

# AOPA 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2019 Staff Report



**To: AOPA Membership**  
**From: Eve Lee, Executive Director**  
**Date: October 15, 2019**

It was great to connect with many of you last month at the 2019 National Assembly! There were nearly 2,400 individuals from O&P in attendance, all with the goal to drive the waves of change for the profession and the patients it serves.

During the Assembly I talked about how one of my biggest priorities since becoming Executive Director has been ensuring members have what they need to run their business and serve their patients. Between the member survey we conducted earlier this year and the conversations I have had this past year with members, I found that there is something all members have in common, despite the all challenges of running an O&P business: everything they do is for their patients.

In the coming year we will be both improving our current initiatives and implementing new ones to better support you in your efforts. We will be improving our member communications, both the type and frequency. We will be developing new educational initiatives to help you and your staff stay on top of the ever-changing regulations that are constant in healthcare. We will continue to push for common sense regulatory and legislative changes that are focused on the patient, like the Medicare O&P Patient Centered Care Act. We will promote the value of research and the role AOPA plays in it. We will educate stakeholders in the need to differentiate O&P from DME. We will continue to build relationships with members of congress, high level administrators at the VA and CMS, to represent and promote the interests of O&P at every level.

As we move forward with current initiatives and implement new ones, AOPA staff remains committed to you. We want you to have the tools you need to run your O&P businesses.

## **2019 National Assembly: An Incredible Success**

The 2019 Assembly was held September 25-29 in beautiful downtown San Diego. Initial feedback has been extremely positive with many citing that it was the best O&P show of any type they have attended in years and that the education program was one of the strongest they have experienced.

Renowned speakers such as Howard Place, MD; Ann Hayes, PT, DPT, MHS, OCS; Matthew Major, PhD; Shawn Farrokhi, PT, PhD, John Mayer, DC, PHD, CCRP, FACSM; Rickard Branemark, MD, PhD, MSc; Jonathan Forsberg, MD, PhD; David Armstrong, MD, PhD, Judith Baumhauer, MD; Andreas Kannenberg, MD and Kenton Kaufman, PhD, PE led packed clinical symposia each day.

The Exhibit Hall featured over 150 exhibitors and numerous special events such as the massage station, sponsored by Cailor Fleming, the headshot lounge sponsored by Alps South, and the annual Technical Fabrication Contest which resulted in eleven winners. On Saturday, it opened up to the community for free, individuals outside O&P came to learn more about the profession and what it does for those living

with limb loss and limb impairment. Read more at <https://www.aopanet.org/education/2019-aopa-national-assembly/>

A special THANK YOU to our 2019 National Assembly sponsors; it was a success in large part because of your support!

To access photos from the Assembly, visit our Flickr page, <http://bit.ly/2MwmtDc>. To see reactions from other's search #AOPA2019 on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook. To view all the opportunities the Assembly offered take a look at the Final Program, <http://bit.ly/2IGc8mQ>.

### **2020 National Assembly – Vegas Here We Come!**

The 2020 Assembly Planning Committee is gearing up for an educational program befitting our attendees, highly educated practitioners and successful business owners. If you would like to participate in a curriculum of high-quality education, scientific research, and clinical principles—the 2020 Call for Papers is open. Learn more at <https://www.aopanet.org/education/2020-call-for-papers/>. Questions or comments should be directed to [Assembly@AOPAnet.org](mailto:Assembly@AOPAnet.org) or (571) 431-0876.

### **Legislative and Regulatory**

#### **Legislative Updates**

##### Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act

AOPA continues to work diligently on the introduction of the Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act. We are close to finalizing the bill language that will be introduced by Reps. Mike Thompson (D-CA), GT Thompson (R-PA), GK Butterfield (D-NC), and Brett Guthrie (R-KY). The bill will likely be introduced by the end of October, with the goal of having bill language wrapped into a larger “must-pass” package in the House by the end of the year.

In the Senate, Senator Mark Warner (D-VA) will once again serve as our Democrat lead but will not introduce the bill without a Republican cosponsor. Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), who cosponsored the bill in the last Congress, but will not do so again due to his being named chairman of the committee of jurisdiction) suggested working with Sen. Mike Crapo (R-ID); however, Sen. Crapo declined, citing an unfamiliarity with the issue and concerns about potential cost. We then turned to Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), who agree to be an original sponsor of the bill (thereby fulfilling Warner's request for the bill to be introduced as bipartisan), however, Cornyn's staff indicated the Senator would not have the bandwidth to push the bill aggressively. We have therefore begun outreach to other Republican senators on the Finance Committee, including Richard Burr (R-NC), John Kennedy (R-LA), and Rob Portman (R-OH).

Once legislation is introduced in both the House and the Senate, we will be mobilizing the AOPA membership and the O&P Alliance to help secure additional co-sponsors.

##### Wounded Warrior Workforce Education Act

We have added three cosponsors - Reps. Gil Cisneros (D-CA), Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), and John Rutherford (R-FL) to the House version of the WWWEA (H.R. 2487), bringing the total to 12. Bilirakis is especially important as he represents the district where Florida International University is located, and other Florida Republicans look to him for leadership on VA-related issues.

##### VA/DoD Relationships

AOPA continues to grow their relationships with key players at the Department of Veteran's Affairs and the Department of Defense. On August 20, staff held a call with Dr. Lucille Beck, Deputy Under Secretary of Health for Policy and Services, discussing new ways we could continue to partner with the VA. On October 1, staff traveled to Ft. Detrick in Frederick, MD, to meet with representatives of the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Program (CDMRP), which, through Congress, provides \$10 million in research funding for O&P projects annually. We discussed ways to further our relationship, bring increased attention to the program and to the work of grantees and potential grantees.

### O&P Political Action Committee

As part of AOPA's National Assembly, we were able to raise \$9,185 for the PAC and \$7,640 for Capital Connection. A rundown of our PAC activities in 2019 are as follows:

These individuals have made contributions to the O&P PAC, since the Q2 Staff Report: Jacqueline Adolph, CO; John Angelico, CP; John Allen, CPO; Maggie Baumer, JD; Jenna Baxter; Christopher Berdahl, CP; Deborah Boone; David Boone, PhD, MPH, BSPO; Mark Brady; Jeffrey Brandt, CPO; J. Douglas Call, CP; Erin Cammarata; Maynard Carkhuff; Kristin Carnahan, CPO, FAAOP; Sarah Chang; Gary Cheney, CPO; Glenn Crumpton, CPO; Kathleen DeLawrence; Thomas DiBello, CO, LO, FAAOP; John Chad Duncan, Phd., CPO; Frank Erdeljac, CO; Mike Fenner, CP, BOCPO, LPO; Kirk Ferris, CPO; Steven Filippis, CP; Jim Fitzpatrick; Colton Graham; Paul Gudonis; Kimberly Hanson; Bob Harmon; David Henry; Michele Hogan; Steven Hoover, CP, LP, COA; Dan Ignaszewski; David Johnson, CO; James Kaiser, CP, LP; Karyn Kessler; Jim Kingsley, COO; Charles Kuffel, CPO, FAAOP; Teri Kuffel, JD; William Leimkuehler, CPO, LPO; Kyle Leister, CPO, LPO; Ron Longo, CP; Pam Lupo, CO; Lee Mantelmacher, CPO; Stuart Marquette, CO; Clyde Massey, CPO; Brad Mattear, LO, CPA, Cfo; Brian Mayle; Steve McNamee, CP, BOCO, FAAOP; Thomas Metheney, CTO; Wendy Miller, BOCO, CDME; Aaron Moles, CPO; Morris Moncure, BOCP, CPA; Jonathan Naft, CPO; Matthew Nelson, CPO, FAAOP; Kathleen Pelz; Dale Perkins; Joyce Perrone; Joseph Pongratz, CPO, FAAOP; Mark Porth, CPO; Eduardo Reyes, CPO, LPO; Tyler Rowley, CPO; Bradley Ruhl; Kurt Schlau; Stephen Schulte, CP, FAAOP; Robin Seabrook; Frank Snell, CPO, LPO, FAAOP; Mike Sotak; Jack Steele, CO; Wanda Stephans; Natalie Stewart, CPO; Jason Tanner, CPO; Robert Tuck, CPO; Jason Wening, CPO, FAAOP; Mark Woodsen, RTP; Larry Word, CPO; Shane Wurdeman, CP, FAAOP, PhD, MSPO; Jessica Zistatsis, MSME.

AOPA would also like to thank the following individuals for their recent contributions to Capitol Connections and/or an O&P PAC sponsored event: Rudy Becker; David Boone, PhD, MPH, BSPO; Jeffrey Brandt, CPO; Thomas Costin; Mark Ford; Randall McFarland, CPO; Rick Riley; Paul Weber, CO; Jason Wening, CPO, FAAOP.

### O&P PAC 2019 Contributions to Date:

- Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Chair, Senate Finance Committee (\$1,000)
- Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX), Member, Senate Finance Committee, Senate Majority Whip (\$2,000)
- Senator Mark Warner (D-VA), Member, Senate Finance Committee (\$5,000)
- Rep. Julia Brownley (D-CA), Chair, Veteran's Affairs Health Subcommittee (\$1,000)
- Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX), Member, House Ways & Means Committee (\$1,000)
- VoteVets (\$2,500) VoteVets is a Political Action Committee supporting the campaigns of veterans serving in Congress, including Sens. Tom Carper (DE), Tammy Duckworth (IL), Gary Peters (MI), Jack Reed (RI), and Reps. Anthony Brown (MD-4), Salud Carbajal (CA-24), Gil Cisneros (CA-39), Jason Crow (CO-6), Tulsi Gabbard (HI-2), Ruben Gallego (AZ-7), Jared Golden (ME-2), Chrissy Houlahan (PA6), Andy Kim (NJ-3), Conor Lamb (PA-17), Ted Lieu (CA-33), Elaine Luria (VA-2), Seth Moulton (MA-6), Jimmy Panetta (CA-20), Max Rose (NY-11), Gregorio Sablan (MP), Mikie Sherrill (NJ-11), Elissa Slotkin (MI-8), and Abigail Spanberger (VA-7).

### Upcoming Distributions:

- Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Chair, House Energy & Commerce Committee (\$2,500)
- Rep. Steven Horsford (D-NV), Member, House Ways & Means Health Subcommittee (\$1,000)
- Rep. John Lewis (D-GA), Member, House Ways & Means Committee (\$2,500)
- Rep. Julie Brownley (D-CA), Chair, Veteran's Affairs Health Subcommittee (\$1,000)
- Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Member, Energy & Commerce Health Subcommittee (\$1,000)

### 2020 Policy Forum

Save the Date for the 2020 Policy Forum and plan to join us May 5-6, 2020 in Washington, DC. Our voices are louder together.

## Regulatory Updates

### Recovery Audit Contractor Introduces One New Audit

Performant, the Recovery Audit Contractor (RAC) for DMEPOS, Home Health, and Hospice claims nationwide posted one new approved issue to their website.

On October 01, 2019 Performant began a review for L1900, L1902, L1904, L1906, L1907, L1910, L1920, L1930, L1932, L1940, L1945, L1950, L1951, L1960, L1970, L1971, L1980, L1990, L2000, L2005, L2010, L2020, L2030, L2034, L2035, L2036, L2037, L2038, L2106, L2108, L2112, L2114, L2116, L2126, L2128, L2132, L2134, L2136, L4350, L4360, L4361, L4370, L4386, L4387, L4396, L4397, L4631. The review will be an automated review to determine if the reasonable useful lifetime (RUL) has been met. Since this is an automated review you will not receive the traditional additional documentation request (ADR) letter informing you of the review.

This new review brings the total number of approved O&P issues under review by Performant to nine.

### New Qualified Independent Contractor (QIC) Announced

On May 28, 2019 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) awarded MAXIMUS Federal Services, Inc. a contract for administering all reconsiderations (second level appeals) on processed Durable Medical Equipment Prosthetic Orthotic Supply (DMEPOS) claims. This contract includes:

- New appeals received on and after September 1, 2019
- Telephone discussions and reopening activities under the Telephone Discussion and Reopening Process Demonstration

MAXIMUS replaced C2C Solutions, and C2C Solutions will handle any second level appeals submitted prior to September 1, 2019.

MAXIMUS is not new to the Medicare contracting environment as it currently holds multiple contracts including serving as the QIC for Part A and Part B Medicare.

### AOPA Submits Comments on Ways to Reduce Provider/Supplier Burdens

AOPA responded to a June 11, 2019 Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) request for information (RFI). The RFI is part of CMS' initiative of Patients Over Paperwork, launched in 2017 as part of an Executive Order to reduce red tape in federal agencies and reduce regulations that are deemed burdensome, and they were seeking comments on ideas for "regulatory, sub-regulatory, policy, practice, and procedural changes that reduce unnecessary administrative burdens for clinicians, providers, patients and their families."

AOPA strongly supports CMS' efforts to put patients over paperwork through the reduction of unnecessary and redundant administrative burdens that are placed on physicians and allied health providers who deliver medically necessary services to Medicare beneficiaries. AOPA's comments focused on eight key asks:

- CMS Should Promulgate Regulations to Implement Section 427 of the Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP Benefits Improvement and Protection Act of 2000 (BIPA)
- CMS Should Ensure that Prior Authorization Programs Are Efficient and Do Not Result in Delays in Patient Care
- CMS Should Fully Acknowledge the Role and the Value of Prosthetist's and Orthotist's Clinical Documentation When Performing Claim Review
- CMS Should Exempt Orthotists and Prosthetists from Competitive Bidding of Off-the-Shelf Orthoses
- CMS Should Consider Revising the Reasonable Useful Lifetime for Orthoses
- CMS Should Require Comprehensive Error Rate Testing (CERT) Contractors and DME MACS to Employ a Certified/Licensed Prosthetist Orthotist
- CMS Should Reduce the Documentation Burden Associated with the Provision of Therapeutic Shoes and Inserts for Patients with Diabetes Mellitus

- CMS Should Authorize Contractors to Review Claim History When Determining Medical Necessity

The full comments may be viewed at <https://bit.ly/AOPACommentsRFI>.

#### AOPA Submits Comments on a Proposed Rule for Gap-Filling Methodologies

On September 27, 2019 AOPA submitted comments on a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed rule CMS-1713-P (Medicare Program; End Stage Renal Disease Prospective Payment System, Payment for Renal Dialysis Services Furnished to Individuals with Acute Kidney Injury, End-Stage Renal Disease Quality Incentive Program, Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) Fee Schedule Amounts, DMEPOS Competitive Bidding (CBP) Proposed Amendments, Standard Elements for a DMEPOS Order, and Master List of DMEPOS Items Potentially Subject to a Face-to-Face Encounter and Written Order Prior to Delivery and/or Prior Authorization Requirements). The primary purpose of the proposed rule was to update payment policies and rates under the End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Prospective Payment System (PPS) for renal dialysis services furnished to beneficiaries on or after January 1, 2020. However, CMS-1723-P included two provisions which would have a direct impact on orthotic and prosthetic suppliers and manufacturers.

AOPA's two main concerns with the proposed rule was the suggested method of calculating and updating fee schedules for newly created codes and possibly existing codes, and the arbitrary expansion of the list of HCPCS codes eligible for prior authorization. Here is a summary of AOPA's comments:

- Medicare fee schedules continue to be established using an outdated, non-transparent, gap filling method.
- Pricing continuity must be reserved for instances when items are truly comparable
- The proposed framework for establishing comparability is inappropriate for use with orthoses and prostheses
- The use of supplier/commercial pricing lists to determine base amounts for gap-filling purposes do not accurately reflect the cost of providing orthotic and prosthetic services
- CMS' authority to adjust prices for HCPCS codes created in the last five years should not be expanded beyond existing Inherent Reasonableness authority
- The criteria for Medicare prior authorization should not be reduced
- The creation of a combined master list of HCPCS codes potentially subject to a Face-to-Face encounter, written order prior to delivery, and prior authorization will lead to increased confusion among providers and Medicare beneficiaries

To review AOPA's full comments visit <http://bit.ly/3118lqM>.

#### Round 2021 Competitive Bidding Update

The bidding process for Round 2021 of the competitive bidding program, which includes 23 off-the-shelf orthoses, is now closed. All bids for Round 2021 were submitted by September 18, 2019. All submitted bids are now under review, and the contracted suppliers will be announced in the Fall of 2020.

For more information about Round 2021 of the competitive bidding program, and some helpful tools be sure to visit the AOPA website and the Round 2021 Competitive Bidding page.

#### Research

##### **AOPA Co-OP, the Compendium of O&P**

The AOPA Co-OP, a reimbursement, coding and policy resource, now has 437 active users. Perhaps the best kept secret in O&P, the information on the AOPA Co-OP spans the 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.

If you haven't signed up for the Co-OP yet, or if you have questions about this member benefit, there is an opportunity to learn about O&P's most comprehensive resource for coding, billing, and reimbursement. AOPA's Director of Strategic Initiatives, Ashlie White will demonstrate how to use the Co-OP and answer all your question on Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at noon ET, register here <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/5081336213031829249>.

Members can find more information and sign up at <https://www.aopanet.org/resources/co-op/>.

## **Prosthetics 2020**

The AOPA Medical Advisory Board (MAB) is scheduled to meet for the second time in 2019 on November 18 in Alexandria, VA. During the previous meeting, the MAB discussed the need for several research initiatives to protect patient access to quality prosthetic technology and associated prosthetic care. MAB members Kenton Kaufman, PhD, Douglas Smith, MD, and Paul Pasquina, MD, as well as members of the Prosthetics 2020 Steering Committee approved two projects for which AOPA will issue requests for proposals (RFPs). The first project seeks to determine the potential costs (both financial and quality of life) associated with prolonged wound care and limb salvage in an effort to determine the viability of a surgical model that more readily embraces amputation as a viable option when patients have access to prosthetic intervention and rehabilitation.

During the 2019 AOPA Assembly in San Diego, AOPA's Research Committee reviewed the project overview and refined the information to be included in an RFP for publication in Q4.

## **Orthotics 2020**

The Orthotics 2020 Medical Advisory Board (MAB) is scheduled to meet on November 19 in Alexandria, VA. During the previous meeting, the MAB approved the addition of neurological disorders as an area of focus for the Orthotics 2020 program and the addition of fourth MAB member with a background either in craniofacial surgery or neurosurgery. The MAB also approved a new round of RFPs to be issued in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2019. To date, the Orthotics 2020 program has awarded over \$370,000 in research funding in four specific areas of orthotic intervention; post-stroke, osteoarthritis, plagiocephaly, and spinal injury.

## **The Center for O&P Learning (COPL)**

The COPL Board recommended and AOPA approved the funding of 5 projects submitted during the 2019-2020 COPL request for proposals. The following studies have been funded:

- Leigh Clarke, B.PO, MPH, La Trobe University; *Patient and payor perspective of the benefit of prosthetic interventions and services: informing measures for future health economic evaluations.*
- Reza Safari, PhD, University of Derby; *Activity, Mobility, Social Functioning, Mental Health and Quality of Life Outcomes in Limited Mobility Transfemoral and Knee Disarticulation Amputees Using Microprocessor-Controlled Knees or Non-Microprocessor Controlled Knees in the United Kingdom: A Cohort Study*
- Jenny A. Kent, PhD, Northwestern University; *Vacuum Assisted Suspension: The effect of residuum-socket interface integrity on perception and control in individuals with a transtibial amputation*
- Christopher Hovorka, PhD, CPO, LPO, FAAOP, University of Pittsburgh; *Quality of life, satisfaction, gait and motion control outcomes of articulated passive dynamic, non-articulated passive dynamic and solid ankle foot orthoses in hemiparetic stroke survivors*
- Geoff Balkman, BA, MS, CPO, University of Washington; *Large-scale administration and calibration of a patient-reported item bank for assessing mobility of lower limb orthosis users*

## **Education**

### **Online AOPAversity Learning Center**

Access the on-demand education for the CE Credits you need! Learn some of the state-of-the-art clinical practices advancing the profession. Visit <https://www.aopanetonline.org/aopaversity> to create an account and gain access to distance learning modules.

### **Mastering Medicare Webinars**

There is still time to get the most relevant reimbursement information from AOPA's Experts and earn 1.5 CE credits for the two remaining months. Webinars are scheduled for 1pm ET on the second Wednesday of each month. Visit <https://www.aopanet.org/education/monthly-webinars/> to register. The 2019 AOPA Mastering Medicare Webinars remaining include:

- 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 recordings.

- 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
- May: Are You Complaint-Know the Supplier Standards
- June: Documentation-Understanding Your Role
- July 10: TPE - 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

### **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. They 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 final seminar for 2019 is scheduled for November 4-5 in Las Vegas. Learn more and register at <http://www.aopanet.org/education/coding-billing-seminar/> or contact Ryan Gleeson at [rgleeson@AOPAnet.org](mailto:rgleeson@AOPAnet.org).

## **Membership and Communications**

### **Membership Update**

Although building membership is a year-round activity, AOPA conducted its targeted annual member recruitment drive this quarter. The following are new AOPA members joining July 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019.

AOPA welcomes the following new patient care facility members in the third quarter: *Saunders Prosthetics & Orthotics* of Lady Lake, FL; *Strobel & Associates Prosthetics* of Plano, TX; *Southern California Prosthetics Inc* of Irvine, CA; *Fondren Orthopedic Group of Houston*, TX; *Essentia Health* of Duluth, MN; *Innovative Prosthetics* of Hastings NE; *Orthokinect* of Royal Oak, MI; *Mid Star Lab* of Tonganoxie, KS; *Joint Active Systems* of Effingham, IL; *University of Colorado, Denver*; *UCLA of Santa Monica*; and *Blue Ridge Prosthetics & Orthotics* of Harrisonburg, VA.

The new Supplier member this quarter was *Lindhe Xtend AB of Sweden*.

### **2019 Operating Performance and Compensation Survey Reports Published**

Ninety-six patient care facilities representing 1,025 full-time facilities and 200 part-time facilities, participated in AOPA's 2019 Operating Performance & Compensation Survey. Members are encouraged to participate in these benchmarking surveys (FREE) to assist in developing specific strategies to gauge and improve the financial health of their O&P business. The survey also helps AOPA develop a more accurate picture of the financial trends in the O&P industry.

Published copies of the final 2019 reports are now available at <https://www.aopanetonline.org/store>. *2019 Operating Performance Report*: Member: Electronic Version \$500, Nonmember: \$895 and *2019 Compensation & Benefits Report*: Member: Electronic Version \$500; Nonmember \$895

Mark your calendars for May 2020: When you participate in the Operating Performance survey, you receive the final published report (and a customized report for your facility) for FREE. Watch for announcements in the AOPA's online bi-weekly newsletter *SmartBrief*.

### **It's Membership Renewal Season for 2020**

With 2020 around the corner, members will begin receiving AOPA's 2020 membership invoices mid-October. There are no dues increase planned for 2020.

### **O&P Almanac**

The *O&P Almanac* is the most respected source for industry insight and association news in O&P. The June issue of the O&P Almanac explored how successful O&P companies are getting strategic in partnering with hospitals, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and other entities to provide orthotic and prosthetic services. These partnerships can be profitable if O&P professionals are careful in their contract negotiations, build relationships with key contacts, offer educations on device fitting, and provide high-quality clinical care. July's issue found that growing numbers of O&P clinicians are seeking to capture patient information and outcome measures data as the healthcare industry recognizes the importance of embracing "big data." Some O&P practices have instituted their own processes to collect and analyze facility-wide data to inform clinical decision making and prepare for future value-based reimbursement models. The August O&P Almanac answered the questions of who is undergoing osseointegration procedures, and what to do prosthetists need to know about caring for this growing U.S. patient population. Experts shared their opinions on the role of the prosthetist as well as the advances alongside other technologies, such as neuroprosthetics.

### **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**

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