program as they can. But where did they come from? How do they work? To answer these questions and many more, including how to prepare for an audit, attend the audio conference. Join AOPA on March 12<sup>th</sup> for a Mastering Medicare Audio Conference that will focus on the following issues:

- Learn who is auditing your claims and why
- How do audits work
- What restrictions do the auditors have
- How to identify potential problems
- How to handle an audit (documentation, timely responses, etc.)

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](mailto:dbernard@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0854 with content questions.

Contact Betty Leppin at [bleppin@AOPAnet.org](mailto:bleppin@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0876 with registration questions.

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**Upcoming Events**

- Feb 20      *2014 Research Funding Update*  
 Telephone Audio Conference  
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- Mar 12      *The ABC's of Audits: What to Expect and How to Respond*  
 Telephone Audio Conference  
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- Apr 7-8      *Mastering Medicare: Adv. Coding & Billing Techniques Seminar*  
 Las Vegas, NV  
[Learn more or register online here](#)

**February 2014**

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