



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

www.AOPAnet.org

## **AOPA In Advance SmartBrief**

*Breaking News*

March 3, 2015

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### **OMHA Announces New ALJ Appeal Status Information Portal**

The Office of Medicare Hearings and Appeals (OMHA), the entity which handles all Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) hearings and requests, the third level of appeal, has announced a new system for you to track the status of your appeal requests. This new tracking portal is called the ALJ Appeal Status Information System (AASIS) and may be accessed on through the OMHA website or by clicking [here](#). The AASIS will inform you if your appeal has been received, assigned, in deliberation, decided, combined or reopened.

The AASIS will only provide information on appeals and requests for appeals that have been entered into the OMHA system. The OMHA has stated that due to the current backlog of appeals it is expected to take at least 16 weeks, from your mailing/requesting date, before the OMHA can enter it into their system and have it appear on the AASIS site.

Any questions please contact Joe McTernan at [jmcternan@AOPAnet.org](mailto:jmcternan@AOPAnet.org) or Devon Bernard at [dbernard@AOPAnet.org](mailto:dbernard@AOPAnet.org).

## Revised Lower Limb Prostheses Policy Has Been Released

The DME MACs have recently released a revised Lower Limb Prostheses medical policy which has an effective date of January 1, 2015. AOPA is currently in the process of conducting an in depth review of the revisions to determine how they may affect you and your organization.

A preliminary review of the new policy indicates that the revisions appear to be minor. For example, the policies have updated the code language for L7367, to reflect the code descriptor change which became active on January 1 of this year. Also, it appears that the revisions include the inclusion of some standard documentation and medical necessity language, already found in other Medicare documents.

A copy of the revised lower limb policy may be found on your DME MAC website or by clicking [here](#).

If AOPA's in depth review of the policy revisions determines there any possible conflicts or concerns, AOPA will address them immediately with the DME MACs.

Any questions? Contact Joe McTernan at [jmcternan@AOPAnet.org](mailto:jmcternan@AOPAnet.org) or Devon Bernard at [dbernard@AOPAnet.org](mailto:dbernard@AOPAnet.org)

## Nick Ackerman Named to Forty Under 40



Nick Ackerman, CP, Director of Prosthetics, American Prosthetics & Orthotics (APO), which has patient care facilities throughout Iowa, has been named to the Des Moines Business Record's annual Forty Under 40 list of honorees.

The Forty Under 40 refers to 40 business and professional leaders in the greater Des Moines community who are under the age of 40. Ackerman was selected based on his contributions to his profession, including his support and mentoring of the amputee community and wounded service members. As a bilateral BK amputee since childhood, Ackerman delivers an inspirational message on not being limited by physical disability. A graduate of Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa, Nick won the 2001 NCAA Division III Wrestling Championship – the first athlete to become a national champion without the use of his legs. The NCAA named Ackerman's wrestling championship one of its "25 Defining Moments in NCAA History."

Furthering rights of amputees, Ackerman played an instrumental role in getting lawmakers to pass the Iowa Prosthetic Parity Law (2009) which guarantees access by amputees to comprehensive health insurance coverage for prosthetic care.

## Join the Mobility Saves Movement



The Mobility Saves Facebook campaign has reached over 5,000 followers and we can't express our gratitude and appreciation at this supportive community. This is YOUR community. Please keep passing along the Mobility Saves message to your colleagues and friends. The purpose of this campaign

is to raise awareness, provide support, and most of all educate payers, regulators, referral sources, practitioners, and consumers that the research shows Mobility Saves!

1. Visit [MobilitySaves.org](http://MobilitySaves.org) to learn more and utilize the cost-effectiveness study! Download the brochures, PowerPoints, and white papers.
2. Follow Mobility Saves on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#)!
3. Spread the word to practitioners, payers, and referral sources!
4. Submit Testimony [here](#), in the form of a video clip, photo, or personal story.

**SUBMIT VIDEO**



*Spread the good word about the valuable benefits of O&P Care*

**Get Social with #MobilitySaves**



## Call for Papers: Deadline is March 10, 2015



The AOPA National Assembly Planning Committee has issued a call for papers for the 98<sup>th</sup> Annual AOPA National Assembly to be held October 7-10, 2015 in San Antonio, Texas. The submission deadline is March 10, 2015.

Share your expertise and advance your career by being part of the country's oldest and largest meeting for the orthotic, prosthetic and pedorthic profession.

- Papers are being accepted for podium, poster and/or symposium sessions for each of the five concurrent education tracks (orthotic, prosthetic, pedorthic, technician, and business). For more information or to submit a paper [click here](#).
- All submission must be submitted electronically.
- Before submitting a paper, please review the model for the abstract format which also provides additional information about the submission process. The model abstract is [available here](#).

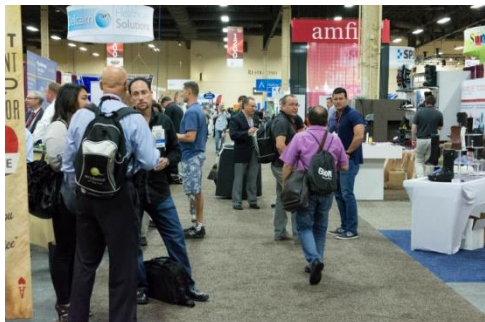
### For general information about the Assembly

**Visit:** <http://www.aopanet.org/education/2015-assembly/>

**Email:** [Assembly@AOPAnet.org](mailto:Assembly@AOPAnet.org)

**Contact:** Tina Moran at (571) 431-0808

Don't miss this unique, fun learning experience.



## Take the Lead: Policy Forum 2015

The 2015 O&P Policy Forum will be held March 23-24, 2015 with post-conference educational events being held March 24-25 at the Renaissance Hotel, 999 Ninth Street, NW, Washington, DC.

The Policy Forum is your best opportunity to learn the latest legislative and regulatory details 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. You will be well prepared to meet with your member of Congress after day 1. On day 2 each state delegation will go on appointments together as time allows.

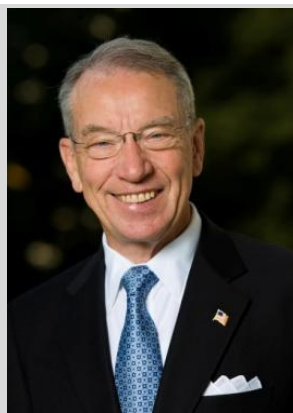
**Why should you attend?** Educate your lawmakers on the issues that are important to YOU:

1. Recognition of the Orthotist/Prosthetist's notes as part of the medical record
2. RAC /Medicare Contractor audit practices that harm honest providers and don't prevent fraud
3. Preventing the Expansion of the Off-the-Shelf Orthoses Category and Competitive Bidding
4. Equitable reimbursement for medically necessary services
5. The value of O&P professionals as allied health providers, and enforcing rules limiting Medicare reimbursement to licensed and/or accredited facilities-certified professionals
6. How O&P care can save Medicare money
7. Distinguish O&P from DME – endorse legislation that recognizes that you are more than a supplier

### Speaker Highlights



Welcome and Insight into Health Care in the New Congress –  
*Representative Brett Guthrie (R-KY)*



2015 and Beyond—The Good and the Bad—  
*Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA)*



Congressional Perspective—What Is the Future of Health Going to Look Like, 2014-2016—  
*Representative Mark Meadows (R-NC)*

Maximize your time away from the office by taking advantage of the post-forum modules. Customize your schedule and register for the additional modules you are most interested in.

**AOPA Extended Educational Sessions: Module I, Tuesday, March 24, 2015**

**Tuesday, March 24, 2015, 5:00 to 8:00 pm -- A. Special Business and Clinical Educational Program Begins, A Closer Look at How Washington WILL Impact Your Business -- Separate Subscription Required & Buffet Dinner Served**

1. Competitive Bidding—Winners, Losers and Determining If You Want to Play

*Joseph McTernan, Director of Coding & Reimbursement Services, Education and Programming*

2. A Surgeon's Perspective on O&P --

To be announced

3. With Wal-Mart as a Health Insurer, and Amazon Delivering Orthotic Braces within Four Hours: Who are Your Friends and Who Are Your Enemies—A Fresh Look at O&P Partners and Competitors

*Thomas F. Fise, JD, Executive Director, AOPA*

**AOPA Extended Educational Sessions: Module II, Wednesday, March 25, 2015**

**Wednesday, March 25, 8:30 am to 1:00 pm, B. Special Business and Clinical Educational Program Begins: Coding, RAC, OTS Coding, Appealing to the ALJ & FDA Educational Program Segments -- Separate Subscription Required**

Breakfast

1. Coding and Reimbursement Segment – *Joseph McTernan, Director of Coding & Reimbursement Services, Education and Programming, AOPA*

- a. Primer: Steps You Can Take to Avoid RAC/Pre-Payment Audits and Succeed If You Get Them
- b. Current Impact of OTS orthotic Codes on Your Business: A Review of Recent Audit Results
- c. Turning Challenges into Opportunities: Strategies to Increase Revenue without Breaking the Rules

2. FDA and Your O&P Business: *Speaker to be announced*

3. Prosthetics & Orthotics, Five Year Fast Forward: Getting the Answers Needed to Preserve and Grow vs. De-Valuing the Core of O&P

*Thomas F. Fise, JD, Executive Director, AOPA*

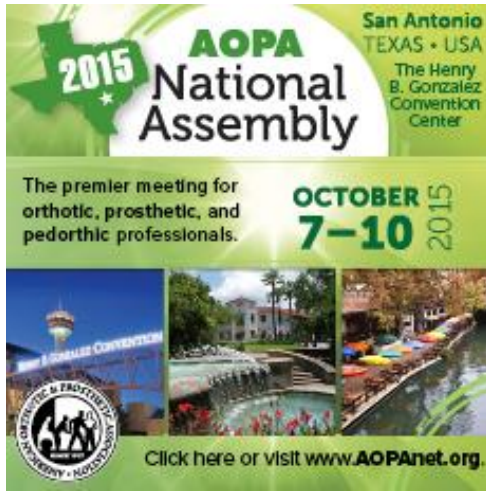
More Information: <http://www.aopanet.org/2015/01/save-the-date-for-the-2015-policy-forum/>

Registration: <https://aopa.wufoo.com/forms/2015-policy-forum-registration/>

Hotel Reservation: <https://aws.passkey.com/g/45902216>

## Save the Date for AOPA's National Assembly

Make plans now to attend the 2015 National Assembly, Oct. 7-10, 2015 in San Antonio.



The 2015 Assembly will be held at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, located on San Antonio's famous riverwalk.

San Antonio's River Walk is one of the most visited sites in Texas, providing scenic pathways and waterways for the city's cultural and historic sites, as well as a picturesque link between restaurants, hotels and shops. The [San Antonio River Walk](#) is a verdant oasis of cypress-lined paved paths, arched stone bridges and lush landscapes. It gently winds through the city center, providing millions of visitors each year with easy access to the city's cultural hot spots, historic sites and other attractions.

Plan ahead and take these four easy steps to get the most of your trip to San Antonio. ,

1. Go to Visit San Antonio.com <http://visitsanantonio.com/> to sign up for San Antonio's official newsletter and learn more about what interests you most. Whether it is the Arts, Music, Festivals, Family, Local Attractions or Shopping you will find a calendar of events and local information at VisitSanAntonio.com
2. Request a Free Visitors Guide – Learn about local attractions and things to do. *Request your guide* here <http://visitsanantonio.com/english/Leisure-Guide-Request-Form>
3. Download SAVE coupons from the San Antonio Vacation Experience. Get exclusive deals and discounts. <http://visitsanantonio.com/VisitSanAntonio/media/vsa-media/SAVE%20Coupons/2014-SAVE-WebCoupons.pdf>
4. Download a copy of the riverwalk map to see all the great places you will want to visit within walking distance to the convention center. [http://visitsanantonio.com/VisitSanAntonio/media/vsa-media/maps/SAT09\\_SA\\_River\\_Walk.pdf](http://visitsanantonio.com/VisitSanAntonio/media/vsa-media/maps/SAT09_SA_River_Walk.pdf)



See you in San Antonio!

## Upcoming AOPA Events

- March 10, 2015      *Deadline for National Assembly Call for Papers*  
[Learn more and apply online here](#)
- March 11, 2015      *Who Gets the Bill: A Complete Look at Medicare Inpatient Billing*  
Webinar Conference  
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- March 23-25          *AOPA Policy Forum*  
Washington, DC  
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- April 8, 2015        *Lower-Limb Prostheses Policy: Learn the Policy Inside and Out*  
Webinar Conference  
[Learn more or register online here](#)
- April 13-14          *Essential Coding & Billing Techniques Seminar*  
Seattle, WA  
[Learn more or register online here](#)