



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

www.AOPAnet.org

## **AOPA In Advance SmartBrief**

*Breaking News*

March 1, 2016

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### **Upcoming Events**

#### **AOPA and the O&P Alliance Meet with CMS Officials about Prosthetic LCD Workgroup**

On February 26, AOPA Executive Director Thomas Fise joined other representatives of the O&P Alliance for a meeting with CMS Deputy Administrator/Chief Medical Officer, Patrick Conway, M.D., Kate Goodrich, M.D., the Director of the Center for Clinical Standards & Quality, Susan Miller, M.D. who has responsibility for the planned Prosthetic LCD-related Interagency Committee comprised of Government Employees and other CMS staff in Baltimore to discuss the Prosthetic LCD. O&P reps were informed that the participants in the Inter-agency Committee have been identified. They are expected to generate a Consensus statement, likely to take about a year before it is complete, and that Consensus document is expected to be made available for public comment. Dr. Miller noted that the Consensus Statement, while spawned in the wake of the 2015 Prosthetic LCD, is really not about the LCD, but about Best Practices in the care of Medicare amputee beneficiaries. A question was raised about whether the public would be allowed the access, thus far denied, to be able to see the comments on the LCD, but it appears that that information may be made available to the Interagency Committee, but not to the public.

After inquiry, CMS reps stated that they would not be releasing the names of the persons comprising the Interagency Committee until that group's work was complete about a year hence, and the participants may then be identified in the Consensus Statement. While CMS officials said they would take suitable input, especially new scientific articles, that there was not means by which public/stakeholder input from non-government individuals—Medicare

amputees or others-- could be incorporated into the Interagency Committee work until after release of the Consensus document.

O&P reps raised questions about the lack of transparency of this proposed approach. It was noted especially that one of the perceived difficulties with the draft LCD was that it came as a surprise without any stakeholder input, and that there was the possibility that the intended Interagency Consensus document might be perceived in the same light. CMS officials noted that to open the process to one meant opening the process to all, which would likely necessitate shifting to a Federal Advisory Committee process, which would mean the process would take longer.

O&P reps raised the issue of the continued presence of the draft LCD on the CMS and DME MAC websites. We were told that the draft LCD was an essential part of the record, and that it would be highly unusual for that to be removed from the website. It was noted that since none of the thousands of submitted comments were not available to the public, it would mean that really the draft LCD would be the **only** document, among thousands of comments and other materials in the record that was deemed as of sufficient critical importance to be available for website viewing under CMS/DME MAC's masthead.

The O&P reps presented data on the reduction in Medicare spending for prosthetics in each of the past four years, 2010-14, a cumulative -15% reduction, as well as Medicare's data showing that spending on advanced prosthetic devices for Medicare beneficiaries (K3 and K4) had dropped 41.6% over that 4 year period, while the Medicare spending on the cheaper less advanced (K1-K2) technology prosthetics had increased 49.9% over that same four-year period, clear evidence of a change in the standard of care for Medicare amputees, as well as that patients who have K3/K4 technology will now face an uphill battle in securing a comparable replacement when their current device wears out. Dr. Miller said that dollars are irrelevant to the Consensus statement, while O&P reps maintained that the evidence of a downshift in Medicare prosthetic standard of care is very germane to Best Practices. O&P reps also distributed a recent article outlining that a very substantial number of amputees never receive a prescription for a prosthetic device, and that with each advancing ten years of age, the prospect that an amputee receives such a prescription drops -50%, an especially relevant point for Best Practices since Medicare beneficiaries fall into those older patient age levels least likely to receive a prescription for a prosthesis, and thereby significantly reduced access to any prosthetic care.

Time will tell, but all reports are that it will take a year or so before we get a resolution to the question of whether (a) CMS takes the policy for lower limb prosthetics away from the DME MACs and pursues instead a National Coverage Determination; or (b) they decide after the Consensus Statement, to release the matter back to the DME MACs for them to resolve as they wish via one or more LCDs. AOPA, in its communications with legislators, has encouraged consideration both for Congressional oversight and potential clarification to assure that the HHS statutes and rules clearly allow CMS to properly manage the activities of its contractors on LCD and all other issues, as well as supporting the concept of a moratorium to assure clarity through the end of the Obama Administration and into 2017 and beyond the inauguration of the next President.

## AOPA Announces Requests for Proposals for Pilot Grants

The American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association is proud to announce a [Request for Pilot Grant Proposals](#) in sixteen potential areas of Orthotic and Prosthetic (O&P) research including an open topic. For 2016-2017 the association is seeking proposals for one-time grants in amounts up to \$15,000 for one year. The leadership of AOPA, working in conjunction with the Center for Orthotic and Prosthetic Learning and Outcomes/Evidence-Based Practice (COPL) and its Board of Directors comprised of representatives from eight leading O&P organizations recognizes that there is a modest amount of original evidence-based or outcomes research in orthotics and prosthetics. Consequently, AOPA is interested in funding original pilot research that will lead to larger trials that may qualify for government or other research funding support in the following areas:

Areas for submission are:

- a) Demonstration of multi-site coordination of P&O clinical outcomes data collection with emphasis on data consistency and quality
- b) Quality of Life, Wellness, Patient Satisfaction and/or Outcomes Studies of Patients Who Have Received O&P Care vs. Those Who Have Not
- c) L0631 bracing—Performance and Outcomes Data That Differentiate Patient Results from What Could be Achieved with an OTS Orthosis that is Provided without any Fitting, Trimming or Clinical Care?
- d) TLSO/LSO: Utilization and comparative effectiveness of TLSO/LSO. Pre and post-operative use
- e) AFO/KAFO: Utilization and comparative effectiveness of custom vs. OTS AFOs and KAFOs. Investigation and analyses of patients who receive custom orthosis subsequent to OTS AFO fitting.
- f) Microprocessor Controlled Knee and Ankle Joints – Safety Benefits for Non-Variable Cadence (K-1, K-2) Ambulators
- g) Does Restricted Access for K-1 and K-2 to Hydraulic Controls Adversely Impact Patient Safety?
- h) Efficacy of custom vs. OTS relating to clinical outcome, analyses of providers credential
- i) Functional Impacts of Vacuum-Assisted Socket Suspension Systems
- j) Outcomes Measures, Evaluation of Clinical Benefit, and Quality of Life Metrics Related to Orthotic Management (Note: Submissions Should be Pathology and/or Condition Appropriate, e.g. Stroke, Cerebral Palsy, Multiple Sclerosis, Polio, OA)
- k) Orthotic Management of Osteoarthritis
- l) Alignment (tuning) of Ankle Foot Orthoses in the Cerebral Palsy population, measured outcome.
- m) Stance Control Knee Ankle Foot Orthoses, Clinical Application and Measured Outcome.
- n) Socket Interface: Methods for Measuring Quality of Socket Fit and Alignment
- o) Sockets: Methods for Measuring Proper Socket Fit and Alignment
- p) Open Topics – Beyond the Above Priorities, Top Quality Clinical O&P Research Topics Considered

AOPA and COPL will give preference to grants that address evidence-based clinical application in orthotics and prosthetics. Please post this RFP and share it with your colleagues. **The deadline for proposals is April 30, 2016.** [Read the full eligibility and application process.](#)

## Calling All People with Limb Loss in the Houston Area



**amputee  
coalition**

The Amputee Coalition recently announced Limb Loss Education Day (LLED), a full day of education and adaptive recreation for those with limb loss, will be held in Houston, Texas at the TIRR Memorial Hermann Greater Heights Hospital on Saturday, March 26 from 9am to 4pm. The day will offer educational sessions aimed at providing timely information to the limb loss community, their families and caregivers that will help them to live full and productive lives with limb loss.

Presented by the Amputee Coalition, a national donor-supported nonprofit organization serving people with limb loss, the goal of the 2016 regional events such as the one in Houston is to bring the organization's programs and services into the community. The cost is \$15 for adults and children 11 and older.

[Register](#) today for:

Limb Loss Education Day, Houston, Texas  
Greater Houston Hospital, South Tower, Rooms A-F  
1635 North Loop West, Houston, Texas, 77008

*For questions about this event, please contact Kate Anderson at 703/330-1699, ext. 7104, or email her at: [lled@amputee-coalition.org](mailto:lled@amputee-coalition.org).*

## Prosthetic Care Facility of Virginia Receives 2016 Best of Leesburg Award

The Prosthetic Care Facility of Virginia has been selected for the 2016 Best of Leesburg Award in the Prosthetic Clinic category by the Leesburg Award Program.

Each year, the Leesburg Award Program identifies companies that we believe have achieved exceptional marketing success in their local community and business category. These are local companies that enhance the positive image of small business through service to their customers and our community.

Various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the winners in each category. The 2016 Leesburg Award Program focuses on quality, not quantity. Winners are determined based on the information gathered both internally by the Leesburg Award Program and data provided by third parties.

## Visit the AOPA Booth at the Academy Meeting

Will you be at the Academy meeting next week in Orlando? If so be sure to visit Devon & Kelly at the AOPA Booth #149 and play our game, "Lucky Lobster." Prizes include: 2016 Quick Coders, Coding & Billing Manuals, Gift Cards provided by Cailor Fleming Insurance, Boston Hotel Goodies, Complimentary registration to an AOPA Webcast and Discounts on AOPA Products... including the new **2016 Coding Products!**

Don't forget the Grand Prize! Each day one lucky winner will win a complimentary registration to the 2016 AOPA National Assembly.

## Exhibit at the 2016 National Assembly in Boston, MA!



AOPA is currently accepting exhibit applications for the 2016 AOPA National Assembly, which is due to take place in Boston, MA on September 8-11, 2016. The Hynes Convention Center will serve as the event's venue. This event, the oldest and largest of its kind in the United States, will feature dedicated tracks of the most relevant education for prosthetists, orthotists, technicians, pedorthists and business managers.

### Why Exhibit?

Exhibit at this important event will give you the opportunity to:

- 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 Medicare, and other 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.

### Who Attends?

Access to key Decision Makers: O&P Practitioners, pedorthists, physicians, technicians, fitters, students, educational instructors, facility owners, marketing personnel, physical therapists, residents, office managers, billing specialists, occupational therapists, researchers, engineers, manufacturers, distributors and suppliers of O&P products and services.

### What Will You Get?

As an exhibitor you will receive:

- 24 hour perimeter security guard service.

- FREE breakfast and lunch.
- Exhibitor Service Kit—Exhibitors will receive two sets of information. The first will be the Exhibitor Confirmation Packet that contains your booth assignment, payment confirmation, and additional materials. The second set of information is the Exhibitor Service Kit which is an online guide provided by Freeman Decorating that includes all information and order forms you need to plan a successful trade show event; to include shipping information, booth rental, electric and internet needs.
- Exhibitor Newsletters—provide you with up to date information regarding the show.
- Complimentary exhibitor company listing on the National Assembly website, *O&P Almanac*, show APP and 2016 National Assembly Preliminary Program.
- Opening night reception for all attendees held in the exhibit hall
- Post-event registration mailing list of all National Assembly attendees (*AOPA Members only*).
- Two exhibitor full conference badges (per 10x10 exhibit space) which include: admission to all education sessions, CE credits, meeting materials, social functions, and lunch tickets.
- Private lounge area exclusive to exhibitors.
- 1 hour access to exhibit hall prior to exhibit hall opening each day

[Sign up today to exhibit](#) at the 2016 AOPA National Assembly. Questions? Contact Kelly O'Neill [koneill@aopanet.org](mailto:koneill@aopanet.org) or (571) 431-0852.

<b>March 9 Webinar: Shift the Liability: The Proper Use of an ABN Form</b>
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## WEBINAR WEDNESDAYS



**Wednesday: March 9, 2016, 1:00-2:00 PM (EST)**

### **What to Expect:**

- Learn when an ABN is appropriate, examine common scenarios of when an ABN should be used
- Learn how to use the ABN when billing for upgraded features, and ensure at least a partial payment for services rendered
- Learn to avoid the common mistakes, which can make your ABN invalid
- Learn to understand all the modifiers associated with an ABN

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 here.](#)

Contact Joe McTernan at [jmcternan@AOPAnet.org](mailto:jmcternan@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0854 with content questions. Contact Ryan Gleeson at [rgleeson@AOPAnet.org](mailto:rgleeson@AOPAnet.org) or 571/431-0876 with registration questions.



**Register Now for the Coding & Billing Seminar in Portland!**

# AOPAversity

**The AOPA Coding Experts are Coming to Portland, Oregon April 11-12!**

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 April 11 & 12 in Portland, OR!**

## *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 NOW!**

## Make a Difference for O&P at the Policy Forum



### Register Now for the 2016 Policy Forum and O&P Legislation-Writing Congress! New Format - New Program

Join us April 26 -27, 2016 in Washington, DC for a new Policy Forum experience. Former Senator Robert Kerrey will preside over a special session to write a simple one-to-two page *piece of legislation* to take to the Hill to educate your lawmakers. This is your opportunity to make your voice heard and participate in a landmark event.

[Learn more.](#)

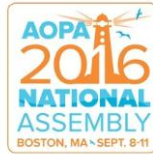
*Why should you attend? Educate lawmakers on the issues that are important to YOU:*

- 1. Participate in the 2016 O&P Legislation-Writing Congress - make your voice heard.*
- 2. Ensure O&P has fair representation in any O&P LCDs*
- 3. Make sure Prior Authorization is administered fairly*
- 4. Help Curb RAC audit practices that harm honest providers and don't prevent fraud*
- 5. Prevent the Expansion of Off-the-Shelf Orthoses and Competitive Bidding*
- 6. Showcase the value of O&P professionals as health providers by simply sharing a personal story how O&P restores lives and saves money.*

**April 26-27, 2016: Washington, DC  
Washington Marriott at Metro Center**

[Learn more and register now.](#)





**AOPA National Assembly and New England Chapter Meeting  
John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center in Boston, MA  
September 8-11, 2016**

The 2016 Planning Committee is seeking high-quality education presentations for the combined 99<sup>th</sup> Annual AOPA National Assembly and New England Academy Chapter Meeting to be held September 8-11, 2016 at the Hynes Convention Center in downtown Boston, MA.

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 2016 National Meeting. All free paper abstracts for the 2016 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

**Submission Deadline** – The submission deadline is March 31, 2016.

**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 2016 National Meeting. The top scoring papers will compete for the prestigious Thranhardt Award.

**Technician Program** – If you would like your Technical presentation considered for the Technical Education Track, please [submit your paper here](#). The planning committee is specifically looking for fabrication techniques to be presented in the form of a “cooking show” style demonstration. Please contact us with questions [assembly@aopanet.org](mailto:assembly@aopanet.org) or 571-431-0808.

**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](#). Scientific Symposia should present thematically related research addressing significant problems or controversies in Orthotics, Prosthetics or Pedorthics. The symposium should bring together one or more of the world's leading researchers to present current developments and planned research directions. Where appropriate, symposium should present differing points of view on a particular topic.

**Student/Resident Poster Submission:** AOPA invites students and residents to present orthotic/prosthetic research findings or a particular case study via a poster presentation. When students and/or residents submit an abstract for a poster, they are entered to win one of two prestigious awards--The Otto and Lucille Becker Award will be presented for the best orthotic abstract submitted and the Edwin and Kathryn Arbogast Award for the best prosthetic abstract submitted by a qualifying student or resident.

- ✓ The poster must be exhibited and presented at the AOPA National Assembly for the award recipient to receive the prize. The winners of the two scientific poster awards will be published in the O&P Almanac.
- ✓ The winners will receive a \$500 cash award, registration to the show, coach-class airfare to the National Assembly and three nights hotel. To qualify to present a poster in this category and eligible for consideration for this award, the main author must be a student (baccalaureate or masters level) or a resident at a qualified patient care facility.
- ✓ Abstracts will not be considered for either award if they have been previously presented, published, or are currently submitted with pending decision on acceptance elsewhere.
- ✓ These awards have been made possible by a special endowment by Becker Orthopedic and WillowWood.
- ✓ The Award Winner's associated school will also be honored with an award.

Please [submit your poster paper here](#).

Questions? Contact Tina Moran at [tmoran@aopanet.org](mailto:tmoran@aopanet.org) or (571) 431-0808.

<b>Upcoming AOPA Events</b>	
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March 9, 2016	<i>Shift the Liability: The Proper Use of the ABN Form Pass</i> AOPA Webinar <a href="#">Learn more and register here</a>
April 11 & 12, 2016	<i>Coding &amp; Billing Seminar</i> Portland, OR <a href="#">Learn more and register here</a>
April 26 & 27, 2016	<i>AOPA Policy Forum</i> Washington, DC <a href="#">Learn more or register here</a>