



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

www.AOPAnet.org

## **AOPA In Advance SmartBrief**

*Breaking News*

May 21, 2015

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### **AOPA's Mobility Saves Campaign Mentioned on CNN**

Boston Marathon Bombing Survivor and Amputee [Adrienne Haslet-Davis-mentions Mobility Saves](#), in a CNN Opinion Editorial about the bombing and her new normal since becoming an amputee. Mobility Saves is AOPA's PR campaign to spread the word that O&P care saves lives and money, and Ms. Haslet addressed Congress and staffers at a recent Mobility Saves event. Ms. Haslet-Davis is a ballroom dancer and has been an advocate for O&P Care and other causes since becoming an amputee.



## AOPA & Congress Team up to Hold HHS to Task on OTS Orthotics

Below is the text of an email AOPA Executive Director, Tom Fise, JD, sent to AOPA's Board of Directors and allied organizations announcing the success of the [sign-on letter](#) that obtained the wide support of members of Congress responding to the full court press AOPA members and the other O&P organizations.

*"I am pleased to enclose a copy of the final letter to HHS Secretary Sylvia Burwell, led by Reps. Ryan Costello (R-PA) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and signed by a total of 26 Members of the House of Representatives. As you can see, the letter: (1) presses HHS/CMS to revise the regulatory definition of off-the-shelf orthotics in 42 C.F.R. § 414.402 to conform with the statutory definition, recognizing the clear meaning and limitation of "minimal self-adjustment" (as previously stated in the prior letter from Senators Grassley and Harkin, October, 2014); (2) modify the OTS list and codes to eliminate from that list any device which does not meet fully and unambiguously the statutory definition of OTS orthotics including "minimal self-adjustment;" and (3) reverse the DME MAC action of August 15, 2014 as inconsistent with the APA and an open rulemaking process, and excise the resulting February 18, 2014 FAQ.*



*"AOPA launched the efforts targeted at this letter, but we need to say 'thank you' to a large number of people for helping to carry the effort forward. These include: (a) attendees at the 2015 AOPA Policy Forum who personally requested their legislators to send this message [and those who used AOPAVotes (roughly 700 letters) and other vehicles to write this request to their legislators]; (b) our partner organizations in the O&P Alliance and its Counsel, Peter Thomas, who fostered similar strong efforts advocating for the letter; (c) AOPA's lobbying teams from Alston & Bird and McGuireWoods, and others for relentlessly pushing this message over the past 7 weeks; and (d) Members of Congress and their staffs, and most importantly the staffers of Reps. Costello and Duckworth, who were steadfast in advancing the letter.*

*"IF HHS/CMS takes this message seriously, it would mark both the conclusion to a 15-year struggle to get Medicare to implement and enforce the provisions on licensure and accreditation for O&P that Congress enacted in Section 427 of BIPA 2000, AND reverse Medicare's misguided effort to expand the relatively narrow category of off-the-shelf orthotics beyond the strict terms of the definition Congress wisely established with the "minimal self-adjustment" criteria, remedying both errant, overly expansive rules CMS promulgated in 2007, as well as CMS' failure to finish the proposed rule on OTS orthotics that it initiated in July, 2014 and seemingly abandoned in October, 2014.*

*So, thanks to all, and we will keep everyone posted on feedback as we receive it from CMS and key members of Congress on this issue."*

[Read the letter to HHS Secretary Burwell.](#)

## Amputee Coalition Consults in Department of Defense Research Reviews

The Department of Defense (DOD) has announced two Amputee Coalition-certified peer visitors/peer review advocates have participated in research evaluation reviews for a new \$10 million orthotics and prosthetics research project.

Along with a group of distinguished scientists, Robert Haas of Columbus, Ohio and Tom Coakley of Canton, New York consulted in the evaluation of research applications submitted to the Orthotics and Prosthetics Outcomes Research Program (OPORP), sponsored by the DoD. The OPORP Orthotics and Prosthetics Outcomes Research Award (OPORA) is being offered for the first time in fiscal year 2014 (FY14).

Both transtibial amputees, Haas and Coakley are active in Amputee Coalition programs. They were nominated by the Amputee Coalition for their expertise as certified peer visitors /peer review advocates. The group reviewed approximately 104 research applications.

In 2013 AOPA members sent hundreds of letters, and made calls and personal visits with their legislators in support of S. 521 (which included a provision for the outcomes research funding and was used in the DoD budget). AOPA consultant, Catriona Macdonald of Linchpin strategies worked closely with Sen. Dick Durbin to develop this funding and consulted on areas where the funds would be best used. More information about the Department of Defense Orthotics and Prosthetics Outcomes Research Program is available at [cdmrp.army.mil](http://cdmrp.army.mil).

## New NSC Contractor Announced



On May 13, 2015, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the final award of the National Supplier Clearinghouse (NSC) contract to NCI Information Systems, Inc. a Reston, VA based IT firm that will administer the contract through AdvanceMed, a wholly owned subsidiary that also holds several CMS contracts to serve as regional Zone Program Integrity Contractors (ZPICS). The contract, worth \$52 million, is for one base year and up to 4 additional option years.

Palmetto GBA, who has held the NSC contract since the creation of the NSC almost 20 years ago, filed a protest of the original contract award which was dismissed by the Government Accountability Office, clearing the way for the final award of the NSC contract to NCI. CMS did not provide any specific information regarding when the transition of the NSC contract will occur. AOPA will provide any information regarding the transition as it is announced. AOPA's take on this issue is that this may be a bit of a bumpy road, especially in the beginning of the transition period. Theoretically, the transition should be seamless to the provider community but Palmetto GBA has had 20 years to refine their processes, which still remain far from perfect. NCI based its proposal on its ability to provide streamlined provider enrollment with increased focus on keeping questionable suppliers from enrolling in the Medicare program. While its proposal was successful, in terms of achieving the contract award, the transition to a new contractor always creates the potential for problems and delays in processes. While Palmetto GBA has been far from perfect, NCI is an unknown entity which creates a lot of uncertainty regarding their ability to improve on the processes developed by Palmetto GBA.

## Operation Namaste Providing O&P Care in Nepal

AOPA member Jeff Erenstone of Mountain Orthotic and Prosthetic Services in Lake Placid, NY, is working in Nepal to provide orthopedic and rehabilitation care to survivors of the recent earthquakes. Read more about his efforts and [Operation Namaste](#), and consider a corporate or personal contribution. For more information, contact Mountain Orthotic and Prosthetic at 518/523-2419 or [info@mountainoandp.com](mailto:info@mountainoandp.com).



## The Key to Better Business: 2015 Operating Performance and Compensation Survey

Better business performance starts with measuring key financial indicators and comparing where you are in relation to similar businesses. For a reasonably small investment of your time, AOPA's 2015 Operating Performance and Compensation Survey will provide the data you need to develop specific strategies to gauge and improve the health of your business.



If you've ever wondered if your employees are generating enough sales, or how your spending on materials, advertising, or other expenses compares with similar companies, you will want to participate in the 2015 Operating Performance and Compensation Survey, mailed to members May 1.

The survey takes about 60 minutes to complete and can be returned by fax, or completed online at [www.aopa-survey.com](http://www.aopa-survey.com). The online form has a "save and return" capability which allows you to complete the survey in multiple sittings, if needed. You may also submit your raw data to Industry Insights and they will enter it for you.

AOPA members who participate in the survey receive:

1. **FREE** customized Company Performance Report, comparing your organization with others of similar size and location. (*A private consultant would charge hundreds of dollars for such a report.*)
2. **FREE** copies of the two published reports: 2015 Operating Performance Report and 2015 Compensation Report – valued at \$570.
3. **FREE** Mastering Medicare Webcast series – a \$693 value. You or your colleagues can earn 13.5 CE credits when scoring 80% or higher on the webcast quizzes.

**It's hard to improve if you don't know where you are starting from.**

Contact Betty Leppin at [bleppin@AOPAnet.org](mailto:bleppin@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0876 with questions.

www.aopanet.org

AOPA Mastering Medicare:  
**ESSENTIAL CODING & BILLING SEMINAR**

# MAINTAIN *Your Independence*

**JULY 13-14, 2015**  
PHILADELPHIA, PA

EARN CREDITS  
**14 CE**  
PER SEMINAR

Attend the Mastering Medicare seminar to enhance or refresh your coding and billing skills, learn new techniques and stay informed about important Medicare policy changes.

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 July 13-14 in Philadelphia!**

***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. **Overtake 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 for the AOPAversity Webinar: Stay Out of Trouble: Building a Medicare Approved Compliance Plan

**June 10, 2015, 1:00-2:00 PM EST**

In today's environment of increased provider scrutiny, a well designed, effective compliance plan is a necessity. The ability to make sure your own billing practices are sound may prevent unnecessary audits down the road. Join AOPA for its June webinar, "Stay Out of Trouble: Building a Medicare Approved Compliance Plan"

Topics for discussion will include the following:

How to establish and manage an efficient Compliance Plan

- The need to have a dedicated company Compliance Officer
- OIG guidance on the 7 fundamental elements of an effective compliance plan
- Taking action when compliance deficiencies are discovered
- How and when to perform self-audits
- Providing appropriate compliance training to your staff



AOPA members pay \$99 (nonmembers pay \$199), and any number of employees may participate on a given line. Attendees earn 1.5 continuing education credits by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80 percent. [Register online](#). Contact Devon Bernard at [dbernard@AOPAnet.org](mailto:dbernard@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0854 with content questions. Contact Betty Leppin at [bleppin@AOPAnet.org](mailto:bleppin@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0876 with registration questions.

## Upcoming AOPA Events

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| June 10, 2015    | <i>Stay Out of Trouble: Building a Medicare-Approved Compliance Plan</i><br>Webinar Conference<br><a href="#">Learn more or register online here</a> |
| July 8, 2015     | <i>Who's on First? Medicare as a Secondary Payer</i><br>Webinar Conference<br><a href="#">Learn more or register online here</a>                     |
| July 13-14, 2015 | Essential Coding & Billing Techniques Seminar<br><i>Philadelphia, PA</i><br><a href="#">Learn more or register online here</a>                       |