



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief
Breaking News
July 25, 2017

AOPA Headlines:

[AOPA is Looking for Legislative Contacts – Do you have a Relationship with a Legislator?](#)

[Register Your Position on the Latest Senate Action on “Repeal and Replace”](#)

[Committee Approved: Bipartisan Bills to Improve Medicare, Protect Taxpayers](#)

[Enter AOPA Logo Contest](#)

[AOPA Announces Winners of 2017-2018 Pilot Grant Awards](#)

[Take Advantage of the Summer Saving’s Webinar Deal](#)

[San Antonio Amputee Foundation Hosts First Stride](#)

[RAC Audits for Custom Fabricated AFOs and KAFOs Announced](#)

[AOPA’s Centennial Directory Now Available to Case Managers](#)

[Register by August 7th for Early Bird Pricing to Attend the AOPA World Congress](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

AOPA is Looking for Legislative Contacts – Do you have a Relationship with a Legislator?

AOPA needs a few good men and women to advance our advocacy efforts. Many AOPA members have treated a member of Congress, or member of their family. Or maybe you know a member of the U.S. House or Senate because you go to the same church, or your children go to the same school, or play on the same soccer team.

In the end, all politics is local. AOPA is starting a systematic plan to identify AOPA members who may either have such an existing relationship with their legislator, or are interested and have a path where they can develop such a relationship. Making a "cold call" and asking your legislator to help with something is hard - both for you as constituent and for your legislator, who clearly can't say "yes" to everyone. On the other hand, if you have built a relationship when there isn't an "ask," have invited your legislator to visit your practice, have educated him/her about the care you provide to their constituents, maybe have supported them at a fundraiser, then it becomes much more natural to ask for help when you really need it.

Contact Lauren Anderson at landerson@AOPAnet.org with the name of your legislative contact.

Register Your Position on the Latest Senate Action on "Repeal and Replace"

Senate action on a "repeal and replace" bill for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is expected to move quickly, and will leave little time for people to register their comments. What do you need to know?

AOPA has meticulously looked at "repeal and replace" through the lens of three key issues - higher premiums linked to pre-existing conditions, essential health benefits, and Medicaid cuts - as these three have a profound impact on O&P patients, and therefore on the professionals who serve those patients. AOPA is NOT taking a position either in favor of, or opposed to the Senate bill. Here is the essence of how the new Senate bill could be expected to impact those three factors.

- The so-called Cruz amendment would permit insurers who offer at least one plan which complies with the ACA guidelines to also offer a number of less expensive plans, with lesser coverage. This is seen as driving down premiums. Risk pool negotiations have resulted in the likelihood that any impact this provision would have on prospect of higher premiums for those with pre-existing conditions would be modest.
- Another impact of the Cruz amendment is that it could serve to further undercut the essential health benefits, which already would be subject to potential state-by-state waiver revision/exclusion provisions. The less expensive plans that would be available could potentially result in short-cutting the essential health benefit-in the case of O&P, the rehabilitative and habilitative services assurances of ACA would be subject to being diminished or reduced.
- The new Senate bill has been described as generating Medicaid cuts - totaling \$772 billion over ten years. Clearly, any patient who's O&P costs are currently paid in some measure via Medicaid would be significantly less likely to be able to pay for their coverage.

Every AOPA member needs to look at this picture - the Affordable Care Act has proven to be significantly less than perfect, though it has increased the number of Americans with a modicum of insurance coverage. The Senate repeal and replace plan has readily identifiable shortcomings, costs and uncertainties. While there is not yet a CBO score on the latest version, CBO has consistently reported significant reductions in the number of insured Americans tracking to the repeal and replace bills.

If You Want to Register Your Position

We have set up a mechanism on our AOPAVotes site to permit AOPA members to register to their Senators their position either in favor of the latest Senate repeal and replace, or opposed to the latest Senate repeal and replace bill.

If you are in favor of the latest Senate repeal and replace bill [you may use this letter](#).

If you are opposed to the latest Senate repeal and replace bill [you may use this letter](#).

AOPA will continue to keep you informed on key steps in the ongoing debate on repeal and replace which has the potential to markedly modify both the current and future environment for American health care.

Committee Approved: Bipartisan Bills to Improve Medicare, Protect Taxpayers

In conjunction with our continuing efforts to advance the provisions of H.R. 2599/ S.1191, the Medicare Orthotics & Prosthetics Improvement Act, we are pleased to advise you that the provision which would assure that the prosthetist/orthotist patient notes are included as part of the official Medicare medical record for purposes of medical necessity determinations has been picked up in a larger bill, H.R. 3178, which has been approved and recommended by vote of the House Ways and Means Committee on Thursday, July 13, to the entire House for favorable action.

Clearly, if the expected approval by the entire House ensues, a similar action by the entire Senate would be required before the measure would go to the President for signature. There has been strong interest in the Senate Finance Committee in enacting S.1191 in its entirety, hopefully later this year. Last Thursday's action by the Ways and Means Committee, linked below, is very encouraging, and we both appreciate the strong support AOPA members and their patients have voiced for H.R. 2599/ S.1191; AOPA will keep you informed of additional steps toward enactment. [Click here for the overall approval synopsis.](#)

Enter AOPA Logo Contest

AOPA is getting a new logo for 2018, and we need your help! We are reaching out to the O&P Profession and designers around the world to enter a contest to design the new logo. One winner will receive \$500, and the contest ends July 31, 2017.

AOPA has used a different variations of the same logo since 1967, and unveiled a special Centennial logo to use for 2017. Now, we are looking for a logo for 2018 and beyond. The theme is "advocacy to restore mobility".

[Learn more and enter here.](#) *Please forward this to any designers you know!*

AOPA Announces Winners of 2017-2018 Pilot Grant Awards

In February, AOPA, in partnership with the Center for O&P Learning & Evidence-Based Practice (COPL), announced a Request for Pilot Grant Proposals in 16 potential areas of orthotic and prosthetic research including an open topic. A record 38 proposals were received in response to the request for proposals, and the board took the extraordinary step of choosing seven projects to fund, instead of the usual 3-4 projects. The previous years' projects, dating back to 2009, are available for review on [AOPA's website](#).

The 2017 COPL grants that are selected for funding are listed below:

- Sarah Anderson, La Trobe University, *Comparison of quality of life in people with partial foot or transtibial amputation*
- Brian Kaluf, BSE, CP, Ability Prosthetics and Orthotics, Inc., *Hydraulic and Microprocessor Controlled Ankle-Foot Prostheses for Limited Community Ambulators with Unilateral Transtibial Amputation: Pilot Study*
- Sarah Chang, PhD, Northwestern University, *A pilot study to evaluate the effects of the hydraulic ankle-foot prostheses on standing and walking in K2-level ambulators*
- Benjamin Padilla, MD, University of California San Francisco Benoiff Children's Hospital, *The Effects of a Custom Pectus Carintum Orthosis on Dosing Response and Quality of Life*

- Eric Weber, CPO, FAAOP, Hanger Clinic - Department of Clinical and Scientific Affairs, *Mobility and Global Health among Users of Lower Limb Orthoses: The Establishment of a National Data Base*
- Chris Hovorka, Ph.D., CPO, LPO, FAAOP, Georgia Institute of Technology, *Gait and Motion Control Benefits of Custom Molded Passive-Dynamic AFOs versus Custom Fit Carbon Composite AFOs in Persons with Neuromuscular Impairment*
- Kenton Kaufman, PhD, Mayo Clinic, *Prevalence, correlates, and risk of prescription drug use and abuse in individuals with above knee amputations*

Take Advantage of the Summer Saving's Webinar Deal

August

9

1:00 PM Eastern

REGISTER

What the Medicare Audit Data Tells Us & How to Avoid Common Errors

- * What claims & services are being denied?
- * Why are they being denied?
- * What I can fix, so my claims will not be denied?

Summer Savings:

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

[Register for the 2017 half year webinar series](#)

Subscribe to the July-December half-year series and get 3 free webinars. We will send you the recording for July's webinar and you can still earn credits. Note that this includes 2 bonus webinars added as part of Healthcare Compliance & Ethics Week that 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.

August 9	What the Medicare Audit Data Tells Us & How to Avoid Common Errors
September 13	ABC Inspections & Accreditation
October 11	AFO/KAFO Policy
November 8	Gift Giving: Show Your Thanks & Remain Compliant
November 9*	"Three Amigos" of a Compliance Program- Compliance Officer, Legal, and Human Resources-Can Work Together to Support and Advance an Effective Compliance Program
November 10*	Teaching Professionalism and Ethics during Residency
December 13	New Codes & Other Updates for 2018

*These webinars are free to all AOPA members as part of Healthcare Compliance & Ethics Week Webinar; and \$50 for non-members.

[Register for the 2017 half year webinar series](#)

San Antonio Amputee Foundation Hosts First Stride



The San Antonio Amputee Foundation, led by Mona Patel recently hosted and co-sponsored a First Stride Training and Clinic at the Mission Concepcion Sports Park. Co Sponsors included Hanger Clinic, Healthsouth Rehab Institute of San Antonio (RIOSA) and Select Rehab. Instructor for the day was Sheila Qualls Clemens, DPT.

Over 35 therapists joined for the morning classroom session with instruction covering prosthetic care and an introduction to gait training for the lower limb amputee.

Continuing education credits were awarded to physical therapists and other allied health care professionals would file for their own CEUs. Therapists were also given exercises to work on relative to core strength and gait to work with their patients.

For the afternoon session, more than 50 lower limb amputees and family members participated in a working session to improve gait and stability. All attendees were given exercises that they could continue with at home or in rehab to improve their walk.

RAC Audits for Custom Fabricated AFOs and KAFOs Announced

Performant Recovery, the national Home Health, Hospice, and DMEPOS RAC contractor, has announced that it will be initiating a post-payment medical review for custom fabricated AFO and KAFO claims. Performant Recovery added the review to its list of approved issues on July 7, 2017. Providers whose claims are selected for review will receive a letter from Performant Recovery requesting relevant documentation to support medical necessity for the orthoses that was provided. If you receive an additional documentation request (ADR) from Performant Recovery, it is very important to respond - failure to do so will result in automatic claim denial and recovery of any payments previously made. As with all RAC reviews, specific rules are in place that limit the number of ADRs that O&P providers may receive to a maximum of 10 ADRs per Tax ID every 45 days.

The RAC audit for custom AFOs and KAFOs is the first O&P specific approved issue since the award of the new RAC contract to Performant Recovery. AOPA continues to monitor the RAC website to identify additional audit issues as they are announced. The RAC announcement on the audit of custom AFOs and KAFOs may be found by [clicking here](#) and searching for issue 0013.

AOPA's Centennial Directory Now Available to Case Managers



As part of AOPA's 100 year anniversary activities, AOPA has produced our Centennial membership directory. In addition to history and technology, the directory includes contact information for all 2017 AOPA members and a supplier listing with a detailed product index, making it helpful for networking and providing referrals. AOPA is pleased to announce that the directory is now being featured in the Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC) newsletter.

CCMC is the largest membership organization for case managers, with a total of 47,874 members. A description and link to the downloadable directory will appear in their bi-weekly online newsletters for 7 weeks. Part of AOPA's mission is to help members raise awareness

and understanding of the industry and the association. Case managers are an important link between patients needing referrals and AOPA members. [Purchase your copy here.](#)

Register by August 7th for Early Bird Pricing to Attend the 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!

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.](#)



Upcoming AOPA Events

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| August 9, 2017 | <i>What the Medicare Audit Data tells us & How to Avoid Common Errors</i>
AOPA Webinar
Learn more and register here |
| September 6-9, 2017 | <i>AOPA World Congress</i>
Las Vegas, NV
Learn more and register here |
| November 6-7, 2017 | <i>Coding & Billing Seminar</i>
Phoenix, AZ
Learn more and register here |