

THE ENT Advocate



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
OTOLARYNGOLOGY—
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY



Dear ENT Advocacy Network Member:

October 6, 2017

Legislative and political activity directly affects our practices and our patients. As a leading advocate for otolaryngology-head and neck surgery, we hope you enjoy reading this edition of The ENT Advocate, your premier source of advocacy information for the specialty!

Lead Story

AAO-HNS Celebrates Legislative Win in EHDI Passage

The U.S. House of Representatives [passed, via voice vote](#), the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Act (S. 652) on October 3. The AAO-HNS worked extensively to ensure support and passage of this important public health bill, which provides a five-year reauthorization of the EHDI program. Since the U.S. Senate previously passed the bill on September 6, it will now be sent to the president for his signature. A special thanks to those members who acted on our legislative “calls to action” over the last few months and helped communicate our message to Congress!

HHS Hosts "Regulatory Relief" Summit

On October 2, the AAO-HNS joined a broad coalition of stakeholders at HHS headquarters in Washington, DC, to discuss current and future efforts to ease regulatory burdens in the healthcare sphere. Following the recent resignation of HHS Secretary Tom Price, MD, the session was led by Acting Deputy Secretary Charles Keckler and [Acting Secretary Don Wright, MD, MPH](#). The meeting was also attended by CMS Administrator Seema Verma.

Action Requested

ENT PAC Thanks You!

Thanks to the generous contributions of our members, ENT PAC raised approximately \$18,000 during the AAO-HNS/F 2017 Annual Meeting & OTO Experience. If you missed the opportunity to stop by the Advocacy booth in Chicago, [click here](#) to make your 2017 contribution to ENT PAC!*

Volunteer Opportunities Available!

Make your voice heard about the issues impacting the specialty by signing up for [PROJECT 535](#) and/or the [State Trackers](#) program! For more information, please contact govtaffairs@entnet.org.

Legislative & Political Reports

Truth in Advertising Legislation Introduced

U.S. Representatives Larry Bucshon, MD (R-IN) and David Scott (D-GA) recently reintroduced the [Truth in Healthcare Marketing Act of 2017 \(H.R. 3928\)](#). The legislation will empower patients by improving transparency in healthcare provider advertisements and marketing. The AAO-HNS looks forward to working with the Congressmen and their staffs to identify co-sponsors for this important legislation.

Congress Advances IPAB Repeal Legislation

On October 4, the [U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means](#) passed legislation (H.R. 849) to repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board (IPAB). The next day, the Senate Budget Committee passed language to repeal the IPAB as an amendment to its budget proposal. Created by the Affordable Care Act, the IPAB is a largely unaccountable body of individuals appointed by the President and charged with creating or modifying Medicare payment policy, thereby usurping the rightful authority of our elected Congressional officials to shape Medicare policy. The AAO-HNS is a strong supporter of IPAB repeal and is continuing to urge Congressional leaders to pass this important legislation.

AAO-HNS Meets with Senate HELP Committee Staff

On September 28, the AAO-HNS participated in an “off-the-record” briefing with Senate HELP Committee Staff Director, David Cleary. Topics discussed during the briefing included: the possibility of additional healthcare reform efforts, CHIP reauthorization, and ongoing efforts to address the opioid epidemic.

September ACA Repeal Effort Stalls

Facing a September 30 deadline to utilize the “fast-track” reconciliation process to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, the White House and Congressional leaders again struggled to garner support for the revised “Graham-Cassidy” proposal. In the short-term, lawmakers have indicated renewed interest in resuming negotiations to craft a bipartisan “stabilization” package.

Other News

AAO-HNS Hosts OTC Hearing Aid Stakeholder Meeting

The AAO-HNS recently hosted a meeting of stakeholders from the hearing health community to discuss forthcoming regulations regarding a new category of “over-the-counter” hearing aids. Per the FDA Reauthorization Act of 2017, the FDA has three years to create a pathway for hearing aids to be available over the counter.

AAO-HNS Joins AMA, USP to Discuss Compounding

On September 25, the AAO-HNS participated in an AMA-hosted meeting with representatives from the United States Pharmacopeia (USP). The meeting provided an opportunity for physician specialty organizations to ask questions and participate in an open dialogue with USP regarding its ongoing efforts to revise USP Chapter 797. The AAO-HNS, and others in the physician community, have raised concerns about potential changes to in-office compounding, especially as it relates to the preparation of allergy immunotherapy.

AAO-HNS Revises Two Position Statements

Following an extensive review process by AAO-HNS Committees, the Academy’s leadership approved two revised [Position Statements](#) at this year’s Annual Meeting. Both statements addressed obstructive sleep apnea.

AAO-HNS Advocacy Maintains Clinically Appropriate Coding Edits

The [National Correct Coding Initiative \(NCCI\)](#), a division within CMS, periodically requests the Academy’s feedback on proposed changes to CPT codes. In response to proposed edits for CPT codes describing laryngectomies paired with cervical lymphadenectomies, the Academy’s CPT Team submitted written comments advocating against edits which would disallow performing these procedures on the same patient on the same day. NCCI agreed with the Academy’s rationale and will not implement the proposed modifications.



Sincerely,
Susan R. Cordes, MD
BOG Legislative Affairs Committee Chair
and the AAO-HNS Legislative Advocacy Team

For more information, contact govtaffairs@entnet.org. Don’t forget to bookmark *The ENT Advocate*!

If you no longer wish to receive important legislative and political updates via *The ENT Advocate*, please reply to this email with CANCEL ADVOCATE in the subject line.

*Contributions to ENT PAC are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Contributions are voluntary, and all members of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Federal law prohibits ENT PAC from accepting contributions from foreign nationals. By law, if your contributions are made using a personal check or credit card, ENT PAC may use your contribution only to support candidates in federal elections. All corporate contributions to ENT PAC will be used for educational and administrative fees of ENT PAC, and other activities permissible under federal law. Federal law requires ENT PAC to use its best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation, and the name of the employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.