



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief

Breaking News

August 25, 2015

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AOPA and the Amputee Coalition Host Live Press Event Today

AOPA and the Amputee Coalition hosted a news conference to discuss the LCD policy before tomorrow's events. The following press release was issued, and the audio replay of this news event will be available later today at www.aopanet.org.

AHEAD OF WEDNESDAY HEARING, AMPUTEE LEADERS TO TELL MEDICARE: DON'T DENY US ACCESS TO NEEDED PROSTHETIC CARE

#NotALuxury: Amputee Coalition, Former U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey, Boston Marathon Survivor to Participate in Briefing on "Significant Setback" for Amputee Care Under Controversial Medicare Rule Proposal.

WASHINGTON, D.C.//NEWS ADVISORY//Amidst growing concern over a Medicare rule proposal that would significantly impact care for two million U.S. amputees, the Amputee Coalition and the American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association (AOPA) will hold a live, phone-based news conference on the issue featuring experts, patients, former U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey, and a Boston Marathon survivor.

The Tuesday news event will precede a Wednesday public hearing at 8 a.m. in Linthicum, Maryland, where amputees and other stakeholders will present their concerns and opposition to the new proposed Medicare policy. (See additional issue background information below.)

On Wednesday afternoon, an amputee rally organized by AOPA is slated to take place at 2 p.m. outside of the offices of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the north sidewalk in front of 200 Independence Avenue SW. Hundreds of amputees and other concerned individuals from across the U.S. are expected to participate.

Speakers on the phone-based news event at 12:30 p.m. EDT on Tuesday (August 25th) will include:

- Dan Berschinski, chairman of the board of directors, Amputee Coalition;
- Charlie Dankmeyer, president, American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association;
- Hon. Bob Kerrey, former U.S. Senator from Nebraska;
- Adrienne Haslet-Davis, Boston Marathon survivor and *Dancing With The Stars* competitor.
- Paul Pasquina, M.D. (invited); and
- Jack Richmond, an amputee from Cleveland, TN.

TO PARTICIPATE: Join the live, phone-based news conference (with full, two-way Q&A) at 1230 EDT on August 25, 2015, by dialing [1 \(800\) 860-2442](tel:18008602442). Ask for the “Medicare rule/amputees at risk” news event.

CAN'T PARTICIPATE?: A streaming audio replay of this news event will be available as of 4 p.m. EDT on August 25, 2015 at www.amputee-coalition.org and www.aopanet.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS: Pat Mitchell, [\(703\) 276-3266](tel:7032763266) and pmitchell@hastingsgroup.com.

BACKGROUND

Proposed changes to Medicare’s reimbursement for lower limb prosthetic care would create unreasonable and clinically unjustified hurdles to amputees receiving care that is now routinely provided. The proposed changes in amputee care not only would have a devastating impact on Medicare amputee beneficiaries, but on all of the two million amputees in the U.S., since commercial health insurance payers tend to follow the lead of Medicare on such matters. According to the Amputee Coalition there are roughly two million persons in the U.S. living with limb loss, and there are approximately 185,000 new amputees each year. For more information, go to <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/advocacy-awareness/federal-issues/medicare-issue-alert/>.

For weeks now, a groundswell of opposition has been growing against the proposed Medicare rule which would have a significant negative impact on America’s amputees. More than 100,000 Americans have signed a “We the People” [White House petition](#) to rescind the Medicare proposal restricting access to prosthetic limbs. The Amputee Coalition also has organized a social media campaign using the [#notaluxury](#) hashtag aimed at helping amputees to learn about the proposal and provide comments to Medicare. For more information, go to <https://www.facebook.com/AmputeeUSA> on Facebook and [@AmputeesUSA](#) on Twitter.



What is AOPA Doing about the LCD Policy?

Everyone throughout the orthotics and prosthetics world has pulled together and gone “all in” on the effort to fight back the DME MAC proposed revisions to the Local Coverage Determination (LCD) for Lower Limb Prosthetics, and hopefully restore some sanity to delivery of prosthetic limbs to Medicare amputee beneficiaries in the future. We are more than halfway through the short 45 day comment period which ends August 31. The meeting where the DME MACs will hear from interested stakeholders is August 26th — eight days from now. We owe every AOPA member a report, in summary form, of the things we have been doing, and will be doing in the coming days.

1. AOPA has activated communications to members, and placed explanatory content on both the AOPA website for members and on the Mobility Saves website for patients-- we had recorded about 1,175 O&P/AOPA members comment letters, as well as 2,075 patient comment letters.
2. NAAOP President (and AOPA Board Member) Dave McGill has initiated and provided excellent promotion for a “We the People” petition to the White House which achieved its 100,000 mark this past weekend reaching 108,979.
3. AOPA is partnering with the Amputee Coalition on Postcards that have been distributed to O&P facilities for distribution to patients.
4. AOPA has registered at least 4 participants, including AOPA President Charlie Dankmeyer, and AOPA Member Tom Watson, to appear and provide statements at the DME MAC meeting in Linthicum, Maryland on August 26 from 8-12 noon.
5. AOPA has activated plans to hold an amputee patient demonstration at the HHS building in DC on August 26 from 2 to 5 pm—know an amputee who would like to attend? Email landerson@aopanet.org for details.
6. AOPA has initiated PR efforts focusing on The “Glass Ceiling of Prosthetics” concept, and is being transformed into (i) broadcast and print ads to run in the DC area August 23-26 and (ii) placement on the Mobility Saves website. Print advertising is slated over the next 3 weeks, and TV broadcast advertising, starting with two messages that will appear in the Washington DC market on ABC’s Sunday morning News programs, “This Week with George Stephanopoulos,” on August 23, and continuing with morning programs all week on CNN, Fox News, CSNBC and other media outlets.
7. AOPA has worked on challenging the absence of scientific/medical/literature support for the LCD, having generated a request to the DME MACs for such information in light of its absence from the proposal.
8. AOPA has generated a series of true to life Patient Vignettes in cooperation with the Amputee Coalition that capture the very specific impact of the proposed LCDs on patient care.
9. AOPA, in consultation with former CMS Administrator, Tom Scully and other AOPA lobbyists scheduled one and possibly more meetings with CMS officials to discuss the LCDs. The first meeting took place on August 11 with Sean Cavanaugh, the Deputy Director of CMS.
10. Input from physicians--three past presidents of the American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons, plus communications from a President of the Association of Bone & Joint Surgeons, the American Orthopaedic Foot and Ankle Society, and the International Federation of Foot and Ankle Societies. A draft letter is in the works from a couple of Past Presidents of the American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, and

the American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association has started its own sign-on letter.

11. AOPA Analysis of Data Since 2010 Shows Steady Decline in Medicare Prosthetics Payments--OIG Report has dictated CMS and contractors behaviors for the past five years. Medicare's determination to squelch that progression as 'fraudulent (in some unknown way)' pushed the number of all types of K3s down, resulting in an increase in K2s AND **reduction in the total dollars Medicare spends on prosthetics each of the past 4 years.** CMS and the DME MACs have succeeded in practicing medicine and changing the prevailing standard of amputee care for the worse. You'll want to take a look at this, which demonstrates that data shows no reason for the LCD. [Medicare prosthetic costs DOWN 13.8% in past 4 years.](#)
12. If you go to the www.mobilitysaves.org home page, you'll find: (a) list of amputee talking points; and (b) you'll be able to link to the [remarkable letter authored by former U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey.](#)

Read the full update [here](#). And remember, patients *and* practitioners can take action and submit comments through www.AOPAvotes.org.

Ottobock Announces New Division and Portfolio: Activity and Sports Medicine

Ottobock's continuing growth and investment in off-the-shelf orthotics, bracing and supports has resulted in the creation of a business focusing on Activity & Sports Medicine (ASM), which combines the products from the acquisitions of Ortho Rehab, Bio Cybernetics International (BCI), Cybertech products, and a global portfolio of unique orthotic solutions.

"Ottobock has developed and marketed orthotic products for decades," said Matt Waidelich, President and CEO of Ottobock's ASM business unit. "The purchase of companies like Bio Cybernetics has spurred increased focus on spinal bracing in particular, allowing us to help meet the increased demand for non-surgical interventions. Our new name reflects the clinicians we work with, helping to improve outcomes for patients with acute and chronic conditions like osteoarthritis of the knee and spinal stenosis."

Ottobock's research and development teams in California and in Germany continue to drive innovation in this sector. As the number one provider of spinal bracing, the line continues to be supplemented with new offerings like the Multi Universal Brace and the TLSOx4. Driving competitive advantage for off the shelf-bracing, differentiated products and ever-advancing technology are important keys to better serving existing bracing needs and delivering market share growth.

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Register online: <https://www.expotracs.com/aopa/2015/>

General Information: <http://www.aopanet.org/education/2015-assembly/>

Hotel Reservations: <http://www.aopanet.org/education/2015-assembly/5151-2/>

Questions: Visit www.AOPAnet.org or Contact AOPA at (571) 431-0876 or info@AOPAnet.org

Exclusive Offer for AOPA in Advance Readers



The graphic features a collage of images including the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, a city skyline, and various museum exhibits. A QR code is located in the top right corner. The main text is enclosed in a dashed green border.

For information about the show, scan the QR code with a code reader on your smartphone or visit www.AOPAnet.org.

O&P Almanac readers are invited to tour the AOPA National Assembly Exhibit Hall on Saturday, October 10 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio. You may choose to pre-register online at bit.ly/aopa2015 and use the promocode OPALMANAC (Be sure to select the registration category, Exhibit Hall Only and then Saturday, Oct. 10) or you may choose to bring the adjacent coupon to the registration desk in San Antonio. Earn 3 ABC Category II and 5 BOC Category II CE credits for completing the Exhibit Hall form onsite.

Valid for Admission to the AOPA National Assembly Exhibit Hall Only on Saturday, October 10, 2015
Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center
San Antonio, Texas

free admission **\$75 Value** free admission

Cannot be combined with any other offer. Valid on Saturday, October 10 only.

Compliments of 

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Upcoming AOPA Events

- September 1, 2015 Last Day of *Early Bird Registration* for the 2015 National Assembly
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- September 9, 2015 *Prior Authorization, How Does it Work?*
Webinar Conference
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- October 7-10, 2015 *AOPA 2015 National Assembly*
San Antonio, TX
[Learn more or register online here](#)