



**American Orthotic &
Prosthetic Association**

AOPA in Advance

Breaking News for O&P Professionals

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Newsletter Feedback

We invite your comments and questions. Please contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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O&P NEWS

AOPA Attends to Texas, the Latest State to Threaten Medicaid Cuts for O&P

AOPA has been alerted to another threat to cut Medicaid payments to O&P, this time in Texas. The Texas legislature is holding a special session to finish passing a budget for the state and is considering a 12.5% cut to O&P reimbursements within the state's Medicaid budget over fiscal years 2011 and 2012. **AOPA** has been providing support to the Texas Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (TOPA), crafting an ad for placement in newspapers and is distributing a letter to O&P patient care providers in the state to alert them to the Medicaid cuts and how to register their opposition to the cuts with their state representatives.

[Click here to see the ad.](#)

[Click here to read portions of the Texas Budget Conference Committee Report relevant to O&P.](#)

[Click here to access and search the entire Texas Budget Conference Committee Report.](#)

AOPA will continue to update members about the status of the O&P cuts in Texas. In the interim, these threats to O&P Medicaid reimbursements provided the impetus for **AOPA** and the Amputee Coalition to launch its 30-second television public service announcement, hosted online at LimbsAreEssential.org and **AOPA** has created a "Take Action" advocacy page where anyone who wants to support O&P may send a letter to their state and federal legislators, urging them to join the fight to protect these vulnerable citizens with mobility impairments.

[Click here to view the LimbsAreEssential.org site and PSA.](#)

And **AOPA** wants to remind members that they are encouraged to recommend the LimbsAreEssential.org site patients or colleagues or friends who are angered by irresponsible Medicaid cuts direct them to the site where they can send a letter to their state and federal legislators, urging them to join the fight to protect these vulnerable citizens with mobility impairments.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Prosthetics Rsearch Funding Protected in House Appropriations Bill by Amendment Submitted by Rep. Jason Altmire

In the May 31 issue of the *AIA* newsletter, we reported that the Medicare O&P Improvements Act of 2011 was introduced as H.R. 1958 in the U.S. House of Representatives by Reps. Shelley Berkley (D-NV) and Glenn Thompson (R-PA). [Click here to read H.R. 1958, the Medicare O&P Improvements Act of 2011.](#) This week there was more good news: Rep. Jason Altmire (D-PA) included an amendment to the FY 2012 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill to assure that current levels of funding for VA prosthetics research were maintained by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Prior to Rep. Altmire's amendment, the appropriations bill had reduced the amount of spending allocated for prosthetics research. With the Altmire amendment, the

money needed to restore the prior level of funding was carved out of other areas of the VA budget and redirected for the purpose of research funding. Here's a summary drawn from materials circulated from Rep. Altmire's office:

ALTMIRE AMENDMENT ADOPTED - WILL IMPROVE VETERANS' ACCESS TO QUALITY PROSTHETICS

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) has successfully inserted an amendment in the FY 2012 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill that will improve veterans' access to quality prosthetics. Originally, this bill significantly cut funding for medical and prosthetic research at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), despite the fact that multiple veterans have told Congress that the transition from prosthetic care at the Department of Defense (DoD) to their local VA is often sluggish and inconsistent, which can impact their everyday life. Congressman Altmire's amendment, which was endorsed by the American Legion, will help the VA improve its prosthetics by restoring much of its research funding at no new cost to taxpayers.

"We can never repay America's veterans for their sacrifice. What amount of money could replace an arm or a leg lost in the line of duty?," Congressman Altmire said. "The least that we can do is ensure that the VA has the resources it needs to conduct medical research and provide veterans with the highest quality prosthetics after they leave the service."

If, as expected, the overall bill passes the House later this month, this amendment would be Congressman Altmire's 41st legislative initiative to pass the House during his congressional career. In all, Congressman Altmire has authored seven bills dealing directly with veterans' issues that have been signed into law.

To view video of Congressman Altmire's floor speech, click [here](#).

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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The Amputee Coalition Presents AOPA with Award During AC's National Conference

The Amputee Coalition hosted its 2011 National Conference in Kansas City June 1-4. The *Kansas City Star* released a photo gallery of the event, which is [available here](#). During the conference, the Amputee Coalition presented a special "Spirit of Collaboration" award to **AOPA**, celebrating the close relationship **AOPA** and the AC have fostered for the sake of supporting amputees and protecting the patient care provided by the O&P community.

[Click here to see a picture of AOPA Executive Director Tom Fise and Hanger Orthopedic CEO and AOPA Board Member accepting the award from Amputee Coalition President and CEO Kendra Calhoun.](#)

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Deadline Extended: New June 30 Deadline for Responses to AOPA's RFP for Prosthetic Knee Research and Grant of as much as \$250,000

As announced in March in the *AIA* newsletter, **AOPA** is interested in promoting research focused on improving the knowledge about, and quality of prosthetic modalities available to Medicare-aged amputee patients requiring prosthetic knees, and comparing outcomes and effectiveness of various types of devices, in this case relating to the measuring performance of newer microprocessor prosthetic knees, as compared to conventional non-microprocessor controlled prosthetic knees. This

AOPA RFP solicits, and will consider high-quality proposals for a single project with a one-time award in an amount projected to be \$250,000.

[Click here to read the entire RFP.](#)

The extended deadline for proposals is now June 30, 2011. Successful applicants will be notified by August 1, 2011, with availability of this support to begin September 1, 2011. Reasonable efforts must be made to obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in compliance with this time line. The study should be completed within two years of the date of the award.

Applications should be sent to:

Research Committee
American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association
330 John Carlyle Street
Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314

Questions should be directed to: Thomas Fise, at the address above, or tfise@AOPAnet.org. Applicants **should not** contact individual microprocessor prosthetic knee manufacturers with questions regarding this **AOPA** RFP.

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Manufacturers' Coding Workshop: What You Don't Know about Coding Can Hurt You!

Join **AOPA** on July 21 and hear representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) discuss current coding issues and learn the ins-and-outs of coding applications, as well as hints on coding success, from speakers experienced in coding issues. The workshop will help you be able to answer these questions and more:

- How does coding affect product sales?
- When in the product lifecycle should you consider coding?
- Does the name of a device affect payment?
- Who makes the final decision on what devices receive codes?
- Can you get a brand name code?
- Do Medicare codes affect private payers?
- What do I do if my code application is rejected?

AOPA has negotiated the incredible room rate of \$109 per night at the Doubletree by Hilton Baltimore BWI Hotel. Make your room reservation today by calling (410) 859-8400. Space is limited and this incredible room rate won't last. Don't miss this opportunity to advance your company's goals-get the answers you need to these questions and more!

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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O&P PAC Corner

The O&P PAC Corner provides updates on the activities of the O&P PAC, including the names of individuals who have made recent donations to the O&P PAC and the names of candidates the O&P PAC has supported.

The O&P PAC recently received donations from the following **AOPA** members (Due to publishing deadlines this list was created on 6/10/2011 and includes only donations received between 5/24/2011

and 6/10/2011. Any donations received on or after 6/10/2011 will be published in the next issue of the AIA):

- James Kaiser, CP
- Stephen Rinko, BS, CPO

The purpose of the O&P PAC is to advocate for legislative or political interests at the federal level, which have an impact on the orthotic and prosthetic community. The O&P PAC achieves this goal by working closely with members of the House and Senate to educate them about the issues, and help elect those individuals who support the orthotic and prosthetic community.

In order to participate in and receive information about the O&P PAC, federal law mandates that you must first sign an authorization form.

[Click here to view and sign an O&P PAC authorization form.](#)

Questions? Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854, or Joe McTernan at jmcternan@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0811.

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2011 National Assembly Donations Needed for Wine Tasting and Auction to Support Government Relations Outreach

For the fourth year, **AOPA** is hosting a wine tasting and auction to benefit **AOPA's** Government Relations outreach. Quickly becoming one of the most anticipated Assembly events, the auction offers a chance to learn about and taste a variety of wines, including some made by your fellow members. Donations for auction are now being accepted.

We look forward to seeing you Tuesday, September 20, from 6:30 - 8:00 PM for a friendly bidding war or two!

[Click here to access the Wine Donation Form.](#)

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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2011 National Assembly: Announcing the New O&P Business Certificate Program and General Registration Information for the Place to Be

The **AOPA** National Assembly is the Place to Be September 19-22 for an O&P meeting experience like no other-win great prizes, attend interactive education programs, participate in roundtable discussions, take part in fun events, earn CE credits and learn at hands-on workshops. Be among the first to participate in the new O&P Business Certificate Program-Take the first step in earning your business certificate by attending the extensive 2-hour course: Financial Management Profitability Tools-Using Cost Accounting to Maximize Your Practice's Profitability.Preview the Preliminary Program. [Click here to access the Preliminary Program.](#)

[Click here to register online.](#)

Hotel Reservations: **AOPA** has negotiated the incredible room rate of \$135 per night at the Mirage Resort in Las Vegas. Make your room reservation today by calling (800) 627-6667. Book your room today as this great room rate won't last long. Hotel reservation cut off is August 4 at this rate.

Questions? Call **AOPA** at (571) 431-0876 or email assembly@AOPAnet.org or visit www.AOPAnet.org.

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2011 National Assembly: A Call for Poster Presentations

Present your research findings or a particular case study via a poster presentation at the 2011 **AOPA** National Assembly, September 19-22, Las Vegas. Poster presentations should be a graphical display in a poster format using photographs, diagrams, flowcharts and graphs and any sample educational materials. Applications for poster presentations will be accepted through July 2011.

[Click here to submit a poster presentation.](#)

For further information, contact Tina Moran at (571) 431-0808 or tmoran@AOPAnet.org.

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2011 National Assembly: The 2011 Fall Thranhardt Golf Classic

Missed your invitation to play in the British Open? Not to worry. On Monday, September 19 you can still play 18 of the best holes from 11 different British Open rotation courses, including two holes from this year's British Open. Better still, they are all on one golf course located less than 9 miles from the heart of the Las Vegas Strip. This is not your typical round of golf at the Royal Links Golf Club in Las Vegas, NV, and whether you are into the history of the game or just want a shot at Tiger Woods course record of 67 (Feb., 2001), Royal Links and your O&P friends will provide you with some great golfing memories. The tournament to be held in conjunction with the **AOPA** National Assembly and will benefit two Great Causes and one great course make it not just golf, but a golf experience. For the third year in a row **AOPA's** Capitol Connection and OPAF have joined forces to co-sponsor this great event to benefit the inspiring efforts of OPAF and the legislative, research and education efforts of the Capitol Connection to further the O&P policy agenda.

[Click here to register for the 2011 Fall Thranhardt Golf Classic.](#)

For further information, contact Tina at (571) 431-0808 or tmoran@AOPAnet.org.

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Join AOPA for the July 13 Audio Conference "Don't Rile the OSHA Police"

OSHA is the Federal Agency tasked with ensuring the health and safety of the workplace in the United States. Compliance with OSHA regulations is mandatory and failure to comply may lead to unnecessary and dangerous working conditions. Join **AOPA** on July 13, 2011 for an hour long Audio Conference addressing OSHA requirements for O&P facilities and why compliance is such an important part of your business operations. An **AOPA** expert will address the following issues during the Audio Conference:

- What is OSHA and how does it affect your facility's operations
- How to comply with OSHA regulations
- Correcting issues of non-compliance
- What to do if an OSHA inspector comes to your facility
- Educating your staff on OSHA compliance
- How to properly report workplace injuries or incidents

The cost of participating \$99 per line for **AOPA** members (\$199 for nonmembers) and any number of employees may listen on a given line. Listeners can earn 1.5 continuing education credits by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80 percent. Contact Devon Bernard at dbernard@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0854 with content questions.

[Click here to register online.](#)

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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AOPA Promote Committee Looking to Recruit Patients as O&P Media Contacts

AOPA's Promote Committee is searching for O&P patients who are willing to share their personal stories of thriving with prosthetic and/or custom orthotic devices, thanks to Medicaid coverage. As you know, we are facing an increasing number of proposals for state Medicaid cuts to O&P care. To combat this, **AOPA** is looking to pitch personal stories of success to local and national media outlets thanks to coverage of Medicaid budget debates.

If you have a patient that fits the following criteria, please email Steven Rybicki (at srybicki@AOPAnet.org) a brief overview of his/her story along with contact information and any relevant links that will help us understand that person's story (ex. links to any previous online news coverage featuring that person, an online bio, a LinkedIn page, personal website, etc.).

The patient should possess the following traits/characteristics:

1. Articulate and outgoing
2. Happy/positive
3. Thriving with prosthetic or custom orthotic device that was paid for in part by Medicaid coverage
4. Preferably maintains a full or part-time job
5. Willing and comfortable with sharing personal details of their story and the impact of being an amputee
6. Has a well-maintained physical appearance
7. Over age 21
8. Has given you permission to send us his/her story and contact information

The patient should NOT possess the following traits/characteristics:

1. Quiet, gives one word responses to questions
2. Sarcastic, cynical, or negative
3. Curses frequently
4. Openly and irrationally critical of others, including government organizations or a previous care provider

Our objective is to show the successes that people with limb loss or difference can achieve once provided the appropriate tools. Studies have shown that providing O&P services actually saves states money by restoring personal independence and productivity and by reducing secondary and life-threatening complications. Now, we're looking to personalize those findings by telling the stories of those who are living proof.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

Audio from AOPA's 2011 Policy Forum Panels and Presentations Now Online

Attendees of the Policy Forum spent the first day of the meeting in education sessions presented by experts in O&P legislative policy and advocacy. **AOPA** is making audio presentations from all the sessions available to members. Presentations from the 2011 Policy Forum include:

- Former Congressman Earl Pomeroy (D-ND) and former Congressman Scott Klug (R-WI) discussing issues related to the budget and debt ceiling;
- Laurence Wilson, Director, Chronic Care Policy Group, Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services speaking about CMS fraud and abuse initiatives;
- An update on federal legislative issues and the health care reform law implementation with Peter Thomas, Esquire of NAAOP, Kendra Calhoun and Sue Stout of the Amputee Coalition, **AOPA** Executive Director Thomas Fise, Esquire and Stephanie Kennan of

AOPA's legislative counsel Alston & Bird;

- A legislative workshop for "state reps" on dealing with Medicaid cuts, licensure, and parity;
- A primer on persuasive advocacy from **AOPA** lobbyist Kevin Brennan, Esquire of the Foley-Hoag law firm;
- And an update on **AOPA's** research and education funding efforts from Catriona Macdonald of Linchpin Strategies.

[Click here to download and listen to the Policy Forum sessions.](#)

And as a reminder, the handouts that comprised the leave-behind materials distributed during visits to legislative offices can be downloaded at any time by [clicking here](#).

Finally, click here to see [AOPA's talking points](#) created for use by members in their advocacy outreach.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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2011 AOPA Coding Products Now Available

Don't get caught with out of date coding references. Update your **AOPA** coding products today. The 2011 **AOPA** coding products are now available through the **AOPA** bookstore and may be ordered by calling the AOPA Bookstore at (571) 431-0876, or by [downloading the 2011 Product Catalogue](#) and faxing your order to (571) 431-0899.

The 2011 *Illustrated Guide*, *Quick Coder* and *Coding Pro* include all of the newly released HCPCS codes that describe O&P items. **In addition, the 2011 Coding Pro contains a new, interactive glossary that allows you to click on selected terms within a code descriptor and immediately view the O&P based definition of the selected term.**

As an added bonus, if you purchase all three **AOPA** coding products at the same time, you will receive a bundled discount of \$50 off the regular retail price of the three items as sold separately.

AOPA's Coding products have long been considered the definitive coding resources for the O&P industry. Make sure yours are current and up to date!

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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Check Out the AOPA Job Board for New Opportunities in O&P

If you need a position filled at your business or are interested in looking at other job possibilities within the O&P field, check out the [AOPA Online Job Board](#). The online job board sports a freshly updated look and an easy-to-navigate profile creation system.

In the past month the Job Board has been viewed over 8,000 times by more than 1,500 unique users. If you want people to find out about a job opening at your facility or are interested in posting your resume for employers to view for potential openings, visit the [AOPA Online Job Board](#) today.

And remember: if you advertise on the Online Job Board and decide to also advertise in the *O&P Almanac*, then you'll receive a 5 percent discount on the cost of advertising in the *Almanac* and on the Job Board.

Questions? Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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The 2011 Audio Conference Series from AOPA

Numerous offices have benefited from their participation in **AOPA's** Medicare Audio Conferences. These one hour sessions come to you in the comfort of your office on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm Eastern. This series provides an outstanding opportunity for you and your staff to stay abreast of the latest hot topics in O&P, as well as gain clarification and ask questions on topics that you may not understand as fully as you would like to.

Seminars are still priced at just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for non-members). Buy the series and get two free; members pay just \$990 and non-members pay \$1990. If you purchase all the conferences, all conferences from months prior to your purchase of the set will be sent to you as CDs.

These convenient one hour telephone seminars are designed to fit easily into your busy schedule. Any practitioners needing credit can get 1.5 per audio conference by returning the provided quiz within 30 days and scoring at least 80%. Billing staff and others who don't need credit can nonetheless gain information they will use right away. The topics for 2011 are:

- January 12: How to Meet the New Medicare Supplier Standards (Available on CD)
- Feb. 9: Using the Lower Limb Medical Policy to Your Advantage (Available on CD)
- March 9: Enhance Your Claims Success, Two Letters at a Time (Available on CD)
- April 13: Improving Clinical Documentation (Available on CD)
- May 11: Which Box to Check? The Negative Effect of the 855S on Reimbursement (Available on CD)
- June 8: Preventing Audit Disasters (Available on CD)
- July 13: Don't Rile the OSHA Police
- August 10: How to Get Paid for Miscellaneous and Repair Codes
- September 14: Don't Run Afoul of the KO Rules
- October 12: Developing Your Medicare Billing Compliance Plan
- November 9: Happy Holidays: Kickbacks and Gifts in O&P
- December 14: Are You Ready for the New Year? 2012 New Codes and Policies

[Click here to register for any 2011 Audio Conference.](#)

If you miss an audio conference, it will be available on CD after the fact. Cost is the same as if you participate live (\$99/\$199). We hope you'll be able to join us for this year's series.

Questions? Contact Ann Davis at adavis@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0876.

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O&P INSIDER'S TRACK

The Only Up-to-the Minute O&P Newsline

People in the News

[The Amputee Coalition](#) announced that **Annie Garofalo** of Medfield, Massachusetts, as the recipient of the \$1,000 Christina Skoski, M.D., Scholarship.

The [International African American Prosthetic & Orthotic Coalition](#) held its 21st Annual Meeting this past May in Charlotte, North Carolina. At the conference, the IAAPOC awarded the Sam D. Benson Scholarship to **Jessica Smith-Armstrong**.

[Touch Bionics](#) announced the appointment of its new Chief Executive Officer, **Ian Stevens**, who is succeeding **Stuart Mead**.

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Businesses in the News

The [American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics, Inc. \(ABC\)](#) announced that its 2010 Annual Report is now available at the [ABC website](#).

[SPS \(Southern Prosthetic Supply\)](#) of Alpharetta, GA and [oandp.com](#) of Gainesville, FL, announced the integration of SPS' product inventory and ordering capabilities with OPIE software tools.

[WillowWood](#) announced the release of updates to its OMEGA[®]CAD system.

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Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA** *in Advance* will arrive in your inbox on June 28. So if you have a new employee or a new office, tell us! Share your news with the over 15,000 readers of the *O&P Almanac* and **AOPA** *In Advance* newsletter. Contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org

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