

AOPA 4th Quarter 2021 Staff Report



To: AOPA Membership
From: Eve Lee, Executive Director
Date: February 2, 2022

I hope everyone's 2022 is off to a good start! As you know, the Board and staff went through a strategic planning process during the second half of 2021. I am excited to announce the product of this, AOPA's new vision, mission, and strategic priorities.

Until now, we did not have an established vision. To remedy these the Board spent time brainstorming and refining what it should be. The decided vision: *A world where orthotic and prosthetic care transforms lives.*

When it came to the mission, we felt our pillars of advocacy, research, and education were still important, but needed to be better articulated. That led us to our new mission of: *A trusted partner, advocating for and serving the orthotic and prosthetic community by:*

- *Fostering relationships with decision makers to ensure equitable access.*
- *Providing education that promotes professional excellence.*
- *Supporting research that informs innovative care.*
- *Advancing equality to strengthen the orthotic and prosthetic profession and improve the lives of patients.*

The strategic priorities determined during the process sets the course for AOPA's future and lays out six areas that we'll work to accomplish in the next three to five years. They are:

- *Communicating the importance of orthotic and prosthetic care*
- *Increasing patient access to clinically appropriate, evidence-based care*
- *Helping members succeed in the changing healthcare environment*
- *Identifying and influence trends and learning that may impact orthotics and prosthetics*
- *Enhancing AOPA value, engagement, and community*
- *Driving collaboration by creating strategic relationships*

Now more than ever, AOPA's leadership is critical to the continued success you our members, and the O&P profession. With our commitment to this new vision, mission, and the defined priorities, I strongly believe we are well-positioned to deliver. If you have questions, do not hesitate to reach out at info@AOPAnet.org.

Thank you for your continued support.

Meetings and Education

2022 AOPA National Assembly Call for Papers



Improve Patient Care * Advance Your Career * Gain National Recognition

The 105th AOPA National Assembly will be held in San Antonio, Texas on September 28-October 1, 2022. In addition to the in-person Assembly, virtual elements are being planned. There will be general sessions, as well as concurrent breakout tracks, an Expo, patient demonstrations, and workshops.

To be part of the 2022 National Assembly, please submit proposals to the appropriate Workgroup as outlined below.

Clinical Education:

If you are interested in presenting a Free Paper on an orthotic, prosthetic, or pedorthic topic, please complete the [submission form](#) and attach two copies of your abstract (one with author and contact information and the other blind, without your name and contact information). Your abstract must include: Title, Purpose, Methods, Results, Conclusion, and Significance. Please take a few moments to review the [sample abstract form](#) which contains submission guidelines. Incomplete abstracts will be returned.

Quick Links

[Clinical Free Paper \(Orthotic, Prosthetic and/or Pedorthic\)](#)

[Business Submissions](#)

[Post Mastectomy](#)

[Technical Education](#)

[O&P Digital Education](#)

[Symposia – All areas of learning](#)

Business Education:

Are you a seasoned business professional with significant experience in managing an orthotics and/or prosthetics patient care or manufacturing business? Share your successes at the 2022 National Assembly and compete for the prestigious Sam E. Hamontree Business Education Award. The winner of the Hamontree award will take home \$1,000. The workgroup will select the top submissions to compete for the Hamontree award during the National Assembly—then the audience will select the winner. Complete the [submission form today](#).

Post Mastectomy Education:

New for 2022, the Assembly Committee will offer a two-day education track for Post-Mastectomy Fitters. The Post-Mastectomy Education workgroup is interested in reviewing a variety of submissions, but especially Case studies, Physiological/Emotional Care and Innovations, and Technology. Please complete the Post-Mastectomy Education [submission form](#) to have your presentation considered.

Technical:

Become a technical presenter during the 2022 National Assembly. The workgroup is looking for a wide variety of education to accommodate all levels of experience. *New for 2022* is a session titled, Fabrication Tips and Tricks. This session will be based on your short videos featuring a

fabrication tip or trick on a fabrication method. Videos should be 3-5 minutes in length and can be on a tool, fabrication technique, design, or other technical related problem-solving method. The audience will select the winner(s) and cash prizes of \$500, \$250, and \$100 will be awarded. Indicate your interest on the [submission form](#)—your video can be updated later.

Digital O&P Care:

New for 2022, The Digital O&P Care Workgroup was created because AOPA has found that the process of digital transformation in our field has progressed to a point where this topic deserves a track on its own at the assembly. The lines around traditional topics like CAD CAM, patient data management, and design for manufacturing in 3D printing have blurred and current computer programs tackle multiple aspects of the patient care. Additionally, the innovations in digital technology that are being discussed and in progress are likely to combine multiple aspects of O&P even more so we need to get ready for the future. Submit a presentation proposal for this innovative education track. The program will be divided into three categories featuring Data, Design, and Application. While the Digital O&P Care Workgroup is interested in a variety of education topics, they are specifically interested in the following.

DATA: Remote patient monitoring, App based data, DATA – What, When, How – Synthesis, and Implementation of an outcomes measuring program.

DESIGN: Modification Software, Remote education tools, CFab services, and Proper limb alignment in digital shape capture.

APPLICATION: Telehealth, HIPAA Compliance Online Digital, Collaborative – EMR with referrals, Digitizing fee schedules through AI, and Robotics in O&P. Please complete the Digital Education [submission form](#) to have your presentation considered.

Timeline:

January 21	Call for Papers Announcement
April 1	Call for Papers Submission Deadline
April 15	Paper Grading and Program Organized
May 2	Confirmation Letters to Presenters
May 16	Presenter Webpage available
May 20	Program on Website
June 1	Program Released; General Registration Open

Manufacturer Workshops are available (to exhibiting companies for purchase) for those manufacturers wishing to educate or promote a specific product line. For further information regarding the submission process or the National Assembly in general, contact Tina Carlson at (571) 431-0808 or tcarlson@AOPAnet.org.

We look forward to receiving your submission.

Health Policy and Research

Co-OP

AOPA’s recent investment in the GovPredict platform provides AOPA staff with alerts and tracking capability for all state policy developments, allowing AOPA to update every state page

on the Co-OP with relevant legislative and regulatory information in real time. Please check your state page to learn more about O&P-specific legislation relevant to your state.

AOPA Supplier Members that are part of the Supplier Plus Program can now include links directly to product-specific webpages on company sites within the L Code Search section, in addition to other exclusive Co-OP opportunities.

If you haven't signed up for the Co-OP, or if you have questions about this free member benefit, there are several ways to learn about O&P's most comprehensive resource for coding, billing, and reimbursement. You can find more information at www.AOPAnet.org/co-op.

Research

New Staff Alert! Meet Susannah Engdahl, PhD

Susannah Engdahl, PhD

"As a prosthesis user for most of my life, I have a long-standing interest in helping to advance quality of life for individuals with limb loss and limb difference. Most of my prior work in this area involved academic research relating to upper limb prostheses, which I performed at the University of Michigan and George Mason University. I also participated in the 2019 NAAOP Fellowship, where I learned about many of the policy and advocacy efforts undertaken by the O&P profession to advance patient care. These experiences contributed to my interest in using scientific research to support health policy initiatives, so I am very excited for the opportunity to work in this capacity at AOPA. I look forward to meeting and collaborating with many of you in the future!"



Legislative Updates

During the fourth quarter, AOPA continued to advocate for the Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act, meeting with over 35 members of Congress. In the House, *H.R. 1990* expanded roster of cosponsors by four, bringing the total to 14:

- Rep. Adrian Smith (R-NE-3)
- Rep. Jackie Walorski (R-IN-2)
- Rep. Suzan K. DelBene (D-WA-1)
- Rep. Jefferson Van Drew (R-NJ-2)

S. 2556 also added Sen. John Thune (R-SD) as a cosponsor, bringing the total number of cosponsors on the Senate bill to 6.

Both bills would improve access to, and quality of, orthotic and prosthetic care while simultaneously combating fraud and abuse. Please visit www.AOPAvotes.org for the most recent call to action related these important pieces of legislation.

O&P PAC Updates

The O&P PAC is AOPA's political action committee (PAC) representing the O&P profession on Capitol Hill. The O&P PAC focuses on seeking out key legislators on key committees who have demonstrated an interest and concern for the issues facing the O&P community.

AOPA would like to thank the following individual for their contributions to the O&P PAC in 2021:

Ryan Arbogast; Curt Bertram, CPO; Gerald Bernar, CP; Jeff Brandt, CPO; George Breece; Joy Burwell; Victor Bustamante, LPO; Erin Cammarata; Russell Cannon; Maynard Carkhuff; Tina Carlson, CMP; Kevin Clarke; Jeff Collins; Thomas Costin; Traci Dralle, CFm; John Chad Duncan, Phd, CPO; Daryl Farler, CPA; Michael Fenner, LPO, CP; Marty Frana; Arlene Gillis; Paul Gudonis; Kimberly Hanson; Scott Hebert, CPO; Denise Hoffmann; Shelly Hogan; Steven Hoover; Aaron James, CO, BOCPO; John Kenney, CPO, FAAOP; James Kingsley; Therese Kuffel, JD; Charles Kuffel, CPO, FAAOP; Robert Leaber, CPO; Eve Lee, MBA, CAE; William Leimkuehler, CPO; William Lester, CPO; James Lewallen, CO; James Liston, CP; Melanie Liston; Mahesh Mansukhani; Brad Mattear, CPA, LO, Cfo; David McGill; Martin McNab, CPO; Matthew Nelson, CPO; Joe McTernan; Wendy Miller, LO, BOCO, CDME; Jon Naft, CPO; Michael Oros, CPO; Sara Peterson, Phd, CPO, FAAOP; Jeff Quelet, CPO; Rick Riley; John Roberts, CPO; Peter Rogerson, COA; Scott Schneider; Lesleigh Sisson, CFm; Mike Sotak; Frank Snell, CPO, FAAOP; Jack Steele, CO, FAAOP; Jason Tanner, CP; Bernie Veldman, CO; Greg Wahl; James Weber, MBA; Ashlie White; Dennis Williams, CO, BOC (O); Scott Williamson, MBA; Linda Wise; Paul Werner, LPO; Shane Wurdeman, Phd, CP and James Young, CP, FAAOP

To participate in, support and receive additional information about the O&P PAC, eligible individuals must first sign an authorization form, which may be completed online: bit.ly/aopapac.

Policy Forum

AOPA is excited to announce that the 2022 Annual Policy Forum will be held in-person from May 17-18 at the Hilton Crystal City in Arlington, Virginia, just southwest of Washington, DC. The Policy Forum is a unique opportunity to tell the story of O&P directly to members of Congress and their staff. Together, we are a strong voice for our patients and our profession: stay tuned for more information on how to get involved!

AOPA VISN Network

AOPA is currently seeking members to serve as liaisons to the Department of Veterans Affairs' Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) to share experiences and facilitate collaboration with the Department. The AOPA VISN Network will meet quarterly as a group, and members are encouraged to check in with AOPA staff individually as challenges or issues arise within their respective VISNs. Participation in at least two quarterly meetings each year is required for continued service. If you are interested in joining the Network, please contact Sam Miller, AOPA's State and Federal Advocacy Manager, at SMiller@AOPAnet.org.

Coding and Reimbursement

CMS & OSHA Released Rules Regarding Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations

On November 4, 2021, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) released separate, but complementary regulations that established COVID-19 vaccination requirements.

The CMS rule applied to certain Medicare and Medicaid providers and suppliers who are regulated under specific health and safety standards known as Conditions of Participation, and O&P suppliers and providers were not included on this list. The CMS Fact Sheet regarding the Interim Final Rule which includes a comprehensive FAQ document may be accessed [here](#).

The OSHA rule applies more broadly to all employers with 100 or more employees (large employers) and is not limited to companies that operate in the healthcare space. A helpful fact sheet including a summary of the employer requirements established by the OSHA rule may be accessed [here](#).

It is important to point out that both of these vaccine mandates have been placed on hold as they are being challenged in the courts.

AOPA remains in support of all measures to ensure the safety and well-being of all of its members and their patients, including COVID-19 vaccination.

Questions regarding the vaccine mandates may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@aopanet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@aopanet.org.

2022 Medicare DMEPOS Fee Schedule Updated

On December 2, 2021, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced the 2022 Medicare Fee Schedule update for Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS). The 2022 Medicare DMEPOS Fee Schedule will increase by a net total of 5.1% for claims with a date of service on or after January 1, 2022. The 5.1% increase is the result of a CPI-U increase of 5.4% from June 2020 to June 2021 and a -0.3% productivity adjustment. AOPA previously reported an assumed net increase of 5.1% but it has now been officially confirmed by CMS.

In addition to the 5.1% increase to the Medicare DMEPOS Fee Schedule, on December 10, 2022, Congress passed a bill that will extend the delay of the 2% Medicare sequestration-based reimbursement reductions that were scheduled to be re-implemented as of January 1, 2022. The bill will extend the moratorium on sequestration reductions through March 31, 2022 and reduce sequestration reductions to 1% from April 1st through June 30, 2022.

Questions regarding the Medicare fee schedule or Medicare sequestration may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@aopanet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@aopanet.org.

Upper Extremity Orthoses Coding Reminders

On November 24, 2021, the DME MACs and the PDAC released a coding reminder and new guidelines for thirty HCPCS codes describing Elbow, Shoulder, Shoulder-Elbow-Wrist-Hand and Shoulder-Elbow-Wrist-Hand-Finger Orthoses. To review the guidelines, click [here](#). These new coding guidelines were effective immediately.

On November 24, 2021, the DME MACs and the PDAC also released a revised coding reminder and guidelines for twenty-six HCPCS codes describing Finger, Hand, Hand-Finger and Wrist-Hand-Finger Orthoses. To review the guidelines, click [here](#). These new coding guidelines were effective immediately.

Questions may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

Code Verification Reminder for L6715 and L6880

Effective for claims with dates of service on or after January 1, 2022, the only products that may be billed using codes L6715 (terminal device, multiple articulating digit, includes motor(s), initial issue or replacement) and/or L6880 (electric hand, switch or myoelectric controlled, independently articulating digits, any grasp pattern or combination of grasp patterns, includes motor(s)) are those that have received a code verification by the PDAC and are listed on the PDAC website.

Questions may be directed to Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

AOPAversity Mastering Medicare Webinars

AOPA staff and guest speakers will keep you up to date with the latest rules and regulations during these one-hour webinars. This year's webinar topics include revenue collection, appeals, policy updates and reviews, documentation and more. And, back by popular demand, the Clinician's Corner series...you'll learn about the newest techniques or how to best treat your patients presented by one of AOPA's National Assembly presenters.

Don't miss out on what we have in-store for 2022, [register for the 2022 monthly webinar series today](#). To keep the topics fresh, current and what you are asking for the monthly topics are subject to change or rescheduling. The current schedule and topics are:

- January 12: Strategies for Effective Revenue Collection*
- February 9: Lower Limb Prosthesis Policy: A Review
- March 9: Medicare 101: Get to Know the Basics
- April 13: Clinicians Corner-Techs/Fitters
- May 11: Supplier Standards & Revalidations
- June 8: SWOs, PODs, ABNs, AOBs: Your Must Have Documentation
- July 13: Clinicians Corner- Orthotics
- August 10: Roadmap to Appeals
- September 14: An Operations Presentation
- October 12: Clinicians Corner-Prosthetics

- November 9: The Do's & Don'ts of Gift Giving
- December 14: The Year in Review & What is Ahead

*The January 12 webinar is available as an on-demand presentation.

Need more convincing? Not only do the webinars provide relevant content, but they are also a great way to promote team-building, providing an opportunity for your staff to come together and refresh their skills. One registration gives five of the staff at your office location access to the webinar(s) and the opportunity to earn 1.5 continuing education credits each month.

The whole series is \$790 for members, and non-members can purchase the series for \$1,999. Individual webinars can also be purchased and are \$79 for members and \$199 for non-members. More on the webinars is available [here](#).

Have any suggestions for 2023 topics, let us know!

Questions about content contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org. Questions about registration contact Kristen Bean at kbean@AOPAnet.org.

AOPAversity Coding & Billing Seminar

This year we will be hosting two virtual Coding & Billing Seminars and two live and in-person Coding & Billing Seminars. More information including dates and locations to follow.

Questions contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org.

QUICKCODERS

The 2022 American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (AOPA) Quick Coder is [now available!](#)

A speedy reference to the HCPCS codes for all orthotic, shoe and prosthetic codes and modifiers, the Quick Coder also provides references for inpatient billing and OTS vs. Custom-Fit coding.

Changes are now being made to codes on a bi-annual basis. If a change is made during 2022, AOPA will notify you. This will ensure your Quick Coder remains up-to-date throughout the year.

Membership and Communications

Welcome New Members

Patient Care Facilities: Cranial Kids, Colorado Springs, CO; Gouterman Orthopedic Appliances, Rockville, MD; Kinetic O&P, Bourbonnais, IL.

Suppliers: Adapttech, Portugal; Medical Creations, Inc, Denver, Colorado; J Puente Consulting, Westchester, IL.

O&P Almanac

The October *O&P Almanac* featured technological advances that will aid clinicians in decision making and offer more individualized patient care; a new approach to prevent adverse business

outcomes; the latest numbers on U.S. health insurance coverage trends; studies that will aid limb loss patients in their rehabilitation journeys; state-specific advocacy efforts; and more.

Read the November/December issue to find out how O&P companies are adapting to supply chain disruptions; read tips for treating senior patients with comorbidities; learn the new OSHA and CMS rules for employee vaccination; meet the 2022 AOPA Board of Directors; review reimbursement changes from the past 12 months and prepare for 2022; read about studies into the role of cognitive bias in gait; and more.

To read these and other past issues visit [our bookshelf](#).

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, share what you are working on using the hashtags #prosthetics and/or #orthotics.

Education Calendar

February 9	Lower Limb Protheses Policy: A Review	Monthly Webinar
February 17	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
February 23	Co-OP Tutorial	Online
March 9	Medicare 101: Get to Know the Basics	Monthly Webinar
March 17	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
April 13	Clinicians Corner- Techs/Fitters	Monthly Webinar
April 21	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
May 4, 2022	Co-OP Tutorial	Online
May 11	Supplier Standards & Revalidations	Monthly Webinar
May 16-18	AOPA Policy Forum	Washington, DC
May 19	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
June 8	SWOs, PODs, ABNs, AOBs: Your Must Have Documentation	Monthly Webinar
June 16	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
July 13	Clinicians Corner - Orthotics	Monthly Webinar
July 21	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
August 3, 2022	Co-OP Tutorial	Online
August 10	Roadmap to Appeals	Monthly Webinar
August 18	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
September 14	An Operations Presentation	Monthly Webinar
September 22	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update
Sept 28-Oct 1, 2022	AOPA National Assembly	San Antonio, TX
Oct 12	Clinicians Corner-Prosthetics	Monthly Webinar
Oct 20	AOPA: Advocacy in Action	AOPA Update

Oct 22	Co-OP Tutorial	Online
Nov 9	The Do's and Don'ts of Gift Giving	Monthly Webinar
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***Bold indicates event**