



**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

The Haiti Aftermath: How O&P Can Help

Since last week's massive earthquake and powerful aftershocks devastated the nation of Haiti, there has been an intensive response to the structural and personal needs of the country and the victims of this horrible disaster. In recent days, there has been a huge, and very diverse, outpouring of concern and commitment to assist with the treatment and rehabilitation of survivors. In particular, there are many Haitians who survived the earthquake, but not before losing one or more limbs. A current estimate from the [BBC](#) reports that in the earthquake's wake there will possibly be as many as 200,000 new amputees in the country.

This reality has brought interest in O&P from former President Bill Clinton, former FEMA Administrator and emergency management expert James Lee Witt, Senator Tom Harkin, the Department of Defense, Dr. William Kennedy Smith, and a host of others.

In addition to donating \$15,000 to be distributed among Helping Hands for Haiti, Doctors Without Borders, and the Amputee Coalition of America (to assist with the costs of transferring used prosthetic equipment to Haiti), the **AOPA** Board of Directors has announced that **AOPA** will help coordinate an industry-wide effort by providing the [AOPAnet.org](#) Web site to help bring together offers of assistance and aid to these amputee patients. This support will occur on multiple levels, including serving as a clearinghouse that will connect Haiti-based prosthetic patients with volunteer professional services and prostheses.

[Please click here and fill out this form to join this much-needed effort.](#)

By completing this form, members can:

- donate money to groups who are currently assisting survivors;
- donate used prosthetic equipment for eventual shipment/availability to survivors;
- patient care providers who are interested and willing to travel to Haiti as a volunteer caregiver may leave information about themselves;
- supplier/manufacture members may register and indicate materials/equipment that their companies would make available for contribution to Haiti; and
- conversely, non-profit charitable entities providing relief services in Haiti can catalogue their specific needs for equipment and professionals to be matched with available resources offered by volunteers.

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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RAC Audits Affecting O&P

AOPA is hearing of increasing instances of O&P audit activity by Medicare Recovery Audit Contractors (RACs). RACs are specialized auditors working on behalf of Medicare to recoup payments on claims that were paid as far back as October 2007. They are paid on a contingency basis, meaning they receive a percentage of what they recover as payment for their services. What started as a small demonstration project in three markets has now been expanded into a permanent nationwide overpayment recovery effort by Medicare.

There are four RAC contractors responsible for performing these audits. The RAC jurisdictions mirror those of the four DME MAC jurisdictions. Information about each RAC, including a link to its website is below:

RAC	Website	E-Mail	Telephone Number
Region A: Diversified Collection Services	www.dcsrac.com	info@dcsrac.com	1-866-201-0580
Region B: CGI	http://racb.cgi.com	racb@cgi.com	1-877-316-7222
Region C: Connolly Inc.	www.connollyhealthcare.com/RAC	RACinfo@connollyhealthcare.com	1-866-360-2507
Region D: Health DataInsights	http://racinfo.healthdatainsights.com	racinfo@emailhdi.com	Part A: 866-590-5598 Part B: 866-376-2319

If you receive correspondence from any of the above organizations, chances are the RAC will already has or will be performing post payment review of several of your past claims. If you receive an overpayment notice and you believe the claims were billed appropriately, you should notify the RAC immediately so that you do not lose the right to appeal any overpayment decisions.

Look for more information about RAC audits and their potential impact on O&P in the March edition of the *O&P Almanac's* "Reimbursement Page."

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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Take the AOPA Business Conditions Survey Today!

The Business Conditions Survey for December 2009 is now available. This month's survey asks questions about year-to-year and 2008-to-2009 revenue comparisons and the rate of reimbursement from state and federal payers.

[Click here to take the December 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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Space Still Available for "Advanced Coding & Billing Techniques" in Atlanta

There's still time to register for **AOPA's** "Mastering Medicare: Advanced Coding & Billing Techniques" seminar, which will be held in Atlanta at the InterContinental Buckhead Hotel on February 18-19. At this valuable two day course, you will:

- Learn how to code complex devices, including repairs and adjustments, through interactive discussions with **AOPA** experts and your colleagues;
- Join in-depth discussions on compliance with Medicare billing rules and documentation expectations;
- Learn how to assess compliance risk areas and deal with them;
- Learn successful appeal strategies and hints on avoiding claim denials;
- Join break-out sessions for practitioners and office staff; and
- Get detailed information on hot topic issues in O&P

Plus, attendees can earn 14 credits in two days.

Cost to attend is \$550 for the first attendee from a given location; any additional attendees pay just \$500. (For nonmembers, the cost is \$750 for the first attendee and \$700 for any additional attendees.) This course will also be offered May 24-25 in Pittsburgh and October 14-15 in Las Vegas. If you haven't taken advantage of this terrific learning opportunity yet, plan to join us in 2010, or send the staff member (or members) from your office who works most with coding and billing.

Seminar attendees receive a rate of \$175 per night (single/double occupancy) at the InterContinental Buckhead. Make hotel reservations by calling (800) 496-7621; mention code EU4 to get AOPA's group rate. This rate will be available to AOPA Members until Wednesday, February 3.

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

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Register Now for the February 10 Audio Conference, "Hints on Passing Your Supplier Standards Inspection"

February's Medicare audio conference, "Hints on Passing Your Supplier Standards Inspection," will be held on Wednesday, February 10 from 1-2 p.m. Eastern. Join **AOPA's** Medicare experts to learn:

- What questions do auditors always ask?
- What documentation will they want to see?
- What are my options if I fail the inspection?
- How do I prepare my staff for inspections?

Cost is just \$99 per line for member companies and any number of staff may listen on a given line. (Nonmembers pay \$199 per line.) Those needing CE can obtain 1.5 credits by taking the provided quiz and scoring at least 80%. Quizzes must be returned within 30 days.

[Click here to register.](#)

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

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Abstract Submissions for 2010 Assembly Due in Three Days

The deadline to submit clinical and business abstracts for presentation at the 2010 **AOPA** National Assembly is this Friday, January 29! All interested presenters should submit an abstract of their proposed scientific paper or description of their proposed business paper. Presentations in Orlando will be 15 or 30 minutes - based on the strength of the abstract as well as the amount of time requested by the presenter.

Types of presentations desired are:

- Scientific papers based on sound research and supported by sound data;
- Clinical papers based on case studies and outcomes;
- Clinical papers based on anecdotal observations and opinions;
- Clinical papers based on significant experience with a technique, component, or system;
- Reports on new products, components or systems (with no commercials, please).

[Click here to submit your clinical presentation abstract.](#)

Presentations will be selected from among papers received by the **AOPA** Assembly Program Committee. Eligible presenters will receive a complimentary full-conference registration for the 2010 **AOPA** National Assembly. An electronic Call for Papers form should be submitted to Tina Moran at **AOPA** *no later than January 29, 2010*.

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

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O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

Prepare Yourself with the Best Tools of the Trade: Pre-Order 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. 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:

- 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

Iraq war veteran and legislative research specialist **Jose R. Ramos** has joined The Board of Directors of the [Board of Certification/Accreditation, International](#) (BOC).

[Orthocare Innovations](#) announced the addition of **Dr. Radu Litiu** as Software Architect.

[PEL Supply](#) has named **Louis Brossard** as the new Director of Sales.

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Businesses in the News

The [Amputee Coalition of America](#) (ACA) is now accepting applications for the second annual Christina Skoski, M.D., Scholarship until March 15, 2010. The fund will once again award a one-time, \$1,000 scholarship to a student with limb loss who has a special desire to learn and exhibits potential for success. The scholarship is only open to undergraduate students who will be entering or who are already attending a 4-year college. To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be amputees and have a minimum high-school grade-point average (GPA) of 3.5 and a minimum ACT score of 30 or SAT score of 1340. They must also submit a letter of recommendation from a high-school adviser. Additionally, the student or his or her parent/legal guardian must be a current member of the ACA. All majors are welcome.

The [Amputee & Prosthetic Center](#) (TAPC) in Houston, Texas and the charity [Limbs of Love](#) are sending hundreds of prosthetic components and supplies as well as volunteering its prosthetic professionals to fit limbs on Haitian amputees in the upcoming months.

[Hanger Orthopedic Group](#) and its philanthropic organization The **Hanger Ivan R. Sabel Foundation** that it will provide \$250,000 in funding and orthopedic devices to assist with the medical needs of those affected by the earthquake in Haiti.

[Hedgecock Artificial Limb Co.](#) celebrates its 100th Anniversary this year.

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Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA in Advance** will arrive in your inbox on February 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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