



**American Orthotic &
Prosthetic Association**

AOPA 1st Quarter 2015 Staff Report

To: AOPA Membership
From: Thomas F. Fise, Executive Director
Date: April 18, 2015

Subject: May Not Be Perfect, But Congress Passed a Longer Term “Doc Fix;” Mobility Saves To Star In Capitol Hill Briefing; 2015 Policy Forum Set the Stage for Lasting Solutions and a Futures Leadership Conference Report.

After years of kicking the can down the road, the U.S. Congress finally designed and passed a longer term solution that satisfied most of the pulls and tugs from within both political parties which was signed into law by the President on April 15th. Failure would have meant an immediate drop in physician fees of 21%. Instead the new law known as the “Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015,” would provide a 0.5% annual increase through 2019 beginning in July 2015. But you can bet the government won’t just print more money to pay for this. It will not be totally offset by spending cuts, but one third of it will impact Medicare beneficiaries and providers to the tune of \$70 billion over ten years. The dollars involved, (\$213 billion) will certainly extract some painful cuts in some areas. Those cuts do not include any cuts that would specifically impact the O&P fee schedule. The new fix has already attracted its share of detractors who claim it’s far from a permanent solution and another fix may be needed down the road. That’s why the AOPA impetus to ramp up comparative effectiveness, cost effectiveness and outcomes measuring research efforts represent the best strategy to make sure our patients aren’t shortchanged and our ability to deliver the best possible care continues. Payers and patients are demanding value and providers are going to have to present unassailable evidence of delivering value to stay in the game.

Capitol Hill Briefings are a very effective tool for educating members of Congress and their staff on the benefits and challenges O&P faces. A Friday, May 1, 2015, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., briefing in the Rayburn House Office Building will focus on the Mobility Saves message of the cost effectiveness of O&P care and will be co-sponsored by the Amputee Coalition and AOPA. The agenda will feature an in-depth briefing by Dobson/DaVanzo, the highly regarded healthcare consulting firm that conducted research commissioned by the Amputee Coalition and funded by AOPA. The briefing will show how the research and analysis using Medicare’s own data proves timely O&P intervention saves money and lives. Adrienne Haslet-Davis, Boston Marathon Amputee, will provide a patient voice along with presenters from the Amputee Coalition and from AOPA’s leadership. A tour of the Mobility Saves website will display all the tools patients,

providers and payers can access to learn more on how to spread the word that Mobility Saves Lives and Money!

AOPA's 2015 Policy Forum delivered a decisive legislative "hat trick" with introduction of the Medicare O&P Improvement Act 2015 in the House (HR 1530) by Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA) and Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA) and in the Senate (S. 829) by Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA). Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) introduced the Medicare Audit Improvement Act of 2015 (HR 1526) in the House of Representatives. The three bills gave the more than 100 attending members who participated in 639 appointments a framework for specific "asks" for their legislators to co-sponsor these bills and to sign on to a letter authored by Rep. Duckworth (D-IL) and Rep. Costello (R-PA) to HHS Secretary Burwell expressing concern that CMS is "attempting to go beyond the definition contained in the legislation," of defining OTS orthotics as requiring only "minimal self-adjustment for appropriate use and do not require expertise in trimming, bending, molding, assembling, or customizing to fit the individual." The letter also points out the fifteen-year delay in promulgating regulations under Section 427 of BIPA that would further protect patient interests and high-handed actions of the DME MACs in making policy instead of providing proper notice and public comment as required in the Administrative Procedure Act.

Futures Leadership Conference Hits All the Right Notes

The January 9, 2015 Futures Leadership Conference attracted some of the best minds in O&P who gave up a weekend to focus on the most pressing issues affecting O&P's future and how can those challenges be met. The lead off speaker, Michael Lovdal, summarized the changing landscape of healthcare followed by Allen Dobson of Dobson/DaVanzo who underscored the importance of data in O&P's survival ability in securing appropriate reimbursements and delivering quality patient care. The message from both - there has to be evidence of value and measurable outcomes backed by research and unassailable data.

Tom Kirk, Ph.D presented the O&P value proposition showcased on the Mobility Saves website and was joined by Tom DiBello, CO, FAAOP and Jim Campbell, PhD, CO, FAAOP to review the proactive steps AOPA has taken through the Survival Imperatives in response to challenges. Vinit Asar, MBA, Professor Hans Georg Nader, Stephen Blatchford and Paul Prusakowski all gave their perspectives on the future of O&P in the opening afternoon session which was followed by five breakout sessions addressing the threats. Another five breakout sessions on the opportunities provided balance as discussion leaders from both breakout sessions summarized their respective group's findings and recommendations.

Sunday morning opened with a recap of day 1 by moderator Michael Oros, CPO, followed by Colin Roskey's crystal ball gazing into what the federal reimbursement and regulatory impediments will look like in the next five years. Lessons learned from a misleading study on the effectiveness of cranial helmets and subsequent media coverage presented by Jim Campbell and William Gustavson alerted the field once again to the importance of having solid research to counteract questionable conclusions that might be drawn from flawed research. Tom Fise, JD, delivered a strong reminder of how the FDA can cause serious problems for every O&P business that does not understand those FDA regulations which apply to O&P. Three topics covered by Michael Oros, Dennis Williams, CO, BOCO and Jonathan Day, CPO, respectively brought focus to the likely service delivery models in the next five years, the manufacturing landscape and C-

Fab utilization and what practitioner skills sets are likely to be needed. The final session heard Charles Birmingham, Ph.D outline the insurer's perspective on O&P followed by other payer perspectives as seen by Rebecca Hast and Ashlie White. Sam Liang, MBA, delivered a strong message on research and outcomes and why they are key survival instruments for O&P. The wrap up and future actions by Charlie Dankmeyer gave everyone a good send off and reflected the upbeat high energy clearly visible in the audience reaction. More than 150 people shared the experience – twice the number expected with a diverse and global representation that truly reflected the immense talent and brainpower the O&P field can muster for an important leadership gathering.

CMS May Be Spending More Restrictive K2-K3 Reimbursement Policies

The Futures Leadership Conference certainly brought home the significance of research to demonstrate O&P value but a Dobson DaVanzo report on how K2 patients who received K3 limbs had lower total healthcare costs than counterpart K2's who received only K2 technology is another evidence of O&P's cost effectiveness. One level higher than the typical CMS designated level had a significant impact on the patient's mobility and overall health record. Less co-morbidity translates into lower long term costs.

This important study and many more AOPA funded research conducted by Dobson/DaVanzo and other researchers are available at no charge to AOPA members on the AOPA website at:

<http://www.aopanet.org/resources/research/> and <http://www.aopanet.org/resources/research/>

Now on to more detail in the Staff Report that follows.

Legislative Activities

Medicare Orthotics and Prosthetics Improvement Act of 2015 (S.829 and HR 1530)

For the 114th session of Congress AOPA and the O&P Alliance pursued a sophisticated strategy to build upon the strength of previous incarnations and provisions of the Medicare O&P Improvement Act with the addition of some new provisions. Past iterations of the bill have been focused on CMS' failure for nearly 15 years to issue regulations under Section 427 of BIPA 2000, and it would further obligate CMS to implement the statutory directives approved in prior Congresses, namely: no payment to anyone who is not properly licensed in O&P in a state that has a license provision, and in states that have not enacted an O&P licensure statute, no payment under Medicare to any provider who does not meet the law's certification requirements. These priorities still need to be accomplished and are included in the House version of the Medicare O&P Improvement Act of 2015 (HR 1530); which was introduced on March 23, 2015 by long time O&P supporters Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA) and Mike Thompson (D-CA). Rep. Peter King (R-NY) and Rep. Steve Stivers (R-NY) quickly signed on as co-sponsors with others soon to follow. Those attending the Policy Forum included in their "ask" that their legislators sign on as co-sponsors. Another "ask" has been for legislators to also sign on to the letter to HHS Secretary Burwell initiated by Rep. Duckworth (D-IL) and Rep. Costello (R-PA).

However, over the last few years many other issues have arisen that must be addressed for the future of O&P. AOPA and the other O&P Alliance members have built those into the Senate version of the Medicare O&P Improvement Act of 2015 (S. 829). This bill was also introduced

on March 23, 2015 by Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA) and co-sponsored by Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA); and it includes the following provisions:

- Recognizes the value of the Orthotist's or Prosthetist's Notes in the Medical record;
- Reinstates and strengthens the statutory definition of "Minimal Self Adjustment" for Off-the-Shelf Orthoses to protect Medicare beneficiaries;
- Distinguishes Orthotic and Prosthetic patient care providers from Suppliers of Durable Medical Equipment (DME); and
- Requires greater transparency and granularity in CMS reporting DME and O&P separately on claims denials and appeal results.

Seldom does a single piece of legislation do so much for a segment of patients and healthcare providers as the new Senate version of The Medicare O&P Improvement Act of 2015. Sen. Grassley, Rep. Glenn Thompson and Rep. Mike Thompson have been previous sponsors and/or cosponsors of previous incarnations of the Medicare O&P Improvement Act and now with the inclusion of Sen. Warner the bi-partisan support for this piece of legislation continues.

The Medicare Audit Improvement Act of 2015 (HR 1526)

On March 23, 2015 Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) introduced the Medicare Audit Improvement Act of 2015 (HR 1526). This piece of legislation would require CMS to recognize the validity of the orthotist's and/or prosthetist's notes in determining the medical necessity of an item being provided to a Medicare beneficiary; and would officially and legislatively separate orthotics and prosthetics from durable medical equipment. The bill would also offer new relief by limiting CMS recoupment on a denied claim to no more than 50% of the claim until the ALJ determination is completed.

If you have not already done so, please be sure to visit AOPAVotes at www.AOPAvotes.org and send a letter to your Senators and Representatives asking them to sponsor the Medicare O&P Improvement Act of 2015 (S.829 and HR 1530). At the moment 88 AOPA members have sent 253 letters to 71 individual members of Congress asking for their support of the Medicare O&P Improvements Act of 2015.

Also send a letter to your Representatives asking them to co-sponsor the Medicare Audit Improvement Act of 2015 (HR 1526). At the moment 46 AOPA members have sent 89 letters to 37 individual members of Congress asking for their support of the Medicare Audit Improvement Act of 2015. This bill can be the solution to the age-old problem of treating DME and O&P as one-size fits all that has vexed O&P providers for years. Please add your name to the list. Just a few minutes are all you'll need to invest to help save your future.

Government Savings Should Call for Common Sense Policy on Recoupment

An AOPA Media Alert on March 19th led by President Charles H. Dankmeyer, Jr., CPO showed how CMS could actually save money by delaying recoupment on denied O&P claims according to a new study by Dobson/DaVanzo commissioned by AOPA. Medicare could have avoided the shuttering of more than 100 O&P businesses by delaying recoupment until after ALJ determinations and saved the government a substantial sum of money in the process. The savings result from CMS avoiding the interest due providers of recouped funds if the denial is overturned at the ALJ level. With delays of three or more years, these interest payments based on 10% or more annual rates could result in CMS basically returning the money and via interest

and bounty payments to audit contractors, eliminating about 30% or more on overturned claims that may have languished in the appeal process for three years. The study concluded CMS could save \$25 million over 10 years. These facts were made available to Rep. Meadows prior to introduction of the Medicare Audit Improvement Act (HR 1526) which does limit CMS recoupment to 50% of claim's value.

Coding and Reimbursement

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

AOPA launched its new blog site, www.aopastake.org in January of 2015 and the feedback has been extremely positive. With over 125 subscribers to date, *AOPA's Take* is creating 'buzz' within the O&P community as the best resource for current news that affects your O&P business. If you currently subscribe to *AOPA's Take* make sure you let your colleagues know what they are missing so AOPA can reach more people.

AOPA's Take is available at no charge to all members of the O&P community and subscribing is simple. Just enter your email address in the sidebar (or header on mobile devices) to subscribe and you will be sure to never miss an entry.

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

Medicare Proposed Rule on Prior Authorization for Certain Prosthetic Items

On May 22, 2014, CMS announced a proposed rule that would implement a prior authorization program for certain lower limb prostheses HCPCS codes. A total of 89 HCPCS codes were included in the master list that was included in the proposed rule. AOPA and its members submitted more than 700 comments expressing concern about several provisions of the proposed rule.

As of the publication of this report, CMS has not issued a final rule regarding the implementation of prior authorization for certain prosthetic services. AOPA remains concerned about the potential impact prior authorization may have on the ability to deliver quality prostheses in a reasonable timeframe and will continue to follow this issue closely. AOPA will communicate any future developments to its members immediately.

Off The Shelf Orthoses

AOPA submitted formal comments on the CMS proposed rule that was intended by CMS to further clarify (AOPA would say "further expand inappropriately") the definition of the term "minimal self adjustment" as it relates to the provision of off the shelf orthoses. This proposed rule, part of the larger proposed rule entitled: *Medicare Program; End-Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System, Quality Incentive Program, and Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (ESRD Rule)* was published in the July 11, 2014 *Federal Register*. AOPA members were responsible for 378 comments in addition to 203 patient comments on this important rule for a total of 581 comments submitted to CMS as a result of the AOPA efforts.

On October 31, 2014, CMS released the final ESRD rule but decided not to implement any of the proposed changes relating to OTS orthotics including the definition of the term "minimal self adjustment" as it relates to the provision of OTS orthoses. By declining to advance its OTS proposal, CMS seemingly also did not implement the provisions of the proposed rule that would

prevent certified orthotic fitters and assistants, operating within their defined scope of practice, from providing custom fitted orthoses. Many would question the motives of an agency which issues a proposed rule, and which prompts a huge response from virtually all the stakeholders, and rather than processing those comments and incorporating them into a final rule, essentially shut down a process, the outcome of which they don't like by essentially saying "Never mind."

Interestingly, prior to the release of the final rule in which CMS elected not to finalize its proposed changes to define who can and cannot fit custom fitted orthoses, the DME MACs updated their Quality Standards for orthoses to reflect virtually verbatim many of the changes that were included in the proposed rule. AOPA has challenged this apparent attempt to ignore the notice and rulemaking requirements of the Administrative Procedures Act by implementing the desired changes through policy. Several discussions have occurred between AOPA and Sean Cavanaugh, Deputy Director of CMS, but as of the date of the publication of this report, policy language remains in effect that restricts certified orthotic fitters from providing anything other than off the shelf orthoses to Medicare beneficiaries. This CMS overreach is one of the issues where CMS actions are challenged by the Costello-Duckworth House sign-on letter to HHS Secretary Burwell.

OTS Orthoses and Competitive Bidding

In January of 2014, CMS reclassified 32 codes as "off the shelf" and created a split code set that created 23 pairs of HCPCS codes that could be delivered as either OTS or custom fitted depending on the need for substantial modification at the time of delivery. The designation of these 52 orthotic HCPCS codes as OTS services clearly signaled the preparation for inclusion of OTS orthoses in future competitive bidding. While, to date, OTS orthoses have not been selected as a competitive bidding category, there is a strong reason to expect a substantial effort to reduce reimbursement for these devices whether that is via inclusion in competitive bidding or by other CMS action at some point in the future. Whether it will be through the traditional method of inclusion in the next round of competitive bidding, scheduled for 2016 or through some other mechanism remains to be seen, but AOPA will continue to follow this issue and provide updates to members as developments occur.

AOPA Participation on DME MAC Advisory Councils

AOPA continues to actively participate on each of the four DME MAC Advisory Councils. These groups meet on a regular basis with representatives of the four DME MACs to discuss provider issues. AOPA has been able to create and maintain open lines of communication with Medicare contractors as a result of participation on the advisory councils.

AOPAversity Educational Events

Mastering Medicare Webinars

In August of 2014 the ever popular monthly Audio Conferences were converted into webinars to help you get the most out of your learning experience. All Webinars begin at 1:00 PM Eastern on the second Wednesday of each month. The Webinars are \$99 each for members and \$199 for non-members. Members can sign up for the entire 2015 series for only \$990 and get two Free. Sign up at www.AOPAnet.org. Mid-year sign ups for the entire series receive a recorded version of sessions missed.

The webinars are a great way to boost employee morale by providing a monthly staff education event and providing needed education and CE Credits.*

The 2015 Schedule

January 14	Fill In the Blanks: VA Contracting and the New Template
February 11	Find Success: Tips, Strategies and Understanding the Appeals Process
March 11	Who Gets the Bill: A Complete Look at Medicare Inpatient Billing
April 8	Lower Limb Prostheses Policy: Learn the Policy Inside and Out
May 13	The New Player in Town: Understand How the RAC Contract Works
June 10	Stay Out of Trouble: Building a Medicare Approved Compliance Plan
July 8	Who's on First? Medicare as a Secondary Payer
August 12	OTS vs. Custom Fit: The True Story
September 9	Prior Authorization, How Does it Work
October 14	Understanding the LSO/TLSO Policy
November 11	How to Make a Good Impression: Marketing Yourself to Your Referrals
December 9	Bringing in the New Year: New Codes and Changes for 2016

**Includes an unlimited number of participants per location. Those needing credit can earn 1.5 Business CEs each by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%. All webinars begin at 1 p.m. Eastern on the second Wednesday of each month.*

AOPA Essential Coding & Billing Seminar

AOPA experts provide the most up-to-date information to help O&P Practitioners and office billing staff learn how to code complex devices, including repairs and adjustments, through interactive discussions with AOPA experts, your colleagues, and much more. Meant for both practitioners and office staff, this advanced two-day event will feature breakout sessions for these two groups, to ensure concentration on material appropriate to each group. The registration rate is \$525 per attendee for members and \$725 for non-members. For additional attendees from the same office, a discount is offered: \$475 for members and \$675 for non-members. The first two seminars in 2015 were held in Savannah, GA and Seattle, WA and were both well attended. The remaining seminar schedule for 2015 is below:

- 1. Hampton Inn Philadelphia Center City-Convention Center | July 13-14 | Philadelphia, PA**
- 2. The Flamingo | November 9-10 | Las Vegas, NV**

Learn more at <http://www.aopanet.org/education/coding-billing-seminar/>

AOPA Government Relations Update

Policy Forum

More than one hundred of your colleagues attended the 2015 AOPA Policy Forum in Washington, DC on March 23-25. These dates were carefully selected to coincide with one of the major Medicare legislative actions of 2015 as Congress was forced by existing law to address a solution to the current physician reimbursement schedule known as the "Doc Fix" or physician fees would drop more than twenty percent. It also presented a golden opportunity to push for inclusion of O&P

specific relief on RAC audits, ALJ delays, separation of O&P from DME and other critical issues affecting patients served by AOPA's membership.

And we took advantage of the opportunity in a big way! AOPA's 2015 Policy Forum broke previous attendance records, and the 120 AOPA members in attendance represented a 20% increase over recent years. This influx of new and returning attendees brought much more energy and expertise to O&P's efforts to get pressing patient care and provider issues in front of the people who can help make a difference. Those who attended did their patients and their colleagues and the entire O&P community a huge service in moving the legislative agenda front and center and building stronger legislative relationships through the 600+ meetings that were scheduled with Members of Congress and/or their staff. What a rousing success on all counts!

To cap off the festivities and the success of the 2015 Policy Forum, as noted earlier, three pieces of critical O&P legislation were introduced in the House and the Senate: The O&P Improvement Act of 2015 (Senate Bill: S. 829 and House Bill: HR 1530) and The Medicare Audit Improvement Act of 2015 (House Bill: HR 1526).

Thank you to the following AOPA Supplier Members for serving as the official sponsors of the 2015 Policy Forum. Their Sponsorship donation played an integral part in providing a successful event.

Silver Sponsors: *Ottobock, Spinal Technology, WillowWood*

Bronze: *Allard USA, Becker Orthopedic, Cascade DAFO, Cascade Orthopedic Supply, Endolite, Fillauer, Freedom Innovations, KISS Technologies, Knit-Rite, SPS Inc., Townsend Design*

Supporter: *Anatomical Concepts, Cailor Fleming Insurance, PEL, TRS Inc.,*

For Issue Papers, Talking Points, photos and other information related to the Policy Forum including templates for letters of follow up to their legislators for those attending or more general templates on O&P issues that can be quickly sent by any member to their legislators, please visit the AOPA website, www.AOPAnet.org, and click on Policy Forum under the Legislative/Regulatory pull down menu. And go to www.AOPAvotes to add your voice in urging legislators to support key O&P efforts that save money, jobs and the lives of the legislators' O&P constituents.

Frosting on the Cake – Special Extended Education Program

Forty plus people took advantage of the extended education opportunity which provided another reason for making the Washington trip an added value. They learned more about competitive bidding; got a clearer look at competitors; and heard a surgeon's perspective during the first segment Tuesday evening after the Congressional visits. The half day Wednesday sessions focused on avoiding RAC audits, impact of OTS codes, FDA challenges and a glimpse five years ahead and how to preserve and grow O&P's core businesses.

2015 O&P PAC Supporters

As a reminder, The O&P PAC is the political action committee representing you and the O&P community on Capitol Hill and provides you with a means of increasing the visibility and recognition of orthotic and prosthetic services among legislators. It allows individuals to unite and pool their resources to support candidates for federal office who understand the crucial role of O&P in the health care delivery system.

Thanks to the following individuals for their contributions to the O&P PAC in 2015. This list covers the period from January 1, 2015 through March 31, 2015. If we missed your name please accept our apologies, and any contributions made or received after March 31, 2015 will be published in the next quarterly staff report.

- George Breece
- Maynard Carkhuff
- James Fenton, CPO
- Rick Fleetwood, MPA
- Wendy Miller, BOCO, CDME
- Ted Muilenburg, CP
- Rick Stapleton, CPO
- Thomas Watson, CP
- James Young, CP, FAAOP
- Pamela Young
- Claudia Zacharias, MBA, CAE

Special Support Group – Each year, the O&P PAC organizes fundraising events for members of Congress who have been supportive of O&P. For each event AOPA members make a personal contribution to the member's campaign and spend time with the member talking about a variety of issues including health care and O&P issues. These events are a unique way to share O&P concerns, get to know a member of Congress, and have been very successful in getting Congress to understand O&P concerns.

We would like to thank those individuals who in 2015 have donated directly to a candidate's fundraiser. This list covers the period from January 1, 2015 through March 31, 2015. If we missed your name please accept our apologies, and any contributions made or received after March 31, 2015 will be published in the next quarterly staff report.

- Tom Becker
- Rudy Becker, Jr.
- James Campbell, Ph.D., CO
- Maynard Carkhuff
- Rodney Cheney, CPO, FAAOP
- Ron Cheney
- Jeff Collins, CPA
- Charles Dankmeyer, CPO
- Joseph Delorenzo , CP
- Thomas Fise , JD
- Rick Fleetwood, MPA
- Elizabeth Ginzal, CPO
- Lisa Guichet
- Hanger PAC
- Thomas Kirk, PhD
- Eileen Levis
- Sam Liang
- Pam Lupo, CO
- Sara McDonald
- Schuyler Nelson
- Michael Oros, CPO, FAAOP
- Michael Park
- Andrew Pedtke
- Rick Riley, CEO
- Brad Ruhl
- Scott Schneider
- Donald Shurr, CP, PT
- Christopher Snell
- Clint Snell, CPO
- Peter Thomas/PPSV PAC
- VGM PAC
- Tom Watson, CP, LP
- Jim Weber, MBA
- Ashlie White
- Eddie White, CPO
- Travis Young, CPA
- Pam Young
- James Young, Jr., CP

2015 AOPA National Assembly & The 8th Annual Wine Auction & Tasting

The 8th Annual Wine Tasting & Auction is scheduled to take place on Thursday, October 8th during the 2015 AOPA National Assembly. The Wine Tasting and Auction is both a fun event and plays the vital role of raising awareness of all of AOPA's Government Relations advocacy outreach programs. If you would like more information on the wine auction (i.e. interested in donating, interested in attending, etc.) please contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

2015 Products and Services Directory Available

The 2015 Products and Services directory is available online at <http://www.aopanet.org/publications/products-services-catalogue/>. The directory is your one stop shop for all AOPA products, services, education and contacts.

Order the 2015 Coding suite and save \$50 when you purchase the newly updated **Coding Suite**—you'll receive everything you need to code like a pro!

2015 CODING PRO (SINGLE USER OR NETWORK VERSION)

O&P's comprehensive guide to Medicare codes, reimbursement and medical policies.

This is the single-source reference for all your coding needs. The CodingPro CD-ROM provides updated Medicare fee schedules for all 50 states and allows you to customize and import other fee schedules used by your office. Illustrations of the codes allow you to quickly sort codes. Writing prescriptions just got easier with the prescription-writing tool.

2015 ILLUSTRATED GUIDE

This easy-to-use reference manual provides an illustrated guide to the coding system in use for orthotics, prosthetics, and shoes, including the HCPCS code, the official Medicare descriptor and an illustration for each code.

2015 QUICK CODER

Stop searching through numerous pages to find a code! AOPA's redesigned Quick Coder provides a speedy reference to the HCPCS orthotic, shoe and prosthetic codes and modifiers. These laminated cards are durable, long-lasting and convenient to store.

2015 AOPA National Assembly

The 98th Annual AOPA National Assembly will be held October 7-10 at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. Located directly on San Antonio's famous Riverwalk, you will enjoy this beautiful, historic city. Whether you choose a leisurely stroll, or a ride on one of the riverboats, take time to see San Antonio's famous Riverwalk with the many shops, restaurants, nightlife, dining options, museum along the way.

With over a 100 abstracts submitted from the call for papers announcements—the scientific program is expected to be one of the best ever. Individual workgroups representing orthotics & prosthetics, pedorthics, business and technical education are busy organizing the program with a goal of releasing the online version of the preliminary program mid-May.

Questions? Visit www.AOPAnet.org or call AOPA headquarters at (571) 431-0876.

In Case You Missed It

In December 2014, AOPA created a new monthly newsletter titled, *In Case You Missed It*. This short recap of the month's most important news is emailed to AOPA member employees the beginning of each month. We know your busy and important news can slip by. This new, short and to the point email newsletter will help.....*In Case You Missed It*.

Mobility Saves Testimony Contest

The Mobility Saves Public Relations Committee has launched a testimony contest – Please share this with your patients. For flyers contact us at info@aopanet.org

The Contest

Become part of an important public relations campaign that proves cost effectiveness for orthotics and prosthetics and perhaps win \$500 just by submitting your testimony.

Why Participate?

- Help patients obtain medically necessary devices
- Support the O&P profession
- Become part of a Major Public Relations Campaign designed to assure your future
- Help spread the word that orthotic and prosthetic devices not only restore lives but are cost effective too!
- All entrants will receive a t-shirt
- One (1) Grand Prize Winner (\$500), one (1) Second Place Winner (\$250), and one (1) Third Place Winner (\$100) will be selected.
- All entries must be received by 11:59 PM EST on September 30, 2015

It's as easy as 1•2•3

1. Create your video testimony by using your smartphone or video camera.
2. Complete the online entry form at <http://bit.ly/MobilitySavesContest>
3. Upload your video testimony or email video from your smart phone.

Questions? Contact us at (571) 431-0876 or ymazur@AOPAnet.org

O&P Almanac

Feedback on the new *O&P Almanac* "Leadership Series" has been incredibly positive. The "Leadership Series" is a new feature revealing insights and opinions from senior-level O&P business owners and managers on topics of critical importance to the O&P profession. Last month's article investigated the subject of encroachment. April's O&P Almanac investigates Niche Facilities, Are they Making a Comeback?

Readers of the O&P Almanac's reimbursement page are now eligible to earn two CE Credits. After reading the column, simply scan the QR code to use the link at the end of the article to take the quiz. Those with a passing grade of 80% or more will receive CE credits from ABC and BOC. There is no charge.

Membership Reminder

2015 is well underway, and we want to remind you to take advantage of *all* of your AOPA member benefits in the year ahead including:

- **Unlimited, expert advice** on RAC and CERT audits and prepayment reviews from our coding and billing experts;
- Access to members-only **LCodeSearch.com**;
- **Member savings** on all AOPA seminars and the National Assembly;
- **Significant discounts** on information-packed products from our bookstore;
- **Credit card processing** as low as 1.9% through Bank of America Merchant Services at www.tellmore@bankofamericamerchant.com;
- **Discounts** on UPS Next Day Air, 2nd Day Air, etc. at www.savewithUPS.com/aopa; and
- **Discounts** on AOPA-endorsed liability insurance plus 30 other separate coverage options through Cailor Fleming at 800/796-8495.

And remember, AOPA is working hard on your behalf every day for legislative relief from threats to the O&P profession, such as overzealous audits and the denial of orthotists' and prosthetists' notes as part of the medical record. We are working hard so that you can focus on what you do best – patient care.

Thank you for your continued support of AOPA in 2015, and we are a phone call away at 571-431-0876, or email us at info@aopanet.org.

Congressional Briefing Scheduled May 1st

As noted earlier AOPA and the Amputee Coalition will host a Congressional News Briefing to help educate Members of Congress, their staff and leaders of CMS on Mobility Saves Live and Money! Boston Marathon bombing amputee survivor, Adrienne Haslet-Davis, has agreed to participate and share her personal story as the highlight of the briefing on Friday, May 1, 2015. The objective of the news briefing is to share the Dobson Davanzo study that proves the cost effectiveness of orthotics and prosthetics and the many additional resources assembled on the Mobility Saves website. Participants will receive **an overview of insurance challenges patients face, along with Legislative, Regulatory and Research Issues in Orthotics & Prosthetics, Medicare, VA, DoD and the private sector.**

Seeking to shape public opinion and that of the policy makers who often reflect that opinion in their legislative and regulatory actions is a multi-faceted endeavor, not unlike building a house. Every possible tool has a role from building a solid foundation to assuring a roof overhead. That's what we're trying to do through Mobility Saves and all its various offshoots. Please visit the website www.mobilitysaves.org and take advantage of the many tools you can use to join this effort to change how the world – your referrals, your patients, your payers and the policy makers view what we do to achieve:

Mobility Saves Lives and Money!

One Final Thought About a New Project - Prosthetics 2020

What do the next five years hold in store—what will prosthetics be like five years from now, and what can be done to permit us to help participate and shape that future? It is clear that evidence, outcomes, and research are keystones. All three were front and center in January's AOPA Futures Leadership Conference. A new program managed by AOPA, initiated under the title, "Prosthetics 2020", is a collaborative effort to operate as an adjunct to AOPA's ongoing 'Survival Imperatives.' Prosthetics 2020 is a partnership open to interested companies who want to take a strong, proactive role in shaping the drivers of prosthetic patient care five years down the road. If you share a commitment to protect, fortify, and enhance the recognized, scientifically-substantiated value of prosthetic care in the minds of payers, patients and the general public, you will want to consider making an investment to be part of "Prosthetics 2020." The hoped for success of "Project 2020" will open the door to similar efforts in the orthotics field. AOPA members have received the invitation via *AOPA In Advance SmartBrief* and but if you missed it, you can view it on AOPA's website at:

<http://www.aopanet.org/2015/02/prosthetics-2020-an-invitation-to-aopa-members/>

Once again, thank you for your loyal support which makes it possible to undertake forward looking efforts like "Prosthetics 2020."

Sincerely,



Thomas F. Fise, JD
Executive Director