



**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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Article Headline

O&P NEWS

Approval by Both Houses for \$26.1 Billion Fiscal Aid to States for Medicaid and Teacher's Aid Offers Hope to Ease Cutbacks in Medicaid Payments for O&P

On Tuesday, August 10, the U.S. House returned from its summer recess to take a single vote-and it approved the \$26.1 Billion federal fiscal aid to states package. This action by the House followed two decisive votes in the Senate a few days earlier. On August 5, Republican Senators Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and Susan Collins (R-ME) joined with Democrats in a successful cloture vote to cut off debate, and a Republican filibuster of the Senate bill that included continued funding for the Federal Medicaid Assistance Percentage program. On the following day, the Senate voted by a 61-39 vote margin to approve that bill.

Once signed by President Obama, the bill assures availability of \$16.1 billion to help pay Medicaid bills. In 2009, Congress had boosted the federal share paid to assist states with Medicaid by 6.2%, which was set to expire in December. Anticipation of that expiration has prompted serious budget cutting initiatives in many states that are in the process of preparing for their 2011 budget and expenditures and were forced to anticipate how they would pay their Medicaid bills if the federal support payment did not materialize. The remaining \$10 billion will go to state and local school boards to ward off the threat of short-term teacher lay-offs for the coming school year.

The portion of the bill passed by Congress relating to Medicaid (referred to as FMAP) was a compromise, after efforts to tack the more costly provisions onto a jobs bill and other measures failed. The new bill extends federal payments for an additional six months, but with a scaling down of those payments to 3.2% in the first quarter of 2011, and then 1.2% in the second quarter. The fact that the bill doesn't span an entire year, and that it reduced the percentage compared to the prior year will likely still spawn some budget-cutting, but many are hopeful it will reduce some of the sense of urgency for state Medicaid budget cutbacks. Enactment of the compromise had an additional cost in the eyes of many Democrats-in order to make it budget neutral a series of "pay fors," government cutbacks, were enacted, the largest being a \$11.9 billion rollback of the food stamp benefits first approved in the 2009 stimulus bill

The uncertainty of FMAP funding has been a contributing factor to the recent Medicaid cuts affecting O&P payments proposed, and still being debated in California, and for cuts enacted by statute in Arizona. These cuts had already targeted O&P in both of these states, in anticipation that federal Medicaid support payments would be cutback or dropped, though the O&P funding cuts have been eliminated from Gov. Schwarzenegger's Medicaid cuts proposal, at least for the time being. Arizona's legislature, on the other hand, has passed Medicaid cuts for 2011 citing their fear of losing federal Medicaid funds. These cuts to Arizona Medicaid-eliminating all payments for orthotics for any Medicaid patient over the age of 21, as well as a ban on the use of microprocessor knees in prosthetics for Arizona Medicaid patients-will not be reversed unless and until the legislature acts again by passing a statute to repeal the 2011 cuts. It is possible that more states will slash Medicaid reimbursements in order to make up deficits in 2011 and beyond. Thus, today's enactment of the FMAP providing a partial flow of federal funding could be an important stop-loss in trying to minimize the incentives for other states to start balancing their budgets on the backs of O&P patients via such Medicaid cuts.

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

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Last Chance to Register for the August 11 Audio Conference: "Medicare's Knocking: How Good is Your Compliance Plan"

The DME MACs and the Office of Inspector General (OIG) are taking a closer look at the billing practices of O&P providers. In today's environment of increased provider scrutiny, a well designed, effective compliance plan is a necessity for any successful O&P business. The ability to make sure your own billing practices are sound may prevent unnecessary audits down the road. Join **AOPA** on August 11, 2010 for its latest **AOPA**iversity Audio Conference entitled "Medicare's Knocking: How Good Is Your Compliance Plan?" Topics that will be discussed during this call include:

- How to establish and manage an efficient Compliance Plan
- The need to have a dedicate company Compliance Officer
- OIG guidance on the 7 fundamental elements of an effective compliance plan
- Taking action when compliance deficiencies are discovered
- How and when to perform self audits
- Providing appropriate compliance training to your staff

The cost is just \$99 per line for members (\$199 for nonmembers) and any number of listeners may participate on a given line. Those seeking credit must return the provided quiz within 30 days and score at least 80 percent.

[Click here to register.](#)

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

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June 2010 Business Conditions Survey Result

The Business Conditions Survey for June 2010 showed improvement from reports in May as 56 percent of respondents noted a June 2009-to-June 2010 increase in revenues. 20 percent of respondents had increases of more than 10 percent and that same number saw an increase in revenues of 6-10 percent, and 16 percent of facilities recorded an increase of 1-5 percent. For June, 12 percent reported a 1-5 percent decrease in revenue; 8 percent said revenue fell 5-10 percent; and 12 percent of respondents reported their businesses having a decrease in revenue of more than 10 percent. Finally for June, 12 percent of survey participants reported no change in revenue.

Survey respondents linked the decrease in revenue to several factors including regional unemployment affecting payment; a decrease in referrals from doctors and hospitals, and increased expenses associated with appealing claims-denials and ensuring that treatment plans are certified and/or pre-authorized.

Finally, facilities indicated overwhelmingly, at 96 percent, that they are accredited and believe that most facilities in their immediate geographic area also have secured facility accreditation.

If you are the primary business decision maker at your O&P facility and are not receiving these surveys, please email Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org.

The survey results presented here represent a compilation of information received from responding member firms. It is not a statistical sample and is for use only as a guide. Information is also presented from prior surveys for comparative purposes. It is important to remember that there may be a different mix of firms responding in each survey. This would have some impact on survey averages.

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

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ABC Announces Continuing Education Credits for Attendance to the 2010 AOPA National Assembly!



Registration is now open for the 93rd **AOPA** National Assembly. The **AOPA** National Assembly is *the place to be* (Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, Orlando, FL) for excellent O&P clinical and business education programming. Check out the program today-available as a supplement to the June issue of the *O&P Almanac*. Or call (571) 431-0876 for a copy.

The American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics, Inc. (ABC) has approved up to 34.25 Mandatory Continuing Education (MCE) Credits for the 2010 **AOPA** National Assembly. And for technicians, the technical program will be jointly hosted by the Orthotic and Prosthetic Technical Association (OPTA) and **AOPA**, this two-part, interactive program will bring you the best in technical solutions. This program was designed especially for technicians, fitters as well as those hands-on practitioners who want to keep current on the latest trends and techniques in O&P.

The blockbuster programming responds to your clinical and business management needs with an array of experts whose credentials and experience will dazzle and educate you far beyond your expectations. Inspirational and motivational speakers will jump start your enthusiasm for success. Social and networking events reach new heights.

Tour the country's largest exhibit hall for the orthotic, prosthetic and pedorthic professions-filled with manufacturers, distributors and suppliers showcasing every significant O, P&P component, device, item of equipment and service that is critical to maintaining a successful patient care facility.

The 2010 **AOPA** National Assembly will be held at the luxurious Rosen Shingle Creek Resort. This beautiful property features an on-site golf course, spa, fine dining as well as more casual eateries. Enjoy golf, walking and nature trails, fish, hike or just enjoy the beautiful surrounding. All of the famous Orlando attractions are just a short ride away.

[Click here to register.](#)

The beautiful Rosen Shingle Creek Resort is located just ten minutes from the Orlando International Airport and convenient to the theme parks and major tourist attractions that Orlando is known for. Please make your hotel reservations directly with the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort by calling (866) 996-6338 - **AOPA** has contracted for a limited number of rooms at a special rate of \$199. Reserve early as the hotel will likely sell out over the dates of the **AOPA** Assembly. Learn more about this beautiful resort at www.rosenshinglecreek.com.

Questions? Contact Kelly O'Neill at koneill@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0852; Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835; or Tina Moran at tmoran@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0810.

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Assembly Session Spotlight: Special General Session Speaker Explains Health Care Reform's Impact on O&P

On Friday, October 1 during the 7 - 9:30 AM General Session, John Markus, J.D. presents an in-depth explanation of the implications of health care reform legislation for O&P. The recently enacted health care reform legislation will have important short- and long-term implications for O&P reimbursement as well as the general environment for future technology innovation. The expansion of health care coverage to an estimated 32 million additional Americans will likely create significant new demands for a variety of medical items and services, including O&P. However, productivity adjustments will restrain Medicare payment increases and new excise taxes will squeeze manufacturers' margins across all markets. An intensified focus on comparative effectiveness research, broader payment bundles and care coordination (post-acute bundle demonstration, and accountable care organizations) and Value-Based Purchasing for hospitals and other Medicare providers continues the shift away from cost-based fee-for-service reimbursement principles. The session will explore how these and other provisions of the new law are likely to affect demand and reimbursement trends for O&P in coming years.

Speaking to the Assembly on this topic is John Markus, J.D., a leading authority on government regulation and compliance regarding health care. Mr. Marcus has served as Executive Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer for HealthSouth Corporation and prior to working with HealthSouth, he was Senior Vice President for Corporate Compliance at Fresenius Medical Care North America where he designed regulatory compliance programs as well as negotiating a Corporate Integrity Agreement for the nation's largest provider of dialysis products and services. Mr. Markus has designed and updated regulatory compliance programs at Oxford Health Plans, Inc. and National Health Laboratories. Additionally, Mr. Markus has been in private law practice for several years and has represented clients before Congress and federal health care agencies on provider regulation and reimbursement, Medicare coverage policy, and regulatory compliance.

The information in this program could not be more timely or crucial. Make sure you're at "The Place To Be" for O&P business and clinical education this year.

[Click here to register for the 2010 AOPA National Assembly.](#)

Questions? Contact Kelly O'Neill at koneill@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0852; Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835; or Tina Moran at tmoran@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0810.

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

For the third 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, and we look forward to seeing you Thursday, September 30, 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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Submit Your Business Education Paper for the Sam E. Hamontree, CP, Business Education Award

The American Orthotic & Prosthetic Association (**AOPA**) is pleased to announce the establishment of a new business education award. The purpose of this education award is to promote the highest quality business education to the orthotics, prosthetics and pedorthics profession; and to highlight business expertise during the **AOPA** National Assembly.

The funding for the annual award is in honor of Sam Hamontree, CP, and his many contributions to the field of O&P. It is given by the Hamontree family --- Marlene Hamontree, Lynne and Steve Hamontree, CPO, and Joelle and Michael Hamontree.

The namesake of this award, Sam E. Hamontree, CP, is well known to the industry. Throughout a career that spans more than 50 years in the profession, his long list of accomplishments includes such monumental achievements as:

- Recipient of the **AOPA** Lifetime Achievement Award in 2000;
- Recipient of the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists Titus Ferguson Award in 2003; and
- President of the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics in 1970.

In addition to these significant achievements, Mr. Hamontree served as chairman of the **AOPA** Business Procedures & Liaison Committee for many years and led the development of several business tools for O&P including, the Relative Values schedule which was developed into the HCPCS L-Code system, the **AOPA** Accounting Manual, the **AOPA** Business Survey, and the **AOPA** Cost Accounting Manual, all of which have been used successfully by **AOPA** members for decades.

Award specifications include:

- The Hamontree Award will be promoted and presented each year during the AOPA National Assembly.
- The winning paper(s) will be selected by the Assembly Planning Committee Business Education Workgroup from the business papers submitted.
- The winning paper(s) will be presented during a general education session at the Assembly.
- The Hamontree Award winner will receive a \$1,000 honorarium and framed certificate.

The Hamontree Award will recognize the best business education paper submitted for presentation at the **AOPA** National Assembly each year and is envisioned as a counterpart to the Thranhardt Award given each year for the best clinical paper.

[Click here to compete for the prestigious 2010 Sam E. Hamontree, CP, Business Education Award.](#)

Questions? Contact Tina Moran at tmoran@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0808.

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Registration for the 2010 Thranhardt Golf Tournament Now Open

The Fall 2010 Thranhardt Golf Tournament promises to be the best one yet! Two great causes and one great course make it not just golf but a golf experience. The Shingle Creek course, designed by David Harman, is both innovative and classic, providing a challenging and rewarding game of golf for all skill levels. The prime location, natural beauty of the course, first-class amenities and renowned commitment to customer service distinguish this course from all others in the Central Florida area.

This beautiful course is located at the site of the 2010 National Assembly, so there are no buses - just a great day of golf with your O&P friends. Individual play is \$195, foursome play \$750. Proceeds from the Thranhardt Golf classic help OPAF sustain its chief mission - enabling individuals with physical disabilities to enjoy the rewards of physical fitness and social interaction, as well as

supporting AOPA's legislative initiatives for the orthotics, prosthetics and pedorthics profession.

Two convenient ways to register-register directly on your Assembly registration form, by simply checking "Thranhardt Golf Classic" under the special events section [or click here to register online](#).

We look forward to seeing you in Orlando!

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

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August 2010 Issue of *O&P Almanac* Shipping Soon!

The August issue of the [O&P Almanac](#) is shipping soon. This month's content includes:

- A cover story on O&P innovations and outcomes;
- Q&A with Rep. Jason Altmire (D-PA) from his presentation to **AOPA** members during the 2010 **AOPA** Policy Forum;
- A preview of more speakers at the 2010 **AOPA** National Assembly;
- Announcements from the COPL regarding evidence-based outcomes research;
- **AOPA's** Government Relations' Reimbursement Page;
- And more!

If you have any questions about the *Almanac*, need to update your subscription, want to pitch a story, or give your input for future features, please contact Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Does Your Patient Care Facility Deserve Coverage in the *O&P Almanac*?

The "Facility Spotlight" section of the *O&P Almanac* is a monthly feature in wherein **AOPA** members discuss the business and clinical techniques that distinguish and define their O&P patient care facility's uniqueness and success. The *Almanac* is currently planning features for issues in 2011 and welcomes any and all providers to volunteer their facility for coverage by the *Almanac* team.

If you would like to be considered or an upcoming "Facility Spotlight" feature, please contact the *Almanac* Editor, Josephine Rossi at rossi@strattonpublishing.com or Steven Rybicki at srybicki@AOPAnet.org or (571) 431-0835.

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Ongoing Need in Haiti for O&P Volunteers

The Haiti Amputee Coalition is looking for CPs, CPOs and prosthetic technicians to work in Haiti. This is a volunteer position. Volunteers are asked to provide two weeks of service in Haiti and to pay all of their travel expenses to Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The Coalition will provide transportation from the airport to the Hospital Albert Schweitzer clinic. The Coalition will also provide housing and meals for all volunteers.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact:

Hanger Clinical Operations
Minneapolis, Minnesota
(763) 521-4126

AOPA will continue to store your information in our volunteer database and remain in contact with you about other requests for donations of time or materials as they arise. **AOPA** and the Academy are pleased to facilitate communications between organizations and potential volunteers, but we are not endorsing any specific organization and suggest that you carefully evaluate the organization with which you decide to work. Finally the [joint Web site](#) by AAOP and **AOPA** continues to offer the opportunity for individuals and companies to make known their willingness to help sustain O&P services in Haiti through cash and equipment donations or volunteering of services.

[Click here to access the joint AAOP/AOPA Haiti Relief Site.](#)

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

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O&P RESOURCES FROM AOPA

Check Out the Redesigned 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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Buy 2010 AOPA Coding Products Today!

Don't get caught with out of date coding references. Update your **AOPA** coding products today. The 2010 **AOPA** coding products are available through the **AOPA** bookstore and may be ordered by calling (571) 431-0835.

The 2010 *Illustrated Guide*, *Quick Coder* and *Coding Pro* include all HCPCS codes that describe O&P items. In addition, the 2010 *Coding Pro* contains expanded medical policy references and the 2010 *Quick Coder* includes a new section that lists all of the current modifiers used in O&P billing.

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.

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

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Is Your Practice Missing the BOAT?

AOPA's largest and most successful members use the Business Optimization and Analysis Tool (BOAT) and you should also. The BOAT will help you:

- Create budgets
- Track your finances
- Participate in the annual Operating Performance and Compensation survey-which provides you

with a personal benchmark comparison study.

- Examine the financial fitness of your business
- Help you identify and understand your competition, market conditions and referral sources
- Much more

Create your own secure and confidential Web pages on the BOAT which is specifically tailored to help O&P business owners manage their business for greater profit and quality patient care.

[Click here to explore the BOAT today.](#)

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

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Are You Registered for AOPA's 2010 Series of Medicare Audio Conferences?

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 nonetheless can gain information they will use right away. The topics for 2010 are:

- January 13: Red Flag Rules: Are You In Compliance? (Available on CD)
- February 10: Hints on Passing Your Supplier Standards Inspection (Available on CD)
- March 10: Billing for Refused/Returned Devices and Deluxe Features (Available on CD)
- April 14: Documenting for Success: Chart Notes, Prescriptions and Physicians' Records (Available on CD)
- May 12: New Rules for HIPAA: Are You Still Compliant? (Available on CD)
- June 9: When Disaster Strikes: Implementing a Contingency Plan (Available on CD)
- July 14: Medicare Appeals Strategies (Available on CD)
- August 11: Medicare's Knocking: How Good Is Your Compliance Plan?
- September 8: Missed Billing Opportunities: Are You Billing Everything You Can?
- October 13: You're Going To Pay Me WHAT?...Hints on Managed Care Contracting
- November 10: The Ins and Outs of Billing in a Part A Setting: Hospital, SNF and Hospice
- December 8: 2011 New Codes and Medical Policies

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.

[Click here to register for any or all of the 2010 AOPA audio conferences.](#)

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

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O&P INSIDER'S TRACK

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

People in the News

[Disabled Sports USA](#) (DSUSA) and the [Challenged Athletes Foundation](#), announced their sponsorship of *Team Missing Parts in Action's* climb of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa on August 2. The three climbers are from three wars: Afghanistan, Iraq and Vietnam. Two are double leg amputees and one a single above knee amputee, leaving literally "one good leg between the three" to climb the tallest mountain in Africa. **Sgt. Neil Duncan**, 27-years-old, a double leg amputee injured in Afghanistan; **Staff Sgt. Dan Nevins**, 39-years-old, a double below knee amputee injured in Iraq; and **Sgt. Kirk Bauer, JD**, 62-years-old, a single above knee amputee injured in Vietnam, comprise the team.

[Ohio Willow Wood](#) announced that **Ryan Arbogast**, a fourth-generation member of the Arbogast family, has been promoted to general manager and vice president of operations at Ohio Willow Wood.

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Businesses in the News

The [American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics, Inc.](#) (ABC) announced that there have been [changes to the Taxonomy Code](#) from the National Uniform Claim Committee (NUCC). ABC requested changes to the existing code descriptions for orthotists, prosthetists, mastectomy and orthotic fitters in order to better reflect contemporary practice in these professions. ABC also launched the effort to establish a specific code for pedorthists, who previously did not have a taxonomy code. Through ABC's efforts, these changes become effective October 1, 2010.

The [Board of Certification/Accreditation, International](#) (BOC) announced its participation in an invitation-only CEO Forum sponsored by the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE). Accredited by the American National Standards Institute as a Standards Developer, ICE offers NCCA accreditation to credentialing programs. The CEO Forum gathered a group of certification organization leaders to meet and share perspectives on emerging issues in the certification arena. **Claudia Zacharias, MBA, CAE**, President & CEO of BOC, was among the participants.

[Hanger Prosthetics & Orthotics](#) announced the launch of WalkAccess, a home assessment program for its neuromuscular device called the WalkAide System.

[OrPro, Inc.](#) and [Prosthetic Care, Inc.](#) announce the merging of the two companies, which took effect on July 31, 2010. The combined companies operate fourteen patient care facilities, two central fabrication centers, one central billing operation and a central administrative office.

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Send Us Your News!

The next **AOPA in Advance** will arrive in your inbox on August 24. 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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