



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief
Breaking News
June 27, 2017

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AOPA and Amputee Coalition Host Joint News Conference Today

On June 27th, AOPA and the Amputee Coalition held a joint phone-based news conference following the Congressional briefing organized by the ITEM Coalition. The two groups cautioned that, in order to be viable, any health care reform plan needs to avoid three problem areas to ensure proper care and treatment for America's two million amputees, which include military veterans, accident victims, and older Americans.

The AOPA and Amputee Coalition news briefing focused on the "big three" priority issues for amputees: (1) no cuts to Medicaid that would turn back the clock on the limb-loss/mobility impaired community in terms of access to needed treatment and state-of-the-art devices; (2) no waivers as to rehabilitative and habilitative services (an essential health benefit) that could be used to deny access to care and treatment for amputees; and (3) no changes to authorize higher premiums with respect to amputation as a pre-existing condition that could interfere with coverage access.

For amputees, loss of affordable health insurance not only means a loss of care, it also means a loss of independence and liberty in the form of the mobility that the care makes possible. AOPA and

the Amputee Coalition are also concerned about the tendency of the insurance industry to use discussion of the potential for any cuts as the basis denial of service, even when bills or regulations are not enacted.

Speakers on the phone-based news event included:

- US Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL);
- Michael Oros, president, AOPA;
- Dr Jeff Cain, head of advocacy program of the Amputee Coalition, a Denver physician, and former president, American Academy of Family Physicians;
- Adrienne Haslet, world class ballroom dancer, Boston Marathon bombing survivor, and amputee rights advocate;
- Kelly J. Miller, an amputee from Baltimore, MD.; and
- Ann McSweeney, a Chicago area mother of twins who both wear orthoses on lower extremities and one spinal as well.

A streaming audio replay of this news event is available as of 6 p.m. at www.aopanet.org.

Congressional Briefing to be Held on Rehab Issues - Today

Three national coalitions including sixty (60) national rehabilitation and disability organizations will host a Congressional briefing on the value of rehabilitation and habilitation services and devices. As Congress considers health care reform, it is critical that people with injuries, illnesses, and disabilities have continued access to rehabilitative and habilitative care.

Compelling speakers will highlight the importance of intensive inpatient hospital rehabilitation, outpatient rehabilitation and habilitation therapies, prosthetic limbs and other assistive devices and technologies. Speakers include:

- U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) (invited): Bilateral leg amputee injured in Iraq
- U.S. Congressman Brian Mast (R-FL): Bilateral leg amputee injured in Afghanistan
- Eric LeGrand: Former Rutgers football player who sustained a spinal cord injury during a game
- Roseann Sdoia: Boston bombing survivor who sustained an above knee amputation
- Isabella Smith: Child with a developmental disability whose speech has benefitted from habilitative speech therapy

Powerful testimonials will be shared of personal injury, habilitation, rehabilitation, and recovery. Cutting-edge assistive devices and technologies will be demonstrated by users.

The briefing will take place on Tuesday, June 27, 2017 from 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m., Eastern Time, in the Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room SD-106. Over 50 Senate staff visits that same day are also planned to bring the message directly to policymakers. Learn more at itemcoalition.org. RSVP to LegislativeDesk@powerslaw.com Space is limited and reservations will be made on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Disability Rights Activists Arrested at Protest

On June 22, the disability rights group, ADAPT, staged a protest outside Senator Mitch McConnell's office. Several dozen wheelchair users attended the protest and some people removed themselves from their wheelchairs to lay on the floor to stage the "die-in." The protest was intended to pressure McConnell and other Republicans not to cut Medicaid funding. Forty-three people were arrested during the demonstrations, some for obstructing passage through the hallway, and resisting arrest. ADAPT is "a national grass-roots community that organizes disability rights activists to engage in nonviolent direct action, including civil disobedience, to assure the civil and human rights of people with disabilities to live in freedom." They have launched similar campaigns for other issues, including the 1990 passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Several major news outlets reported on the protest—you can read more on and see photos and videos on [CNN](#), [TIME](#), [LA Times](#), [Washington Post](#), etc.



Jurisdiction D Reports Pre-Payment Audit Results

Noridian Healthcare Services, which serves as the Jurisdiction D DME MAC, recently released results of pre-payment audits for walking boots described by L4361 and spinal orthoses described by L0648 and L0650. While the overall denial rates for these audits remain high, they are slightly lower than they have been in the past which is an encouraging sign.

The pre-payment review for L4361 included 704 claims, of which 462 were denied for an overall denial rate of 66%. Common reasons for denial included failure to respond to requests for additional documentation, invalid proof of delivery documentation, and an incomplete or missing detailed written order.

The pre-payment review for L0648 included 399 claims, of which 314 were denied for an overall denial rate of 79%. The pre-payment review for L0650 included 1,126 claims, of which 986 were denied for an overall denial rate of 88%. In addition to the reasons above, many claims for these spinal orthoses were denied as same or similar to a previous claim.

Based on the overall denial rates, Noridian will continue its pre-payment review of services described by L4361, L0648 and L0650. Questions regarding this issue may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

Jurisdiction D DME MAC Reports Results from Ongoing Review of Knee Orthoses

Noridian Healthcare Solutions, who serves as the Jurisdiction D DME MAC, recently released results of its ongoing pre-payment review of knee orthoses described by HCPCS codes L1832 and L1843.

Unfortunately, the denial rate for both HCPCS codes was 100% for the claims reviewed from January 2017 through April 2017. There were 139 claims selected for review for L1832 and 117 claims selected for review for L1843. The four top denial reasons were:

- Documentation does not support custom fit criteria

- Documentation does not support coverage criteria
- Lack of response to request for additional documentation
- Proof of delivery is incomplete or missing elements

While the report from Noridian does not specify how many claims were denied for each of the reasons above, it is discouraging to continue to see claims denied for lack of response and invalid proof of delivery as these functions are completely within the capability of the O&P provider. AOPA has had discussions with Noridian regarding potential reasons for such high denial rates, especially for knee orthoses and will continue to work with Noridian on education strategies to reduce the overall denial rate for these services.

Complete Survey to Receive a Free OPC Compensation Report - Deadline EXTENDED to 7/7



Forward thinking managers are eager to receive their company’s Operating Performance and Compensation (OPC) customized company report. This report, available to each AOPA member taking part in the 2017 OPC Survey, is a scorecard on how your O&P facility’s operating performance compares with others of similar size and geographic location.

To receive your company’s Operating Performance and Compensation customized company report, you’ll need to complete the survey by the **new extended deadline – July 7th**. It’s FREE. You’ll also get the opportunity for a 30 minute consultation with Industry Insights about your findings. Don’t miss out on this Scorecard Opportunity! Go to www.aopa-survey.com to fill out the survey online or call 571-431-0810 for more information.

Save Big with AOPA Webinar Wednesdays

Stay on top of all relevant reimbursement issues and earn 1.5 CE credits each month. One registration is all it takes to provide the most reliable business information for your entire staff.

**Summer Savings:
Buy 5 Webinars and Get 3 Free
\$495 members/ \$995 nonmembers**

**Every Month
2017**

2nd Wed

1:00 PM Eastern

REGISTER

Subscribe to the July-December half-year series and get 3 free webinars. Note that this includes 2 bonus webinars added as part of Healthcare Compliance & Ethics Week, which are free to all AOPA members with no purchase required.

Just \$495 members/\$995 non-members for all 8 webinars! Individual webinars are \$99 AOPA members/\$199 non-members.

NIH Omnibus Solicitations for Small Business Grant Applications

The National Institutes of Health invites eligible United States small business concerns (SBCs) to submit Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) and Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant applications. Click each of the following funding opportunity announcements to learn more:



[PHS 2017-02 Omnibus Solicitation of the NIH, CDC, and FDA for Small Business Innovation Research Grant Applications \(Parent SBIR \[R43/R44\]\)](#)

[PHS 2017-02 Omnibus Solicitation of the NIH for Small Business Technology Transfer Grant Applications \(Parent STTR \[R41/R42\]\)](#)

New Room Rate & Early-Bird Pricing for the September AOPA World Congress



AOPA is excited to share the great news of our new lower room rate at the Mandalay Bay. **Only \$125/night** for a great room during the World Congress at the Mandalay Bay Resort in Las Vegas! The room block will fill up early, so book your room today.

Register for the World Congress by August 7 to register at the discounted early-bird rate. Register by **July 1** for a chance to win one of two pairs of tickets to Le Rêve- The Dream, voted "Best Production Show" in Las Vegas for seven consecutive years, courtesy of Fillauer.

AOPA and our 9 international partners welcome you to expand your knowledge, grow your market presence, and advance your career at this unique global gathering. [Register now.](#)



When in Vegas, Party with a Purpose

With the money you'll save on the lowered room rate for the 2017 AOPA World Congress, choose to attend the "Party with a Purpose" on Thursday, September 7 at 6:30 PM at the 1923 Bourbon Bar - a private and modern speakeasy inside the Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino.

The evening will include dinner, prohibition inspired specialty cocktails, access to a private cigar lounge, and a silent auction. Don't forget about the live entertainment provided by [The Moonshiners](#). Space will be limited, so be sure to secure your spot today!

This is a special event and certain rules and restrictions may apply. For additional information about the Party with a Purpose or to register, contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.



Register for the July Coding & Billing Seminar in Pittsburgh, PA

Join the AOPA Billing & Coding Experts July 17-18 in Pittsburgh, PA

There is still space to register for the July 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.

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

July 12, 2017	<i>Know Your Resources: Where to Look to Find the Answers</i> AOPA Webinar Learn more and register here
July 17-18, 2017	<i>Coding & Billing Seminar</i> Pittsburgh, PA Learn more and register here
August 9, 2017	<i>What the Medicare Audit Data tells us & How to Avoid Common Errors</i> AOPA Webinar Learn more and register here