



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief

Breaking News

March 23, 2017

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Upcoming Events

DME MACs Update Policies for AFO/KAFOs, Knee Orthoses, and Spinal Orthoses

On March 16, 2017, the four Durable Medical Equipment Medicare Administrative Contractors (DME MACs) published updated Local Coverage Determinations (LCDs) and Policy Articles for AFO/KAFOs, Knee Orthoses, and Spinal Orthoses. While the changes are mostly format based, there were some minor changes that may impact how you bill Medicare for these services.

The format change that applies to all three policies and will be implemented for other policies in the future is the removal of the "standard documentation" sections of the LCD and Policy Article. This section has been removed from each of the LCDs and Policy Articles and moved to a standalone document that is included as an addendum to each policy. This was done to eliminate the need to update and revise multiple policies whenever a slight change was made to standard documentation requirements. Creating a single standard documentation document that applies to all LCDs and Policy Articles, the DME MACs will only need to update a single document rather than countless individual policies. It is important to note that standard documentation requirements remain in effect and are not diminished in any way as a result of their removal from the body of the LCD and Policy Article. It is important to make sure that standard documentation requirements are reviewed regularly and that all of the standard documentation requirements continue to be met. Policy specific revisions include the addition of ICD-10 codes that describe

acquire genu recurvatum of the knee as eligible for coverage of L1850, the deletion of codes that were discontinued as of December 31, 2016, the addition of codes that were effective January 1, 2017, and the removal of diagnoses codes that describe charcot deformity of the knee as eligible for coverage of L4631.

An interesting revision to all three policies is a clarification regarding the use of HCPCS codes that do not differentiate between custom fitted by an individual with expertise and OTS. These codes simply state “prefabricated, includes fitting and adjustment.” There was some question regarding the proper use of these codes since they did not distinguish whether a device was custom fitted or provided OTS. The policy revisions clearly state that these codes should be used to describe prefabricated devices regardless of whether they are provided as custom fitted or OTS. This clarification only applies to those HCPCS codes that are not part of a split code set. The revised policies may be viewed on the medical policy page of each of the four DME MAC websites.

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

Jurisdiction D DME MAC Releases Quarterly Audit Results for L1832, L1843 & L4361

Noridian, the DME MAC for Jurisdiction D, recently released the results of their ongoing service specific review of Knee Orthoses (KO). Between October 2016 and January 2017 Noridian reviewed claims for KOs L1832 and L1843. Here were the results:

- L1832: 139 claims reviewed and 137 claims were denied (99% improper payment rate)
- L1843: 111 claims reviewed and 111 claims were denied (100% improper payment rate)

One of the more common denial reason was that the documentation submitted for review didn’t support the need for a custom fit brace. Suppliers are reminded that for braces with the description “customized to fit a specific patient by an individual with expertise,” documentation must include a detailed description of the modifications made at the time of fitting the brace to the beneficiary; and who completed the modifications. Based on these results Noridian will continue its widespread prepayment reviews for L1832, L1843.

Noridian also recently released the results of their ongoing service specific review of the Ankle Foot Knee Orthosis, L4361. Between October 2016 and January 2017 Noridian reviewed 618 claims and 355 were denied; a 58% improper payment rate. This was a drop from the previous 66% improper payment rate, however Noridian will continue its widespread prepayment reviews for L4361.

Questions? Contact Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

AOPA Submits Comments on CMS’ Qualified Provider Proposal

On March 13, AOPA submitted comments on the CMS proposal “Proposed Rule on Medicare Requirements for Qualified Practitioners and Qualified Suppliers of Prosthetics and Custom-Fabricated Orthotics”. This is the proposal that would enact the long awaited provisions of Section 1834(h) of the Social Security Act, which establishes requirements for qualified suppliers and qualified practitioners, and restricts payments to providers who don’t meet those criteria.

AOPA gathered member input on the rule and prepared pre-written comments for members to submit through the AOPAvotes.org platform; 181 members submitted comments to CMS through AOPAvotes.org.

AOPA submitted its own comments that reflect our support of the rule, which is the first step toward ensuring that only qualified providers and suppliers provide prostheses and custom fabricated orthoses to Medicare beneficiaries. AOPA's comments include our opinion that the rule as written is overly broad and should include exceptions, and includes AOPA's concerns with enforcement mechanisms, the "equivalency to ABC or BOC standards", and the regulation of fabrication of O&P devices. [Read AOPA's Comments.](#)

Performant Recovery Receives CMS Approval to Start Audit Activities

Performant Recovery, the Region 5 National Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) for O&P, DME, Home Health & Hospice claims has received final approval from CMS to begin its audit activities. O&P suppliers are encouraged to visit the Performant Recovery website if they have any questions and to ensure your contact information is correct and current in the [Performant Provider Portal.](#)

At this time the Performant CMS approved issues page doesn't list any O&P items/services currently under review, but that may change at any time. View the current approved issue list [here.](#)

Questions? Contact Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

American Health Care Act Draft Legislation Released

On March 6, 2017, both the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the House Ways and Committee released draft legislation, the "American Health Care Act," to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Each Committee was scheduled mark-up its respective policies on March 8, 2017. After mark-up, the House Budget Committee will combine the bills into one House bill. Modifications to the bill are anticipated prior to the legislation receiving consideration on the House floor.

AOPA's health care counsel, Alston & Bird, has provided a broad overview of key issues and policies in the legislation. Among other things, the legislation (when taken together) would repeal the penalties associated with the individual and employer mandates retroactively to 2016. The legislation would allow insurance companies to impose a 30 percent late-enrollment surcharge on individual or small group market applicants who had a lapse in coverage for more than 63 days, phases out the ACA's Medicaid expansion and transitions the program to a per capita cap model, and eliminate a number of ACA taxes. The legislation would delay the "Cadillac Tax" on high cost health plans until 2025. The legislation also would preserve certain provisions of the ACA, including provisions that allow children to stay on their parents' insurance until age 26 and that require insurers to cover people with pre-existing conditions.

[Click on this link to read Alston & Bird's summary of issues in the current draft of the legislation.](#)

AOPA 365 Wherever You Go

Don't forget to download the reliable AOPA app, **AOPA 365**, which AOPA uses year-round to keep you up to date on the latest in O&P, AOPA news, and all upcoming World Congress updates. Stay in the know wherever you go!



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AOPA Pilot Research Grants Announced

The American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association, in partnership with the Center for O&P Learning & Evidence-Based Practice (COPL), is proud to announce a Request for Pilot Grant Proposals in 16 potential areas of orthotic and prosthetic research including an open topic.

There are 16 topics total with a few examples listed below:

- Study community outcomes of patients, such as activity, social interactions, depression and anxiety
- Understand the effects of prosthetic component selection on community activity levels rather than in the lab
- Study the origins/clinical goals and prevalence of prosthesis prescribing patterns
- Link biomechanical performance measures to functional levels
- Open Topics - Beyond the Above Priorities, Top Quality Clinical O&P Research Topics Considered
- [See the rest of the topics in the full RFP.](#)

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 28, 2017.*

[Read the full eligibility and application process.](#)

Register Now for the AOPA 2017 Policy Forum

Registration is now open for the 2017 AOPA Policy Forum! The Policy Forum will take place May 24-25 in 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. [Learn More and Register Now.](#)



Check out AOPA's Commemorative Centennial Website!

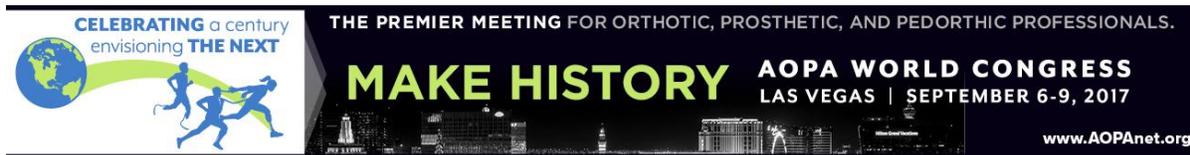
We are pleased to present our new website commemorating our 100 year anniversary – www.AOPA100.org. The website features AOPA's history, an interactive timeline, photo gallery, O&P stories from AOPA members, and AOPA's plans for the future. Listen to stories from other AOPA members and submit your own, and share photos for our photo gallery.



Don't forget to follow AOPA on social media for Throwback Thursday posts all year long! #aopa100!



Exhibit at the 2017 AOPA O&P World Congress in Las Vegas



AOPA is currently accepting exhibit applications for the 2017 AOPA O&P World Congress, which is to be held September 6-9, 2017 in Las Vegas, Nevada in conjunction with AOPA's 100th Anniversary Celebration. Now is your chance to sign up and showcase your products at the largest O&P tradeshow in the Western Hemisphere. This world-wide convention opportunity features 4 days of high-level networking, exhibits, the latest techniques in O&P treatment, and the finest industry specific business and clinical training programs. We hope you make plans to join us. The first Congress was a great learning experience for all and with your participation we can create a larger and even more successful event.

Why you should attend:

- Research and Development expenditures in the United States are more than \$95 billion, making the United States the leader in medical innovation and creating the ideal location for a unique gathering of high visibility and importance.
- Superior Clinical Education featuring the best speakers from around the world. Hear from physicians, researchers and top-notch practitioners.
- Practical Learning and live demonstrations

- Learn how U.S. Health Care reform continues to influence patient care and global health policy.
- Networking with an elite and influential group of professionals.
- Largest Display of exhibits in the United States for the orthotic, prosthetic and pedorthic profession.
- Ideal U.S. Location chosen for travel ease and popularity.

Exhibiting at this important global event will give you the opportunity to:

- Build your customer base and increase sales;
- Experience face-to-face time with existing customers to answer questions and build relationships;
- Enjoy sponsored networking opportunities, including an opening reception in the exhibit hall;
- Take advantage of fun traffic building opportunities;
- Increase visibility for your company/organization in a targeted market;
- Host a Manufactures Workshop and/or Product Preview Theater;
- Take advantage of education sessions to learn what's happening with health care reform, Medicare, and other regulatory agencies that affect your bottom line;
- Speak to AOPA coding experts to learn what's happening with U.S. government sponsored healthcare programs and what you need to do to sell your products in the U.S.

[Sign up today to exhibit at the 2017 AOPA O&P World Congress](#). Contact Kelly O'Neill with any questions at koneill@AOPAnet.org or call (571) 431-0852.

Register for the April Coding & Billing Seminar in Denver, CO

The AOPA Coding & Billing Experts are Heading to Denver, Colorado, April 10-11

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.

At this seminar you will:

- Receive up-to-date information on Prior Authorization and other Hot Topics
- Ensure your Proof of Delivery meets Medicare Requirements
- Learn how to assess risk areas in your practice
- Learn successful appeal strategies and hints to avoid claim denials
- Practice coding complex devices, including repairs and adjustment
- Attend break-out sessions for practitioners and office staff
- Earn 14 CEs



Register Now

Upcoming AOPA Events

- April 10-11, 2017 *Coding & Billing Seminar*
Denver, CO
[Learn more and register here](#)
- April 12, 2017 *Grassroots Advocacy*
AOPA Webinar
[Learn more and register here](#)
- May 24-25, 2017 AOPA Policy Forum
Washington, DC
[Learn more and register here](#)