

WYOTA Newsletter



307.778.2568
January 2008
Volume 4, Issue 1

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Happy New Year Wyoming Occupational Therapists!

As we enter the New Year, WyOTA has several things that we will need to address. First, we are still looking for a local conference coordinator for the 2008 WyOTA Annual Conference. Initial plans were to hold the conference in Casper although if you would like to volunteer your town that still can happen. I have been looking at speakers for the conference and would like your input regarding topics. Possible topics to date include:

- Bridging the Gap...Theory and Practical Strategies to "Jump Start" Learning in Children with Sensory Dysfunction
- Ready S.E.T. Go! Sensorimotor Early Childhood/Elementary Themes
- Got Function? Shifting Our Focus from Physical Impairments to Multi-Disciplinary Function
- Activities of Daily Living (ADLs): Assessment and Intervention in the Clinic and at Home

Let me know what you think or if you have other topics or speakers that you would like to see at conference.

While there do not appear to be any controversial issues facing the legislature this year we will be watching to make sure nothing comes up. We learned last year with the Athletic Trainers' bill that anything is possible and we need to be vigilant. We hope to keep occupational therapy in legislator's minds and will be participating in the Pasta Bowl again this year. This is an opportunity to speak with legislators as well as other health care groups to promote and educate about OT.

I am still looking for any information on jobs in your area that have been difficult to fill. The office that manages student loan repayment for health care providers that fill jobs in underserved areas has contacted me. They are looking at extending this benefit to occupational therapy practitioners in Wyoming if we can provide the data that supports the need. I have evidence of open jobs in Cody, Lander, and Cheyenne. If you know of any other areas in the state that are underserved, please contact me soon. Either e-mail me at sarah-a-king@bresnan.net or call me in the evenings at 307-778-2568.

Sarah King, OT/L
President of WyOTA

AOTA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This year the Annual AOTA Conference ~~is in Long Beach~~ will be held in Long Beach, California April 10-13, 2008. If you haven't received your conference brochure, contact AOTA at 1-800-SAY-AOTA and they will be happy to send one to you. Early conference registration is due by February 13th. If you are interested in attending this year's conference, please email Sheri Montgomery at fmontgom@wyoming.com or Sarah King at sarah-a-king@bresnan.net so we can plan a dinner or noon get together.

Special Interest Topics:

OT Trivia

Individual Highlights:

RA Highlights	2
Membership Benefits	3
Wheelchair Update	4
CMS Site Selection	5
Student Conclave	8
Reimbursement	9

2007 Online RA Meeting Highlights

The following is a brief summary of some—but certainly not all—of the 24 actions taken by the 8th annual Representative Assembly (RA) Online Meeting held October 23–November 7. The RA is the Congress of AOTA and is responsible for setting policy for the profession. Representatives meet online every fall to conduct Association business in a timely manner.

Special Interest Sections Changes

The Work Programs SIS will now be known as the Work and Industry SIS to better align with the Centennial Vision and hopefully create more interest in this area of practice. The proposed change of the School System SIS to Early Intervention and School SIS has been postponed until the 2008 meeting in Long Beach where this can be discussed more fully in task group. Details for this name change are in the Chairperson Toto's report

<http://www.aota.org/Govern/RA/RAMeetings.aspx>.

Fieldwork Awards

The 2007 postponed motion requesting the Recognitions Committee to develop annual awards for Fieldwork Educator and Fieldwork Site was defeated. However, the 2007 postponed motion charging the Commission on Education (COE) to “develop and disseminate Fieldwork Educator and Fieldwork Sites Award Criteria to include but not be limited to ASAP and Academic Fieldwork Coordinators in order to promote Fieldwork Awards at the state level” was adopted. A report is due at the 2008 RA meeting in Long Beach.

Professional Practice

- Adopted the Commission on Practice's (COP) statement, *Occupational Therapy in the Promotion of Health and the Prevention of Disease and Disability Statement*. Minor updates were done to *Physical Agent Modalities: A Position Paper* and *Guidelines for Documentation of Occupational Therapy*.
- The RA Coordinating Council's (RACC) two new societal statements on *Play* and *Youth Violence* were adopted.

AOTA Governance and Policies

- Association policies on Open Meetings, Official Documents, and Systematic Review of all White Papers were adopted as revised.

Revisions to the Administrative SOP, which featured significant changes to the Disciplinary Action and Budget sections, were also adopted.

Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association
.... working to strengthen the profession!



Why join WYOTA?

- Members only List Serve expands opportunities to network with other therapists in your state.
- WyOTA's Legislative Chair serves as a link between WyOTA and the Legislature, providing you with timely, relevant information, and relating the concerns of the profession to our elected officials both at the state and national levels of government.
- WyOTA provides the opportunity for networking, fun, and quality continuing education at its annual conference and other educational opportunities.
- WyOTA officers network with AOTA to provide valuable information to you about happenings at the national level, while providing AOTA with information relating to the needs and issues facing Occupational Therapists in Wyoming.
- WyOTA provides you the opportunity to develop leadership skill by serving on task groups, committees or as an official. Enhance and expand your contribution to the profession by considering volunteering to work on a project.
- Talk with others who will serve as mentors in specific areas.
- Discounts at educational events sponsored by WyOTA and surrounding state associations.

Would you work without benefits?

Now we have your attention! Your support and involvement is needed to continue making the Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association (WyOTA) a powerful voice within the state. There are many benefits to joining WyOTA with the most important being having the opportunity to have the knowledge necessary to be a successful Occupational Therapist. The Wyoming Occupational Therapy Association provides its members the opportunity to gain knowledge in a variety of ways. WyOTA sponsors varied educational experiences designed to provide you with the professional edge you need to advance your career goals and assure your visibility in the health care community. We provide our members with ongoing networking opportunities through posting on the website, email communications, and mentoring programs. What other benefits does WyOTA have to offer you as a member?

- Legislative monitoring and response to issues impacting our practice, our profession and our clients
- Communication with sources of reimbursement for the services provided by Occupational Therapists
- Communication with members of the Wyoming Occupational Therapy Licensure Board
- Marketing of Occupational Therapy to the public employers, health care providers, and legislators
- Access to the leaders of the profession
- Opportunities to share your skills and knowledge
- Colleague support and comradery
- Professional networking
- Representation on Representative Assembly for AOTA
- Discounts to WyOTA Conferences and Special Events
- Scholarship Opportunities
- Discounts to collaborating state association educational events and opportunities
- Quarterly newsletters

AOTA Victory: Medicare Removes Certification Requirement on OT Power Wheelchair Evaluations

After more than 2 years of advocacy, AOTA is happy to announce its success in eliminating an additional requirement for occupational therapy wheelchair evaluations under Medicare. Reimbursement and Regulatory Policy staff convinced the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to eliminate a requirement that would have required an additional certification for occupational therapists (OTs) performing wheelchair evaluations for higher-end power devices.

AOTA had responded to this change, proposed to be implemented in 2008, because it caused deep concern about access for Medicare beneficiaries and an unwarranted restriction on an evaluation that is clearly within the scope of occupational therapy practice.

The provision was included in the Medicare Durable Medical Equipment (DME) contractor's Local Coverage Determination (LCD) Policy for Power Mobility Devices (PMDs) released in 2006.

Specifically, the original LCD required that occupational therapists and physical therapists attain certification as RESNA Assistive Technology Practitioners (ATPs) in order to perform the specialty evaluation required for patients receiving Group 2, Group 3, or Group 4 power wheelchairs. The same LCD was adopted by each of the medical directors across the country, making it a national policy in effect.

Initially, AOTA voiced grave concerns that the policy, set to take effect April 1, 2008, did not measure a therapist's competence in performing evaluations and that it would unreasonably restrict a portion of OT practice. Further, it would result in an access problem for Medicare beneficiaries because of the limited number of OTs with an ATP.

AOTA then met with the Acting Administrator of CMS, Herb Kuhn, to put these concerns forward. That was followed by a formal request for reconsideration of the LCD, including a telephone conference call with regional Medicare medical directors. On December 3, 2007, the DME medical directors told AOTA of their decision to accept AOTA's recommendation and eliminate the requirement for RESNA ATP certification.

No additional certification for wheelchair evaluations will be required as of April 2008.

According to the ruling by the medical directors, the current requirement will remain in place, that is, the patient must have a specialty evaluation performed by a licensed/certified medical professional such as an OT or physical therapist, or by a physician who has specific training and experience in rehabilitation wheelchair evaluations. The evaluation must document the medical necessity for the wheelchair and its special features.

AOTA made the argument to CMS that the code of ethics for occupational therapy supports the expectation that an OT performing such an evaluation would only do so if she or he were competent by reason of training or experience. AOTA also reminds practitioners to be sure their competence and training is appropriate for the performance of such specialty evaluations. AOTA continues to support continuing education and training as part of a practitioner's lifelong responsibility to provide quality services to clients.

The local DME Medicare contractors will publish an article on their individual Web sites that notifies providers of this decision. This information will also be incorporated in a future revision of the Power Mobility Devices LCD.

More Information

CMS ANNOUNCES SELECTION OF SITES FOR DEMONSTRATION TO REVISE POST ACUTE CARE PAYMENT AND EXAMINE POST ACUTE SERVICES FOR BENEFICIARIES

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) today announced the next phase in a demonstration program evaluating the care that Medicare beneficiaries receive after being discharged from a hospital and how CMS pays for that care.

CMS has chosen the geographic areas where data will be collected for this project will take place. The first two markets include Boston, Chicago, and their surrounding areas. CMS is beginning to identify specific providers within these markets to invite to participate in the Post Acute Care Payment Reform Demonstration (PAC-PRD).

Currently, Medicare pays for beneficiaries' care based on where the beneficiary receives health care services. Different types of health care providers (for example, in a skilled nursing facility or a home health agency) are paid in different ways even if the services they offer or the patients they treat may be similar. This has resulted in financial incentives for health care providers to transfer patients from one post-acute care setting to another based on financial considerations.

The PAC-PRD was mandated by Congress in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 to collect and compare consistent information about the health of beneficiaries and the care or clinical services received across the various types of health care providers and should help CMS better understand these patients and providers.

CMS will invite participants from acute care hospitals and four locations where patients may be treated after leaving the hospital -- Long Term Care Hospitals (LTCHs), Inpatient Rehabilitation Facilities (IRFs), Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs), and Home Health Agencies (HHAs). Recommendations generated by the demonstration program will be included in a report to Congress that also is mandated as part of the same law.

"Our goal is to develop a system that is better integrated and more flexible in meeting the needs of our beneficiaries," said CMS Acting Administrator Kerry Weems. "This demonstration is a good first step in developing a comprehensive system focused on helping the patient get the most appropriate health care setting, rather than the setting where payment is highest."

CMS has contracted with Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International to carry out this demonstration. RTI will collect data in ten distinct parts of the country. Selection of the ten demonstration markets was determined by a variety of factors,



including population density, geographic area, the presence of different types of PAC providers, and the availability of volunteer provider in each market area.

The ten markets identified for primary recruitment and the nine markets identified as alternatives are centered on cities, but recruited facilities may be located within a

TO REVISE POST ACUTE CARE PAYMENT AND EXAMINE POST ACUTE SERVICES FOR BENEFICIARIES

(Continued)

two hour radius to include nearby suburban and rural areas. If for some reason, it is not possible to recruit an adequate sample of volunteers in a given market, recruitment will be attempted in an identified alternative market.

The selection of providers in each market will depend on organizational characteristics such as corporate ownership, profit status, hospital affiliation and size, the ability to recruit other providers in the same referral network, and the need to recruit a representative sample. CMS will attempt to recruit a sample that is representative of the range of post-acute service providers across the country.

Providers in the primary and alternative markets are encouraged to participate in this demonstration. Volunteers are still being accepted.

RTI will be contacting selected Boston providers about participation in January 2008. Training and data collection will begin in March for the Boston area. The selection of providers to approach in the other markets will occur between January and July 2008. Data collection in markets 2 to 10 will begin between late May and early September 2008. Participation in this project is voluntary.

The primary and alternative markets are:

Primary Market	Alternative Market, if necessary
Boston, Massachusetts	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Chicago, Illinois	None identified
Dallas, Texas	Atlanta, Georgia
Lakeland/Tampa, Florida	Wilmington, North Carolina
Lincoln, Nebraska	Colorado Springs/Pueblo, Colorado
Louisville, Kentucky	Canton/Akron, Ohio
Rapid City, South Dakota	Marquette, Michigan
Rochester, New York	Portland, Maine
San Francisco/Bay Area, California	Salt Lake City, Utah
Seattle/Tacoma, Washington	Portland, Oregon

Providers in the primary or alternative areas who are interested in learning more about the PAC-PRD or who are interested in possibly participating are encouraged to contact Barbara Gage, Ph.D., Principal Investigator at RTI by e-mailing PAT-COMMENTS@RTI.ORG.

Information about this demonstration can be found at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/DemoProjectsEvalRpts/MD/itemdetail.asp?itemID=CMS1201325>



(Join on-line at www.wyota.org)

WYOMING OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMPLOYER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ PHONE CONTACT: _____

Educational Level

- _____ Associate
- _____ Bachelor
- _____ Master
- _____ Doctorate

Practice Specialty

- _____ Administration & Management
- _____ Developmental Delayed
- _____ Education
- _____ Gerontology
- _____ Home & Community Health
- _____ Mental Health
- _____ Pediatrics
- _____ Physical Dysfunction
- _____ School System
- _____ Sensory Integration
- _____ Technology
- _____ Work Program

Professional Level Fees

- _____ Student \$15.00
- _____ OTA \$35.00
- _____ OT \$35.00
- _____ Non-OT \$35.00

AOTA Membership Number

I would like to become a mentor for a fellow WyOTA member. _____

I would be willing to serve as an officer of WyOTA. _____

I would be willing to serve on a committee. _____

I would like assistance from WyOTA in the following area: _____

Conference suggestions _____

Make checks payable to WyOTA

Return form and payment to:

Heather Lyman, OTR/L

3017 White Mountain Blvd.

Rock Springs, 82901

lymanh@sweetwatercdcwyo.org 307.389.8511

WyOTA CONTACT

BUSINESS ADDRESS

5423 Liberty Street
Cheyenne, WY
82001

PHONE:

307.778.2568

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.wyota.org

Board Members Contact Information

Sarah King, President
5423 Liberty Street
Cheyenne, WY 82001
778-2568
sarah-a-king@bresnan.net

Please update your email with
us at

fmontgom@wyoming.com

Bonnie Richards, Vice President
229 Monterey Way
Douglas, WY 82633
358-9464
sbjjrichards4@hotmail.com

Heather Lyman, Treasurer/Secretary
3017 White Mountain Blvd
Rock Springs, 82901
389-8511
heatherl@co.sweet.wy.us

Jean Owsley, AOTA Representative
1219 Johnson St
Thermopolis, WY 82443
921-9928
jeanowsley@hotmail.com

2007 Student Conclave

This year the American Occupational Therapy Association held the first ever Student Conclave. The event took place in Pittsburg Pennsylvania with over 550 occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students attending. At the 2007 Annual WyOTA conference the board voted to send 2 students from our state. As the student representative for the WyOTA board I was one of those lucky students that were chosen along with Kelsey Berg. We were accompanied by 3 other classmates; Carla Booth, Ashle Hicks, and Lindsey Bartholomew that all chose to attend covering their own expenses. What an amazing opportunity that we had. The event lasted 2 days with chances to meet people that we have only read and heard about. The event started with Florence Clark addressing us about the Centennial Vision. After the address workshops were available ranging from Health and Wellness to Landing Your First Job. All the workshops were geared towards students and the transition from student to practitioner. The second day consisted of information on the National Certification Exam and how to be an advocate for the profession. Not to mention that job recruiters were available to talk with the entire conference. Overall the weekend was a great opportunity to prepare and start networking for the future. AOTA put on a very beneficial event for students to start gearing up for the future. All that attended were pleased with the knowledge that we gained and enjoyed the opportunity to meet fellow students from around the country. A special thank you is necessary to the WyOTA Board for making this available to us students and investing the state's future.

Again thank you to AOTA and WyOTA for making this event possible.

Josiah Hadsall, University of North Dakota at Casper College Class of 2008

AOTA'S REIMBURSEMENT BRIEFING



1. MEDICARE National Policy Updates

***NEWS

The CAP: At the time this Briefing went to press, Congress had not passed a legislative solution to the outpatient therapy cap, which is scheduled to be reinstated on January 1, 2008. If Congress does not act by December 31, 2007, then the annual financial limitation on outpatient occupational therapy services for 2008 will be **\$1810** for outpatient occupational therapy. The combined annual limitation for outpatient physical therapy and speech language pathology is \$1810. For more information, stay tuned to the AOTA website at www.aota.org.

The Medicare Physician Fee Schedule for 2008: At the time this Briefing went to press, Congress had not passed a legislative fix to the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule rate cuts for 2008, which are scheduled to go into effect January 1, 2008. To read more about the fee schedule rates for 2008, click

<http://www.aota.org/Practitioners/Reimb/News/Announcements/41108.aspx>

Power Mobility Evaluations Policy Change: After more than 2 years of advocacy, AOTA is happy to announce its success in eliminating an additional requirement for occupational therapy wheelchair evaluations under Medicare. Reimbursement and Regulatory Policy staff convinced the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to eliminate a requirement that would have required an additional certification for occupational therapists (OTs) performing wheelchair evaluations for higher-end power devices. For more information, click

<http://www.aota.org/News/AdvocacyNews/pw.aspx>

Calling all occupational therapists working in practices owned by therapists or physicians:

If your occupational therapy practice owned in part or wholly by physicians, occupational therapists, or physical therapists, AOTA asks that you participate in a short, 13 question survey on physician ownership. AOTA is using this survey to gain more demographic and setting specific background information about this segment of the occupational therapists workforce. Ultimately, this data will be used to help inform the discussion of the consequences of AOTA taking a position (either way) on physician ownership of occupational therapy practices. All personal identifying information gathered in this survey will be kept confidential within AOTA staff, unless specific consent to disclose has been granted. To access the survey, click here:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB2277E4JPZSZ>

2. AOTA Reimbursement Resources

***Scope of Practice Report.

The [Scope of Practice Issues Update](#) newsletters for September - December 2007 are available online. The reports focus on national, state and payer trends affecting the occupational therapy profession. The report is available exclusively to AOTA members in the Members Only section of the Web site. You also can subscribe (free to AOTA members) to receive the monthly report directly on your e-mail. Submit your name and request to this email address to subscribe: scope@aota.org

If you have local reimbursement news that affects other states or may help other states with advocacy strategies, please send us (rrpd@aota.org) a short summary of what's happening to include in future Briefings. Feel free to use links to your state web page or other Internet sites that have additional information.