



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief

Breaking News

January 6, 2015

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Introducing *AOPA's Take*...Where You Go When You Need to Know!!!

As we begin 2015, AOPA is excited to offer a new form of communication to all members of the O&P community, *AOPA's Take*. Using a blog style format, *AOPA's Take* will keep you in the loop regarding news and information that is vital to the business of O&P. While AOPA has established lines of communication through traditional venues such as the *O&P Almanac* and the *SmartBrief* newsletter, *AOPA's Take* will follow a different approach that will focus on specific issues, in a timely manner that are significant today, right now. Communication through *AOPA's Take* will be immediate, keeping you informed of new information and developments as they happen.



AOPA has a long history of leading the way in ensuring that members of the O&P community have the tools to make sound decisions regarding the direction of their businesses. *AOPA's Take* will continue this history by quickly becoming the best source for immediate access to breaking news that affects your O&P business.

AOPA's Take is available at no charge to all members of the O&P community and subscribing is simple. Go to www.aopastake.org and click on the subscribe button. Fill out a few fields and you're in!

Welcome to *AOPA's Take*.....Where you go when you need to know!

Save the Date for the 2015 AOPA Policy Forum

Mark **March 23-25** in your Calendar to Make a Difference!

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 lobbyists.



Join us **March 23-25** at the Renaissance Hotel in Washington, DC. Stay tuned for more details!

AOPA Submits Comments on CMS Proposed Rule Regarding Essential Health Benefits



On December 22, 2014, AOPA submitted extensive comments in response to a proposed rule issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services entitled, “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; HHS Notice of Benefit and Payment Parameters for 2016”.

This sweeping regulation proposed several updates to the Affordable Care Act that will go into effect in 2016, including a proposed definition of the term “habilitative services” as it relates to provision of essential health benefits under the requirements of the Affordable Care Act.

AOPA’s comments encouraged CMS to include prosthetics and orthotics in any standard definition of habilitative services and also encouraged CMS to establish a standard definition for the term “rehabilitative services” that also specifically included orthotics and prosthetics. AOPA’s comments also reiterated AOPA’s concern regarding the decision to allow individual states to define essential health benefits through the use of benchmark plans. AOPA pointed out several inconsistencies within coverage parameters that have already occurred through delegation of authority to the states regarding essential health benefits.

The Office of Personnel Management released an almost identical proposed rule around the same time as the CMS proposed rule. AOPA submitted essentially identical comments on this proposed rule as the comments that were submitted to CMS. AOPA’s full comments may be viewed [here](#).

Questions may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

CMS Announces Single DMEPOS RAC Contract Awarded to Connolly LLC

In February 2014, as the initial Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) contracts were reaching the end of their term, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced it will be consolidating the RAC contract for DMEPOS, Home Health and Hospice services into a single RAC contract that will provide all RAC services nationwide for these three benefit categories. Previously these services were performed by four independent RAC contractors, one for each Medicare jurisdiction.

On December 30, CMS finally announced the new single RAC contractor for all DMEPOS, Home Health and Hospice services. The contract was awarded to Connolly LLC; Connolly previously handled the RAC duties for Jurisdiction C.

[In the February 20, 2014 AOPA SmartBrief](#) we informed you that as part of the new contract CMS also planned to address some of the concerns raised about the RAC program including reducing provider/supplier burden, increased CMS oversight of its contractors and increasing the transparency of the RAC program. To see a summary of how CMS is addressing these concerns with the new Connolly contract [click here](#).

New England Orthotic and Prosthetic Systems LLC Announces New COO, CAO



New England Orthotic and Prosthetic Systems LLC (NEOPS) has announced new leadership for 2015. Effective January 1, David Mahler, CPO, has been promoted to chief operating officer and Terri Bragdon will become chief administrative officer. Mahler began his career at NEOPS in 2000 as a staff resident and became a partner/manager of the Branford, CT branch. Bragdon began her career at NEOPS 11 years ago and has worked most recently as director of purchasing.

ABC Introduces New Accreditation Compliance Kit

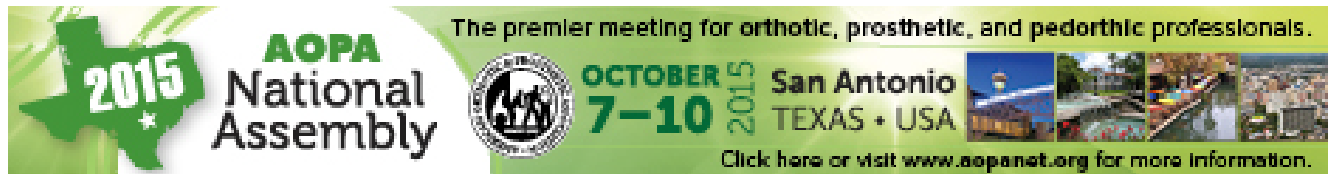
American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics, Inc. (ABC) has created a new resource exclusively for its accredited facilities. The Accreditation Compliance Kit will help facility owners and business managers maintain compliance with ABC accreditation throughout the year.

The Kit includes a 12-month calendar with ABC advice and tips for the most critical standards and an online Resource Pack with form and document templates as well as ABC's comprehensive Facility Accreditation Guide.



The templates are available through the facilities' MY ABC account on the ABC website, abcop.org, and include an employee verification form, sample patient satisfaction survey, and other documents. Users can simply download and customize the forms to their personal needs and brand them with their facility's information. The Compliance Calendar was recently mailed to each ABC accredited facility. ABC's goal is to continually provide tools and resources to help its facility owners with their accreditation needs and feels confident that these latest tools will meet that goal.

Call for Papers: Become a Presenter at the 2015 AOPA National Assembly



Share Your Expertise * Advance Your Career * Improve Patient Care Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas

AOPA is seeking high-quality education presentations for the 98th Annual AOPA National Assembly.

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 2015 AOPA National Assembly. All free paper abstracts for the 2015 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

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 2015 Assembly. The top scoring papers will compete for the prestigious Thranhardt Award.

Technician Program – If you would like your Technical education paper considered for submission in the Technical Track, please to [submit your paper here](#).

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](#).

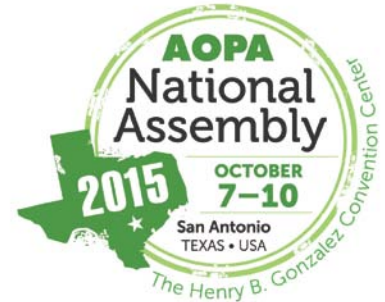
Student Poster Submissions – Coming Soon

Technical Fabrication Contest Submissions – Coming Soon

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

2015 AOPA National Assembly Exhibit Space is NOW AVAILABLE!

AOPA is currently organizing its 2015 National Assembly, which is the country's oldest and largest meeting for the orthotic, prosthetic, and pedorthic profession in the United States. Expand your knowledge, grow your market presence, and advance your career at this unique gathering of high visibility and importance.



- Build your customer base and increase sales by meeting with Owners who actually make the final decisions on purchases.
- Experience face-to-face time with existing customers to answer questions and build new relationships.
- Enjoy sponsored networking opportunities, including an opening reception in the exhibit hall.
- Take advantage of fun traffic-building opportunities.
- Take advantage of education sessions to learn what's happening with regulatory agencies that affect the success of your product.
- Increase visibility for your company/organization in a targeted market.
- Host a Manufacturer's Workshop and/or Product Preview Theater presentation.
- Speak to AOPA reimbursement experts who can answer all your O&P coding, reimbursement and compliance questions.
- Hear from top researchers and clinicians to learn what products and support is needed from manufacturers.
- Participate in key education programs and plenary sessions.
- Be a part of the largest exhibit hall in the US for the orthotic, prosthetics and pedorthic profession, and much more!

More information on exhibiting can be found [here](#). For any exhibitor questions, please contact Kelly O'Neill at KOneill@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0852



Upcoming AOPA Events

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| Jan 14, 2015 | <i>Fill In the Blanks: VA Contracting and the New Template</i>
Webinar Conference
<u>Learn more or register online here</u> |
| Feb 9-10, 2015 | <i>AOPA Mastering Medicare: Essential Coding & Billing Seminar</i>
Savannah, GA
<u>Learn more or register online here</u> |
| Feb 11, 2015 | <i>Find Success: Tips, Strategies and Understanding the Appeals Process</i>
Webinar Conference
<u>Learn more or register online here</u> |