



American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association

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AOPA In Advance SmartBrief
Breaking News
October 8, 2019

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2019 National Assembly Attendees Drove the Waves of Change



Last week over 2,400 individuals from the O&P profession gathered in San Diego for the 102nd National Assembly. Below are the highlights of what attendees experienced.

The Assembly kicked off Wednesday afternoon with the recognition of the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Jim Kaiser and the 2019 Legislative Advocacy Awardees Glenn Crumpton, CPO, Stella Seiber, and Maynard Carkhuff. Attendees then heard from Captain Lanny Boswell who spoke about the

importance of O&P from the military perspective. AOPA President Jim Weber opened up the Exhibit Hall with a champagne toast sponsored by Blatchford (formerly Endolite).

Eve Lee, AOPA's Executive Director addressed attendees on Thursday morning (her first time since she started in November 2018), highlighting the importance of AOPA's support of its members. Crowd favorite, the Award Winning Thranhardt Lecture series was also presented by this year's recipients, Tiffany Graham, MSPO, CPO, LPO, FAAOP, Kelly Millay, MPO, and Andreas Hahn, PhD, MSc. That evening several hundred veterans and attendees rocked out with Montgomery Gentry, with proceeds benefiting the Veterans Stride Foundation.



Friday began with the AOPA Annual Membership Business Meeting. The results of the election were announced, Jim Weber offered reflections on his past two years as President, and President-Elect Jeff Lutz spoke about his plans for 2020. After a day of education, attendees were treated to happy hour by exhibitors in the Exhibit Hall.



Saturday morning rounded out the Assembly, the student poster awards were presented to Erin McGraw and Charles Noble, both from the University of Pittsburgh. Attendees learned that they had selected Mark Ford as the 2019 Hamontree Business Lecture Series winner. Last but not least, Paralympian Jeremy Campbell shared his inspiring story.

Attendees enjoyed numerous educational opportunities throughout the Assembly including, Outcomes and Evidence Base Practice in O&P: How Are You Documenting Value in Your Clinic and Using it to Improve Reimbursement, The Diabetic Foot from the Outside In, Contemporary Perspectives on Low Back Pain in the Population with Limb Loss Symposium, and Future Tech – A Glimpse into Emerging Technologies.



The Exhibit Hall was once again the place to be. Attendees perused over 150 exhibitors and enjoyed the various 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, the Exhibit Hall 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.

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](#). 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](#). View the [2019 Exhibitor List](#).

AOPA Participates in MedPAC Public Meeting

On September 5, 2019 AOPA staff attended the monthly public meeting of the MedPAC Commission which is charged with advising the Congress on issues regarding Medicare policy. AOPA was represented by Justin Beland, Director of Government Affairs and Joe McTernan, Director of Coding and Reimbursement, Education, and Programming. A topic of discussion on the MedPAC agenda was a review of the Medicare DMEPOS Competitive Bidding Program, specifically the national competitive bidding program for mail order diabetic test strips. While the session began with a focus on diabetic test strips, the commissioners quickly began discussing the DMEPOS Competitive Bidding program in general, including its relative success in achieving significant savings for the Medicare program without significant patient issues. MedPAC staff presented data that supported the premise that competitive bidding did not result in significant patient access issues. The commissioners discussed the potential expansion of DMEPOS competitive bidding and discussed how competitive bidding could potentially be expanded beyond DMEPOS into other areas of the Medicare program.

AOPA offered verbal comments during the public comment section of the session and cautioned the commission on the concept of expanding competitive bidding into non-commodity services such as custom fitted and custom fabricated orthoses and prostheses. AOPA stressed the importance of ensuring that Medicare beneficiaries continue to have access to high quality clinical care provided by properly certified and/or licensed practitioners. AOPA also asked the commission to continue to support an exemption from competitive bidding for orthotists and prosthetists as mentioned in its June 2018 report to congress.

Reconsideration Request Contact Information Update

As previously reported the new Qualified Independent Contractor (QIC) contractor is Maximus Federal Services, Inc and they will be replacing C2C Innovative Solutions. As of September 1, 2019, all Reconsideration requests, level two appeals, should be submitted to Maximus Federal Services, Inc. Requests can be submitted in writing to the following address:

Maximus Federal Services, Inc.,
Medicare DME,
3750 Monroe Avenue, Suite 777,
Pittsford, NY 14534-1302

Reconsideration requests may also be submitted via the QIC Appeals Portal at <https://qicappeals.cms.gov>.

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

Thank You to Our National Assembly Title Sponsors



Revised Medical Necessity Criteria for MPK's

BCBS Illinois, BCBS Montana, BCBS New Mexico, BCBS Oklahoma, BCBS Texas, HCSC: Lower Limb Prosthetics, Including Microprocessor-Controlled Prosthetics - Med Policy

Released revised draft policy with the following proposed changes to criteria and supporting information.

Revised medical necessity criteria for microprocessor-controlled and powered knee (MPK); replaced K-PAVET score requirement with Medicare's classification of functional level (MFL) K2, K3, or K4; revised criterion regarding physical ability to add strength and balance as examples.

Removed experimental, investigational, and/or unproven policy statement for the Genium Bionic Prosthetic System microprocessor-controlled knee.

Revised not medically necessary policy statement for MPK to replace K-PAVET scores with MFL 0.

Revised medically necessary policy statement for a four-axis, hydraulic or pneumatic hip joint (e.g., Helix 3D Hip [OttoBock]) to replace K-PAVET score requirement with MFL K3 or higher, and change use in conjunction with the OttoBock C-leg from a requirement to an option.

Added table of Medicare's classification of functional levels to the coverage section.

Removed all scoring information for the K-PAVET guide from the coverage section.

Updated notes in the coverage section. Updated description, rationale, and references sections.

Draft posted: 08/01/2019.

Comment period ends: 08/16/2019.

CMS Releases Proposed Rules for ESRD PPS & Gap-Filling Methodologies

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently released a [proposed rule](#) to update the End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) Prospective Payment System (PPS), and included in the proposed rule were major changes to the gap-filling methodology. Gap-filling is the current procedure for how new introduced products and HCPCS codes receive a fee schedule amount.

AOPA staff is currently reviewing the proposed rule in more detail.

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

Medicare DME QIC Contract to Transition from C2C to Maximus

The contract to serve as the Medicare Qualified Independent Contractor (QIC), which processes Medicare reconsideration requests, will transition from C2C Innovative Solutions, Inc. to Maximus Federal by the end of 2019. C2C will hold its last re-opening discussion on September 15th and all pending reconsideration requests will be completed by December 31, 2019. Information regarding when MAXIMUS will begin accepting Medicare reconsideration requests has not yet been released.

C2C spearheaded a popular telephone re-opening process during its tenure as the QIC which drastically reduced the number of reconsideration denials. It is not yet known whether MAXIMUS will continue this process as part of its QIC contract.

AOPA will continue to follow this story and provide updates on the transition as they are available.

Don't Sleep on the Latest AOPA Member Resource

Are you utilizing your AOPA membership? Attend the upcoming live tutorial to learn about one of the best resources available for O&P practices, the [AOPA Co-OP](#).

A Wikipedia for all things O&P, the Co-OP is a one-stop resource for information about reimbursement, coding, and policy. It is searchable database that provides up-to-date information on developments in Medicare policy, state-specific legislation, private-payer updates, and more. Members can access detailed information on everything from modifiers to product-specific L Codes and associated policies. Additionally, members can share information and insights on developments impacting the entire O&P profession.

If you haven't signed up for the Co-OP yet, this is your 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 questions.

Register now for FREE:

- [Friday, October 18 at noon ET](#)
- [Friday, November 8 at noon ET](#)
- [Friday, December 6 at noon ET](#)

CMS Adds L0650 to the Master List of Items Subject to Medicare Prior Authorization

On April 22, 2019, The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published an announcement in the *Federal Register* that added four HCPCS codes to the master list of Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) items that are subject to inclusion in the Medicare Prior Authorization program. One of the four HCPCS codes that were added to the master list is L0650 which describes an off the shelf (OTS) lumbar-sacral orthosis (LSO). L0650 was added because it meets the criteria necessary for inclusion on the prior authorization master list. Specifically, the average Medicare allowable for L0650 exceeds \$1,041 and L0650 was listed in the *2018 Medicare Fee for Service Supplemental Improper Payment Report*.

The inclusion of L0650 on the Medicare prior authorization master list does not mean that claims for L0650 are subject to prior authorization currently, it just means that Medicare can choose to require prior authorization for L0650 in the future. The inclusion of L0650 is a significant development as it represents the first orthotic code to be identified and included in the Medicare prior authorization master list. Previously, all the codes on the master list described prosthetic devices.

AOPA will continue to follow developments related to the Medicare DMEPOS Prior Authorization program and will communicate any changes regarding the master list or proposed implementation of prior authorization for O&P services.

Upcoming AOPA Events

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| October 9, 2019 | <i>Performance Reviews: How is Your Staff Doing?</i>
AOPA Webinar
Learn more and register here |
| November 3-9, 2019 | Corporate Compliance & Ethics Week
AOPA
Learn more |
| November 4-5, 2019 | <i>Coding & Billing Seminar</i>
Las Vegas, NV
Learn more and register here |