

# AOPA 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2019 Staff Report



**To: AOPA Membership**  
**From Eve Lee, Executive Director**  
**Date: April 22, 2019**

In my first Staff Report I wrote about what I saw driving the AOPA membership. As I continue to get to know more of you and the profession, I'm convinced that despite the changing policy and regulatory changes, everything AOPA members do is for your patients.

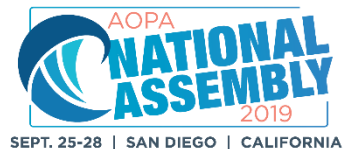
To help you continue to serve your clients, the AOPA staff remains committed to listening to you. We want to hear what you value and what you need from us. The in-depth member needs survey that many of you have completed will help us. We will use its results to inform our advocacy, education and research efforts for the rest of this year and beyond. I look forward to digging into the results and presenting our proposed plans to you all.

Immediately on the horizon is the 2019 Policy Forum which provides us a great opportunity to educate Congress on the needs of the O&P profession and the patients it serves. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

## **2019 National Assembly: Driving the Waves of Change**

► Education ► Exhibits ► Networking ► Special Events

AOPA Leadership and the California Orthotics and Prosthetics Association look forward to welcoming you to San Diego for the 2019 AOPA National Assembly, September 25-28<sup>th</sup>.



If you are not already planning to attend, here are just a few reasons you should:

- Earn CE Credits. Over 40 CE Credits are available to orthotic, prosthetic, and pedorthic practitioners.
- See the latest cutting-edge technologies in prosthetics, orthotics, and pedorthics while you pursue the largest O&P exhibition in North America. The Exhibit Hall will also feature: the Step it up challenge making it easy to win prizes while taking steps to stay healthy, a Technical Fabrication Contest – a timed competition with a grand prize of \$500, and Product Preview Theater Presentations that provide knowledge and CE Credits.
- Hear from keynote speakers, Captain Lanny Boswell, PT, PhD, OCS, Chair of the Extremity Trauma and Amputation Center of Excellence (EACE)/U.S. Navy, and three time Paralympic Gold Medalist, Jeremy Campbell.
- Orthotic education highlights include: A Multi-Disciplinary Panel on Orthotic Management of Traumatic Spine Injury, The Role of Microprocessor Controlled Orthoses, and Management of Pediatric Cerebral Palsy.

*Driving the Waves of Change*

- Prosthetic education topics include: Getting a Grip On Multi-Articulating Hands, Osseointegration Rehabilitation, and Prostheses that Feel: Clinical and Technical Considerations for Restoring Sensation to Upper and Lower Limb Amputees.
- Fun Networking Events such as the AOPA Night at the Ballpark, OPAF First Clinic -First Stride, Welcome Reception, and more.

Registration opens soon. Register before August 20<sup>th</sup> to save \$100! Visit [www.AOPAassembly.org](http://www.AOPAassembly.org) for more details.

## **Legislative and Regulatory**

### **116th Congress Convenes**

The 116th Congress convened January 3<sup>rd</sup>, and AOPA immediately began work on the introduction of our revamped legislation to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries receive appropriate, safe, effective, patient-centered orthotic and prosthetic care, as prescribed by their physician. Over the past three months we have worked closely with the offices of Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA) and Mike Crapo (R-ID) in the Senate, and Reps. GK Butterfield (D-NC) and GT Thompson (R-PA) in the House. Our goal is to have the bill, now titled the Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act, introduced prior to the 2019 Policy Forum. We expect the bill, upon its introduction, to garner broad bipartisan support, and we will work swiftly to add cosponsors and bring the bill before the relevant committees.

In addition, AOPA and our external consultant, Catriona MacDonald, continue to work to shore up support for the Wounded Warrior Workforce Enhancement Act (WWWEA). The bill would authorize \$5 million per year for three years to provide limited, one-time competitive grants to qualified universities to create or expand accredited advanced education programs in prosthetics and orthotics. AOPA staff and Catriona have met with a half dozen legislative and committee staffers and have garnered broad bipartisan consensus on the bill. While some last-minute details are still being worked out, we expect introduction of the bill in the second quarter of 2019.

### **2019 Policy Forum**

The 2019 AOPA Policy Forum will be held May 7-8<sup>th</sup>. The Policy Forum provides an opportunity to learn the latest legislative and regulatory details and how they affect the O&P profession and patients. Attendees will educate members of Congress to offer common sense solutions and share how the O&P profession restores lives and puts people back to work. Four-time track and field all-American, Gulf War Army veteran and Paralympic silver medalist, John Register will be the keynote speaker. He will join Policy Forum attendees to show how he continues to hurdle adversity and turn obstacles into opportunities.

### **Competitive Bidding 2021**

On March 7, 2019, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the final product categories and timeline for the Medicare DMEPOS Competitive Bidding Program that will begin for dates of service on or after January 1, 2021. As expected, certain off-the-shelf (OTS) knee orthoses and spinal orthoses will be included in the 2021 competitive bidding program. A total of 16 OTS spinal orthosis codes and seven OTS knee orthosis codes will be included in the program. The specific codes that have been identified by CMS are listed below.

#### **OTS Spinal Orthosis Codes Included in Competitive Bidding 2021**

L0450, L0455, L0457, L0467, L0469, L0621, L0623, L0625, L0628, L0641, L0642, L0643, L0648, L0649, L0650, L0651

#### **OTS Knee Orthosis Codes Included in Competitive Bidding 2021**

L1812, L1830, L1833, L1836, L1850, L1851, L1852

One knee orthosis code (L1848) has been removed from the list as it represents an orthosis that policy states is never medically necessary.

While DMEPOS competitive bidding is in a temporary “gap” period until 2021, the process of soliciting, analyzing, and awarding bids, as well as implementing the program takes approximately 18 months. The CMS announcement on March 7, 2019 sets the following timeline to assure that Competitive Bidding 2021 will begin on time.

- March 7, 2019: CMS begins pre-bidding supplier awareness program
- May 2019
  - CMS announces dates for registration and bidding
  - CMS begins bidder education program
- June 2019
  - Bidder registration period begins
  - Bid windows open

AOPA has developed a member only webpage <https://www.aopanet.org/coding-reimbursement/round-2021-competitive-bidding-announced/> where members can learn more about the program. In addition, AOPA will be hosting a live webinar and Q&A session on May 15 <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/2572325443536553473>. The webinar is free to members and \$99 for non-members.

### **AOPA Statement Regarding Delivery of Orthoses through Lead Generation Marketing**

On March 28, 2019, AOPA announced its strong opposition to the model for delivery of orthoses that relies on what is known as lead generation marketing to identify and recruit potential patients for treatment with orthoses.

AOPA firmly believes that Medicare beneficiaries deserve to receive the highest quality, most clinically appropriate orthotic care available and that it is in the best interest of the Medicare program to ensure that the delivery of all orthoses must be coordinated through the physician or practitioner who is treating the patient’s orthopedic condition and a properly trained and educated orthotic provider, such as a certified or licensed orthotist. Alternative models, such as those that use lead generation marketing, will continue to facilitate increased fraud and abuse, unnecessary costs and utilization, and the delivery of ill-fitting orthoses that may not be medically necessary without any clinical care, patient follow up, or patient education.

Read the full statement at <https://www.aopanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/AOPA-on-Lead-Gen-Marketing.pdf>.

### **AOPA Statement on Department of Justice Indictments Involving Delivery of Orthoses through Lead Generation Marketing**

On April 9, 2019, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) announced multiple indictments against 24 individuals responsible for more than \$1.2 billion in losses to the Medicare program through fraudulent schemes involving the use of lead generation marketing to deliver orthoses that were not medically necessary or not wanted by the beneficiary. Simultaneously, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the immediate suspension of Medicare payments to 130 Medicare enrolled Durable Medical Equipment suppliers suspected of participating in the scheme and responsible for more than \$1.7 billion in Medicare claims and more than \$900 million in Medicare reimbursement.

AOPA is highly encouraged by both the DOJ indictments and the administrative action taken by CMS. We are hopeful that this sweeping action will drive this criminally negligent activity out of the orthotic and prosthetic marketplace.

With the support of its O&P Alliance partners, AOPA has been pursuing legislation that will ensure that Medicare patients continue to have access to clinically appropriate orthotic care delivered by properly educated, certified and/or licensed professionals. The Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act contains several provisions that would further guarantee that criminal elements such as those uncovered by DOJ will no longer be able to use OTS orthoses to generate illegal profits through exploitation of the Medicare program and its beneficiaries.

Read the full statement at <https://www.aopanet.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/AOPA-on-DOJ-Project-Brace.pdf>.

### **Recovery Audit Contractor Introduces One New Audit**

Performant, the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) for DMEPOS, Home Health, and Hospice claims nationwide posted a new approved issue to their website. On March 3, 2019 Performant began a review for knee orthoses L1812, L1820, L1830, L1831, L1833, L1836, L1848, L1850, L1851 and L1852.

The RAC review will be a complex review to determine if the selected KO is reasonable and necessary for the patient's condition based on the documentation in the medical record. Since this is a complex review you will receive the traditional additional documentation request (ADR) letter informing you of the review. This review represents the fifth approved O&P issue under review by Performant.

### **Jurisdiction A Releases Quarterly TPE Results**

Noridian, the Durable Medical Equipment Administrative Contractor (DME MAC) for Jurisdiction A, recently published the quarterly results of their Target, Probe & Educate (TPE) audits. The audits are based on claims audited/reviewed during October 2018-December 2018 and the results are as follows:

- Ankle Foot Orthoses/Knee Ankle Foot Orthoses (L1970, L4360, and L4361) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate of 48%. This was an increase of the previous quarter's 39%.
- Knee Orthoses (L1832, L1833, L1843 and L1851) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate of 40%. This is a decrease in overall claim potential improper payment rate from the last quarter's results of 79%.
- Spinal Orthoses (L0648 and L0650) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate of 29%. This was a slight increase of the previous quarter's 25%.
- Diabetic Shoes (A5500) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate of 43%

The top and common denial reasons for all TPE results (in no order) are as follows:

- Documentation does not support basic coverage criteria.
- Documentation was not received in response to the Additional Documentation Request (ADR) letter.
- Claim is the same or similar to another claim on file.
- Documentation does not include verification that the equipment was lost, stolen or irreparably damaged in a specific incident.

### **Jurisdiction D Releases Quarterly TPE Results**

Noridian, the Durable Medical Equipment Administrative Contractor (DME MAC) for Jurisdiction D, recently published the quarterly results of their Target, Probe & Educate (TPE) audits. The audits are based on claims reviewed during October 2018-December 2018 and the results are as follows:

- Ankle Foot Orthoses/Knee Ankle Foot Orthoses (L4360, L4361, L4386 and L4387) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate, based on dollars, of 34%. This is the same overall claim potential improper payment rate as the last quarter's results.

- Knee Orthoses (L1810, L1812, L1830, L1832, L1833, L1843, L1845 and L1852) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate, based on dollars, of 61%. This is the same overall claim potential improper payment rate as the last quarter's results.
- Spinal Orthoses (L0625, L0626, L0627, L0630, L0631, L0637, L0641, L0642, L0643, L0648 and L0650) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate, based on dollars, of 47%. This is a decrease in overall claim potential improper payment rate from the last quarter's results of 51%.
- Diabetic Shoes (A5500) had an overall claim potential improper payment rate, based on dollars, of 28%. This is a decrease in overall claim potential improper payment rate from the last quarter's results of 36%.

The top and common denial reasons for all TPE results (in no order) are as follows:

- Documentation does not support basic coverage criteria.
- Documentation was not received in response to the Additional Documentation Request (ADR) letter.
- Claim is the same or similar to another claim on file.
- Documentation does not include verification that the equipment was lost, stolen or irreparably damaged in a specific incident.

### **DMEPOS Medicare Fee Schedule Increase & Quarterly Update**

The 2019 DMEPOS Medicare fee schedule was increased by 2.3% over 2018 rates. The 2.3% increase is a net reflection of the 2.9% increase in the Consumer Pricing Index for Urban Areas (CPI-U) from June 2017 through June 2018, combined with the annual Multi-Factor Productivity Adjustment (MFP) of -0.6%.

The 2019 April Quarterly DMEPOS Fee Schedule Update included a new fee for L0623 (Sacroiliac orthosis, provides pelvic-sacral support, with rigid or semi-rigid panels over the sacrum and abdomen, reduces motion about the sacroiliac joint, includes straps, closures, may include pendulous abdomen design, prefabricated, off-the-shelf). The L0623 is not a new code for 2019, it was introduced in 2006 and revised in 2014, but it has not had a dedicated fee associated with it. The new fee took effect April 1, 2019.

The April 2019 quarterly update did not assign a fee to the new HCPCS codes introduced for this year: L8701 and L8702. We may have to wait until the next quarterly update to verify if these new codes will be assigned a fee.

### **Medicare Medical Policy Article Revisions**

The Durable Medical Equipment Medicare Administrative Contractors (DME MAC) Noridian and CGS recently announced revisions to the Policy Articles for AFO/KAFO, KO, and LSO/TLSO. The revisions provide guidance on the proper coding of prefabricated items, which don't require modification beyond minimal self-adjustment or minimal self-adjustment.

The revisions indicate that when a HCPCS code descriptor does not define a brace as either off-the-shelf (OTS) or custom fitted, meaning it only states prefabricated, the code should be used whether the device requires custom fitting or is delivered OTS. Here is the full passage from the LSO/TLSO Policy Article:

*"In most cases for prefabricated orthoses, the correct coding of the orthosis is dictated by actions that take place at the time of fitting to the beneficiary, either custom-fit (requiring expertise) or off-the-shelf (OTS) (requiring minimal beneficiary self-adjustment). However, for certain types of orthoses, the HCPCS code narrative that best describes the product does not make a distinction between prefabricated orthoses that are provided as custom-fit or OTS. These code narratives are correct and must be used for Medicare billing, without regard to how the product is provided to the beneficiary at the final delivery."*

Previous interpretations by CMS indicated that if the LSO/TLSO HCPCS code only stated prefabricated, it was to be considered custom fitted by default. This interpretation was later reversed and is now clearly stated in the Policy Article.

### **O&P PAC and Capitol Connection Update**

These individuals have made recent contributions to the O&P PAC. AOPA would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the O&P PAC in 2019: James Young, CP, LP, FAAOP; George Breece; and Mike Fenner, CP, LPO; Frank Snell, CPO, FAAOP; Jason Tanner, CPO; Christopher Berdhal, CP; John Hays, CP; William Leimkuehler, CPO.

AOPA would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the Capitol Connection fund in 2019: Innovative Prosthetics; Townsend Design (Thuasne USA); CFI Prosthetics & Orthotics; Fit-Well Prosthetic & Orthotic Center Div. PPMC; Cornerstone Prosthetics & Orthotics; Nobbe Orthopedics Inc.; Artificial Limb Specialists Inc.; Arise Orthotics & Prosthetics; Capital Prosthetic & Orthotic Center Inc.; Rogerson Orthotics & Prosthetics; Southeastern Orthotics & Prosthetics Inc.; Clark & Associates Prosthetics & Orthotics; Adaptive Prosthetics & Orthotics LLC; Naked Prosthetics; Aljan Co.; Fourroux Prosthetics Inc.; W VA Orthotic & Prosthetic Center Inc.; Augusta Orthotics & Prosthetics; Orthotic & Prosthetic Specialties; Ortho Pro Associates Inc.; Premier P&O; Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Laboratory; Ability Prosthetics & Orthotics; Hi-Tech; Artificial Limbs Inc.; Allard USA Inc.; Claiborne Prosthetics & Orthotics; International Prosthetics & Orthotics; Louisville Prosthetics; Comfort Prosthetics & Orthotics; Mulenburg Prosthetics Inc.; Horizon Orthotic & Prosthetic Experience Inc. (HOPE); Medex International Inc.; Wolverine Orthotics Inc.; Johnson's Orthopedic; Floyd Brace Co. Inc.; Cresap Orthotics & Prosthetics Inc.; J&K Orthopedics Inc.; Fenner Inc./dba Specialty Prosthetics & Orthotics of Tulsa; Center for Orthotics & Prosthetic Inc.; Allegheny Orthotics & Prosthetics; Master's Orthotics & Prosthetics; Custom Orthotics & Prosthetics; Anderson Orthotics & Prosthetics; John W Michael Ltd

## **Research**

### **Small Grant RFP Announcement – COPL**

In March, AOPA announced a Request for Pilot Grant Proposals in 10 potential areas of O&P research including an open topic. For 2019-2020, the association is seeking proposals at two funding levels for one-time grants; \$15,000 and up to two exceptional proposals for \$30,000 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:

1. Effects of microprocessor-controlled knee and ankle joints on community outcomes such as activity, social interactions, depression, and anxiety in limited household and limited community ambulators (K-1, K-2).
2. 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).
3. Demonstrate methods to record primary health outcomes such as falls and lower back pain in amputees.
4. Functional impacts of vacuum-assisted socket suspension systems.
5. Documentation of therapeutic effects of spinal orthoses.
6. Utilization and comparative effectiveness of custom vs. OTS AFOs for stroke patients.
7. Measuring the impact of OA knee brace use on community activity.

8. Retrospective analysis of goals versus outcomes in treatments of pediatric patients with plagiocephaly.
9. Study the origins/clinical goals and prevalence of current prescribing patterns for prostheses.
10. Study health inequity/health disparity within orthotic and prosthetic patient populations.

Preference will be given to proposals that address evidence-based clinical application in O&P. The deadline to submit is May 31, 2019.

### **AOPA Co-OP, The O&P Compendium**

The AOPA Co-OP, a reimbursement, coding and policy resource, now has 412 active users. Perhaps the best kept secret in O&P, the information housed spans topics most important to members, like Local Coverage Determinations, L Code descriptors and the appropriate use of modifiers for claims submissions. AOPA continues to populate this member-only resource with information from our internal experts, as well as vetted information from you, our AOPA members. Updates on state-specific private payer and Medicaid policies were the most requested updates in 2018, and AOPA has invested in additional resources to provide these updates more regularly. Members can find more information and sign up at <https://www.aopanet.org/resources/co-op/>.

### **Outcome Assessment Reporting System (OARS)**

AOPA has launched a second beta test for the OARS online tool. This resource walks clinicians through an outcome measure, with written and video instructions, then creates a report, including what the result means for the patient and references to the science supporting the measure. This report can then be printed or downloaded as a PDF for the patient's record as a validated, third-party report.

As part of this second beta testing phase, AOPA is offering free access to interested practitioners that work for AOPA member organizations. If you are interested, please email [awhite@AOPAnet.org](mailto:awhite@AOPAnet.org).

### **Prosthetics 2020**

The AOPA Medical Advisory Board is set to meet on May 21 in Alexandria, VA. The upcoming meeting will focus on the next round of research initiatives necessary to protect patient access to quality prosthetic technology and associated prosthetic care. Medical Advisory Board members Kenton Kaufman, PhD, Douglas Smith, MD, and Paul Pasquina, MD, as well as members of the Prosthetics 2020 Steering Committee will also be discussing issues and areas of concern that should be addressed by AOPA. The preliminary agenda includes: a review of the RAND research on transtibial prosthetic technology, ongoing efforts to work with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) on a demonstration project focused on the use of microprocessor-controlled prosthetic technology in individuals identified as having a K-2 activity level, and additional research project proposals designed to increase the evidence base to support prosthetic care.

### **Orthotics 2020**

AOPA is honored to announce Alan Davis, MD, of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, John R. Fisk, MD, of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, and Alberto Esquenazi, MD, of Moss Rehab at Elkins Park as members of the new Medical Advisory Board (MAB) for the Orthotics 2020 program. Much like the MAB for Prosthetics 2020, the Orthotics 2020 MAB serves to ensure clinical efficacy and to provide the necessary clinical knowledge to oversee research development and communicate the findings to patients, providers and payers, including CMS.

The next Orthotics 2020 MAB meeting will be held on May 21 in Alexandria, VA. In addition to discussion about the next Orthotics 2020 RFP, progress reports will be provided for ongoing Orthotics 2020 research projects in the areas of Osteoarthritis; Stroke; Traumatic Spinal Injuries and Plagiocephaly. Already funded studies include:



- Effect of Ankle-Foot Orthoses (AFOs) on Continuous Walking in Persons with Post-Stroke Hemiplegia, Stefania Fatone, PhD, BPO at Northwestern University Office for Sponsored Research
- Effect of Knee Bracing on Improving Pain & Disability, Physical Performance, Physical Activity and Femoral Cartilage Deformation in Individuals with Medial Compartment Knee Osteoarthritis, Brian Pietrosimone, PhD at University of North Carolina
- Lumbar Brace Deployment in the Emergency Department for Benign Low Back Pain: Effectiveness and Impact on Pain, Spine Function, Analgesic Use and Community Resources, Greg Kawchuk, PhD, DC, MSc at University of Alberta
- Effects of the Use of a TLSO after Spinal Fusion on Functional Measures and Patient Perception: Implications for Post-Operative Rehabilitation, Ann Hayes, PT, DPT, MHS, OCS at Saint Louis University Dept. of Physical Therapy & Athletic Training
- Effectiveness of Repositioning and Cranial Remolding in Infants with Cranial Deformation, Tiffany Graham, CPO, LPO, MSPO at University of Texas Southwestern

## **Education**

### **Online AOPAversity Learning Center**

Get access to on-demand education for the CE Credits you need! Want to learn some of the state-of-the-art clinical practices advancing the profession? Wanted to attend the National Assembly but had to miss out? Visit <https://www.aopanetonline.org/aopaversity> to create an account and gain access to distance learning modules.

### **Mastering Medicare Webinars**

Webinars are scheduled for 1pm ET on the second Wednesday of each month. Webinars are \$99 each for members and \$199 for non-members. Members can sign up for the 2019 webinars for only \$995 and get one free. Sign up at [bit.ly/2019webinars](http://bit.ly/2019webinars). The webinars are a great way to boost employee morale (by providing monthly staff education event) and provide needed education and earn CE Credits. The 2019 AOPA Mastering Medicare Webinars remaining are:

- May 8: Are You Complaint-Know the Supplier Standards
- June 12: Documentation-Understanding Your Role
- July 10: T.P.E – Get to Know the Program & What the Results are Telling You
- August 14: Are You Ready for the Worst: Contingency Planning
- September 11: Veteran Affairs Updates: Contracting, Special Reports and Other News
- October 9: Performance Reviews: How is Your Staff Doing?
- November 13: The Holiday Season-How to Provide Compliant Gifts
- December 11: New Codes for 2020, Other Updates and Yearly Round-Up

Previous webinars are available for purchase as a recording.

- January: Understanding the Knee Orthoses Policy
- February: Patient Outcomes: Best Practices & How to Use Them
- March: Advanced Beneficiary Notice: Get to Know the ABN Form
- April: Shoes, External Breast Prostheses, Surgical Dressings and Other Policies

### **AOPA Coding & Billing Seminars**

Seminars 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 led by AOPA experts. Seminars are two-days and feature breakout sessions for practitioners and office billing staff, to ensure concentration on material appropriate to each.



Registration 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 next seminar is scheduled for June 3-4 in Indianapolis, IN. Learn more at <http://www.aopanet.org/education/coding-billing-seminar/> or contact Ryan Gleeson at [rgleeson@AOPAnet.org](mailto:rgleeson@AOPAnet.org).

## **Membership and Communications**

### **New Members**

- Patient care facilities: Thrive Prosthetics of Carmichael, CA; Bakersfield Prosthetics & Orthotics Center Inc. of Bakersfield, CA; and Presque Isle Medical Technologies of Beachwood, OH.
- International: US Member Society for the International Society for Prosthetics & Orthotics, Boardman, OH.
- Suppliers: Invent Medical USA LLC of Warminster, PA; Create O&P of Cohoes, NY; Open Bionics of Bristol, UK; and Covvi USA, Inc. of San Antonio, TX.

### **Operating Performance and Compensation Report Workgroup to Launch 2019 Survey**

AOPA's Operating Performance and Compensation Survey Workgroup met to refine the annual survey instrument. Patient care facility members and their affiliates are encouraged to participate in the free benchmarking survey that assists in the development of specific strategies to gauge and improve the fiscal health of O&P business. Participating members will receive the report for free as well as a free customized individual Company Performance Report comparing their performance with other like size O&P businesses. The survey helps AOPA develop a more accurate picture of the industry's financial trends for use by bankers and investors to benchmark clients and acquisition targets.

Expected publication of the final 2019 reports is early fall. The survey will be available around May 17, so be on the lookout in your mail. You can also visit [www.aopa-survey.com](http://www.aopa-survey.com).

### **Calling All Volunteers**

Looking to get more involved in the O&P profession? All employees of AOPA member companies are invited to volunteer to serve on one of AOPA's Committees and/or Workgroups. AOPA is opening its annual call for volunteers for the following committees and workgroups:

1. Assembly Planning Committee
2. Coding and Reimbursement Committee
3. Government Relations Contributions/Fundraising
4. Member Services Committee
5. Mobility Saves Committee
6. Operating Performance and Compensation Workgroup
7. Research Committee
8. State Representatives
9. Veterans Affairs Committee

Build your professional network. Advance your career. Give back to the profession. Become a volunteer!

Most importantly, your participation provides a necessary level of support to AOPA by participating in the association's governance. Don't miss this exciting opportunity to become involved!

There is a two-year term commitment and most committees meet face-to-face at least once per year with monthly conference calls lasting approximately one-hour. Additional time commitments include reviewing materials and work geared towards accomplishing the goals of the committee or workgroup.

Timeline:

Annual Call for Volunteers Announcement	May 1
Application deadline	July 31
Notifications on application status	October 1
Volunteer service begins	December 1

For more details about the goals and responsibilities or information regarding the nominations process, as well as to apply, visit <https://www.aopanet.org/volunteer/>. For additional information, please contact AOPA's Executive Director at [elee@AOPAnet.org](mailto:elee@AOPAnet.org).

### **O&P Almanac**

The *O&P Almanac* is the most respected source for industry insight and association news in the Orthotic & Prosthetic Industry. The January issue featured O&P professionals' benefits of gender balanced O&P facilities while sharing their strategies for promoting women in the workplace. February's issue delved into the acquisition activity O&P. Business owners and management teams that are considering selling their businesses should implement strategies to ensure profitable transactions, including examining their financial statements, hiring consultants, and determining the value of their facilities. The March issue uncovered the six trends that are making a powerful impact on upper-limb patient care, leading to more versatile and comfortable devices geared toward a larger swath of O&P consumers. The April issue outlined what's at stake for the O&P Community on the policy and advocacy front to set the stage for the 2019 AOPA Policy Forum happening May 7-8<sup>th</sup>.

### **AOPA is Social**

Interact with AOPA and O&P professionals on social media. Get the latest AOPA and O&P news, network with others, watch videos, post photos and share your story. Follow us on Twitter, like us on Facebook and connect with us on LinkedIn. Play your part to bring more awareness to important O&P issues, use the hashtag #AOPA2019.

## **Education Calendar**

May 7-8		AOPA Policy Forum	Ritz Carlton, Arlington, VA
May 8	1.5 CEs	Are You Compliant-Know the Supplier Standards	AOPA Webinar
June 3-4	14 CEs	Coding & Billing Seminar	Indianapolis, IN
June 12	1.5 CEs	Documentation-Understanding Your Role	AOPA Webinar
July 10	1.5 CEs	T.P.E – Get to Know the Program & What the Results are Telling You	AOPA Webinar
August 14	1.5 CEs	Are You Ready for the Worst: Contingency Planning	AOPA Webinar
September 11	1.5 CEs	Veteran Affairs Updates: Contracting, Special Reports and Other News	AOPA Webinar
October 9	1.5 CEs	Performance Reviews: How is Your Staff Doing?	AOPA Webinar
November 13	1.5 CEs	The Holiday Season-How to Provide Compliant Gifts	AOPA Webinar
December 11	1.5 CEs	New Codes for 2020, Other Updates and Yearly Round-Up	AOPA Webinar