



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief

Breaking News

February 18, 2016

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Reserve Your Spot for the February 25th Webinar on Prior Authorization

Please join AOPA in an AOPA Member Exclusive introductory webinar, concerning Prior Authorization, to be held on February 18th & 25th at 1PM EST. AOPA members get to attend for free! Take this opportunity to learn from the experts about what Prior Authorization means for your business and how it will impact you as a practitioner. **Registration for the February 18th Webinar is closed.** Register [here](#) to attend on February 25th.

A second webinar, *Prior Authorization Preparation*," is scheduled to be held on March 24th and 31st at 1PM EST, available for AOPA member and non-member viewing. This webinar will feature any additional updates on Prior Authorization. These webinars in March are \$99 for AOPA members and \$199 for non-members. Register [here](#) for March 24th and register [here](#) to attend on March 31st. We hope to see you there.

Questions about Prior Authorization may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@aopanet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@aopanet.org.

Do You Have Something to Say? Attend the 2016 Policy Forum



Register Now for the 2016 Policy Forum and O&P Legislation-Writing Congress!

New Format - New Program

Join us April 26 -27, 2016 in Washington, DC for a new Policy Forum experience. Former Senator Robert Kerrey will preside over a special session to write a simple one-to-two page *piece of legislation* to take to the Hill to educate your lawmakers. This is your opportunity to make your voice heard and participate in a landmark event.

[Learn more.](#)

Why should you attend? Educate lawmakers on the issues that are important to YOU:

1. *Participate in the 2016 O&P Legislation-Writing Congress - make your voice heard.*
2. *Ensure O&P has fair representation in any O&P LCDs*
3. *Make sure Prior Authorization is administered fairly*
4. *Help Curb RAC audit practices that harm honest providers and don't prevent fraud*
5. *Prevent the Expansion of Off-the-Shelf Orthoses and Competitive Bidding*
6. *Showcase the value of O&P professionals as health providers by simply sharing a personal story how O&P restores lives and saves money.*

**April 26-27, 2016: Washington, DC
Washington Marriott at Metro Center**

[Learn more and register now.](#)

Jurisdiction D Releases Pre-Payment Audit Results for OTS Walking Boots and Diabetic Shoes

Noridian Healthcare Solutions, LLC., who serves as the Jurisdiction D DME MAC contractor recently released pre-payment audit results for off the shelf (OTS) walking boots described by HCPCS code L4361 and diabetic shoes described by HCPCS code A5500.

The pre-payment audit for OTS walking boots involved 110 claims of which 74 were denied resulting in a claim denial rate of 66%. Primary denial reasons included a lack of documentation supporting the medical need for the walking boot, incomplete or missing medical records, incomplete or non-existent proof of delivery documentation and a missing or incomplete detailed written order. Based on the results of the initial pre-payment probe

review, Jurisdiction D announced that it will begin a widespread pre-payment review of all claims submitted for L4361.

The pre-payment audit for diabetic shoes described by A5500 involved 3,949 claims of which 3,354 were denied resulting in an overall claim denial rate of 84%. Primary denial reasons included no response to the additional documentation request, a lack of documentation of an in-person visit with the supplier of the shoes at the time of delivery, a lack of documentation of one of the pre-requisite conditions by the Certifying Physician, and lack of documentation by the Certifying Physician that he/she is treating the patient's systemic diabetic condition. Based on the current results of the ongoing pre-payment audit for diabetic shoes, Jurisdiction D will continue to audit claims for A5500 on a pre-payment basis.

AOPA members are reminded of the importance of ensuring that all required documentation is in place prior to submitting a claim to the DME MACs.

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

Earn CE Credits Reading the *O&P Almanac*

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[Advertise in O&P Almanac: Access the 2016 Media Kit](#)



Safe and Secure in the Digital Age

Today's O&P facilities are leveraging advanced digital business technologies for record keeping, communications, and marketing, but use of these technologies requires adherence to security guidelines to protect patient privacy and prevent breaches.

[Read More](#)

Register Now for the Coding & Billing Seminar in Portland!

AOPAversity

The AOPA Coding Experts are Coming to Portland, Oregon April 11-12!

The world of coding and billing has changed dramatically in the last few years. The AOPA experts are here for you! The Coding & Billing Seminar will teach you the most up-to-date information to advance your O&P practitioners' and billing staff's coding knowledge.

The seminar includes hands-on breakout sessions, where you will practice coding complex devices, including repairs and adjustments. Breakouts are tailored specifically for practitioners and billing staff. Start the year off right for your business, staff, and patients!

Join your Colleagues April 11 & 12 in Portland, OR!

Top 10 Reasons to Attend

1. **Get Your Claims PAID**
2. **Increase Your Company's Bottom Line**
3. **Stay Up-To-Date On Billing Medicare**
4. **Code Complex Devices**
5. **Earn 14 CE Credits**
6. **Learn About Audit Updates**
7. **Overturn Denials**
8. ***Submit YOUR Specific Questions Ahead of Time***
9. **Advance Your Career**
10. **AOPA Coding & Billing Experts with over 70 Years of Combined Experience**

Don't miss the opportunity to experience two jam-packed days of valuable O&P coding and billing information. [Learn more and see the rest of the year's schedule here.](#)



REGISTER NOW!

Alarming O&P Provisions Included in the President's Proposed Budget

The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2017, sent to Congress by President Obama on February 9, contains some wording that could cause concern and possible panic in the O&P community. Page 72, under the heading "***Provide Authority to Expand Competitive Bidding for Certain Durable Medical Equipment***" contains the text "This proposal expands the competitive bidding program to additional categories, including: inhalation drugs, all prosthetics and orthotics, ...". ([Read the full excerpt.](#))

The excerpt from the Budget Message should be taken in the context that it is unlikely to see the light of day in an election year with this Congress. AOPA has continually kept the O&P community aware of the prospect of expanded competitive bidding even though the current statutory provisions limit competitive bidding to Off-the-Shelf (OTS) orthotics, which CMS has continually pushed the envelope on in expanding the number of eligible devices defined as OTS.

The President's Budget Message is another wake-up call for O&P being in the gun sights for competitive bidding even though it is unlikely in the very near future. It is also unlikely that a Republican Congress would enact any law with ramifications that an amputee veteran would be perceived as potentially receiving their prosthesis in a UPS delivered brown box (political perception sometimes is at least as important as reality).

However, this sends a clear message that AOPA needs to continue with its vigilance about preventing the expansion of competitive bidding. AOPA will continue to be your advocate on Capitol Hill, educating lawmakers about the realities of providing high quality O&P care in an increasingly hostile regulatory climate. AOPA will continue our work behind the scenes fighting harmful RAC audit practices, attempts at expanded competitive bidding, and sharing the message that orthotists and prosthetists are healthcare providers and not DME providers. Member dues make this advocacy possible and this year is no exception. If you have not renewed your 2016 membership, now is the time. And share with your colleagues that all O&P practices need to join in to strengthen our efforts.

If this is what the federal government has in mind for the future of your business, can you really afford NOT to be a member of AOPA?

To renew membership or obtain a membership application for a colleague, please contact Betty Leppin at BLEppin@AOPAnet.org

Articles Published in the Military Medicine Journal on Cost-Effectiveness of O&P Care, and OTS Orthotics

All AOPA members will be receiving in the mail a copy of the recent *Military Medicine* Supplement. *Military Medicine* is the official journal publication of the Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS), and this edition arises in conjunction with the topics covered at the December annual meeting of AMSUS.

There are two articles that are very important to all AOPA members which are included in the edition. Most members are aware of the Dobson-DaVanzo study on cost-effectiveness, which demonstrates, using four years of Medicare data, that timely O&P intervention saves payers' money (the study has been a central feature of the www.MobilitySaves.org website, and you may

wish to take a look there also). Dr. Allen Dobson, the author of this research, presented his work at the AMSUS meeting, and the attached manuscript will make this work widely available for citation for use by payers (including both Medicare and private sector providers), and others to show the value of O&P care (page 18).

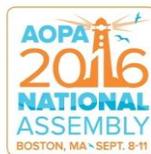
Secondly, this edition also includes the manuscript developed by a Multi-Disciplinary Task Force headed by John Fisk, M.D., with physician representatives from both physical medicine and rehabilitation, and orthopedic surgery, a physical therapist, and certified O&P professionals around key issues on the orthotic treatment team, distinctions between OTS and customized orthotics, the importance of the orthotist's notes and records, and other key clinical issues (page 11). This publication is particularly timely in establishing this valuable consensus viewpoint at a time when orthotic care, and its reimbursement are attracting greater attention and scrutiny.

There are also several reasons why we are especially pleased to see both of these articles appearing in *Military Medicine*. This journal is a peer-reviewed medical journal, listed in the Index Medicus, which conveys substantial credibility for these papers, placing it in the top tier for purposes of medical citations, and because of the importance of topics covered in this journal to Congressional Appropriations and Department of Defense matters, *Military Medicine* is circulated to all Congressional Offices, giving these messages great reach to our lawmakers.

[View the abstracts for the “Economic Value of Prosthetic Services Among Medicare Beneficiaries: A Claims-Based Retrospective Cohort Study” and “Suggested Guidelines for the Prescription of Orthotic Services, Device Delivery, Education, and Follow-up Care: A Multidisciplinary White Paper”.](#)

[Access the articles online.](#) Please note that a paid subscription is required for access.

Present at the 2016 National Assembly in Boston



**AOPA National Assembly and New England Chapter Meeting
John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center in Boston, MA
September 8-11, 2016**

The 2016 Planning Committee is seeking high-quality education presentations for the combined 99th Annual AOPA National Assembly and New England Academy Chapter Meeting to be held September 8-11, 2016 at the Hynes Convention Center in downtown Boston, MA.

Your submissions, based on sound research and strong empirical data, will set the stage for a broad curriculum of highly valued clinical and scientific offerings at the 2016 National Meeting. All free paper abstracts for the 2016 AOPA National Assembly must be submitted electronically. Abstracts submitted by e-mail or fax will not be considered. All abstracts will be considered for both podium and poster presentations. The review committee will grade each submission via a blind review process, based on the criteria below and reach a decision regarding acceptance of abstracts.

- Relevance, level of interest in topic

- Quality of Scientific Content
- Quality of Clinical Content

Submission Deadline – The submission deadline is March 31, 2016.

Clinical Free Papers – Those wishing to present an Orthotic, Prosthetic or Pedorthic Free Paper should [submit here](#) to have their paper considered for presentation at the 2016 National Meeting. The top scoring papers will compete for the prestigious Thranhardt Award.

Technician Program – If you would like your Technical presentation considered for the Technical Education Track, please [submit your paper here](#). The planning committee is specifically looking for fabrication techniques to be presented in the form of a “cooking show” style demonstration. Please contact us with questions assembly@aopanet.org or 571-431-0808.

Business Education Program – Please [submit your business education paper here](#). The top papers will be considered for the prestigious Sam E. Hamontree, CP (E) Business Education Award.

Symposia – If you are interested in organizing a Symposium, then please [submit here](#). Scientific Symposia should present thematically related research addressing significant problems or controversies in Orthotics, Prosthetics or Pedorthics. The symposium should bring together one or more of the world's leading researchers to present current developments and planned research directions. Where appropriate, symposium should present differing points of view on a particular topic.

Student/Resident Poster Submission: AOPA invites students and residents to present orthotic/prosthetic research findings or a particular case study via a poster presentation. When students and/or residents submit an abstract for a poster, they are entered to win one of two prestigious awards--The Otto and Lucille Becker Award will be presented for the best orthotic abstract submitted and the Edwin and Kathryn Arbogast Award for the best prosthetic abstract submitted by a qualifying student or resident.

- ✓ The poster must be exhibited and presented at the AOPA National Assembly for the award recipient to receive the prize. The winners of the two scientific poster awards will be published in the O&P Almanac.
- ✓ The winners will receive a \$500 cash award, registration to the show, coach-class airfare to the National Assembly and three nights hotel. To qualify to present a poster in this category and eligible for consideration for this award, the main author must be a student (baccalaureate or masters level) or a resident at a qualified patient care facility.
- ✓ Abstracts will not be considered for either award if they have been previously presented, published, or are currently submitted with pending decision on acceptance elsewhere.
- ✓ These awards have been made possible by a special endowment by Becker Orthopedic and WillowWood.
- ✓ The Award Winner’s associated school will also be honored with an award.

Please [submit your poster paper here](#).

Questions? Contact Tina Moran at tmoran@aopanet.org or (571) 431-0808.

Contact AOPA Headquarters at (571) 431-0876 or assembly@AOPAnet.org with questions about the submission process or the National Assembly in general.

Upcoming AOPA Events

- February 18 & 25, 2016 *Introduction to Prior Authorization*
AOPA Webinar
Registration Closed for Feb. 18th. Register for the [25th](#)
- March 9, 2016 *Shift the Liability: The Proper Use of the ABN Form Pass*
AOPA Webinar
[Learn more or register here](#)
- April 26 & 27, 2016 *AOPA Policy Forum*
Washington, DC
[Learn more or register here](#)