



Dear ENT Advocacy Network Member:

January 10, 2020

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

ENT PAC Launches Annual “First 50” Campaign

Start the new year off right by becoming a 2020 “First 50” ENT PAC Investor! The First 50 campaign is underway, and AAO-HNS members have until January 31 to participate in this fundraising effort to garner at least 50 \$1,000+ (Chairman’s Club or Leadership Club) contributions during the month of January. As we prepare for another year of healthcare-related legislative priorities, participating in the First 50 campaign will help ensure the Academy can actively engage on issues critical to the specialty. First 50 contributors will have exclusive access to a 2019 conference call series with high-ranking individuals from Congress or the Administration. Help us by making your 2020 Chairman’s Club (\$1,000 or \$85/month) or Leadership Club (\$2,500 or \$210/month) contribution to ENT PAC today.* If you have questions or would like additional information, contact ENT PAC staff at entpac@entnet.org.

Action Requested

Strengthening Project 535

Given the aggressive movement by audiology stakeholders to quickly advance legislation opposed by the specialty, it is more important than ever for the Academy to strengthen its “key contacts” network via PROJECT 535. In addition to the Academy’s overall advocacy efforts, PROJECT 535 volunteers help reinforce our message by establishing one-on-one relationships with elected federal officials. This additional element of constituent-based outreach amplifies our advocacy efforts when Congress debates major issues. The commitment is minimal, but the impact is immense. To help further strengthen our collective advocacy efforts, sign up today or contact govtaffairs@entnet.org for more information.

AAO-HNS Needs Your Support! Say No to S. 2446

Now, more than ever, the AAO-HNS needs your support. Legislation has been introduced (S. 2446/H.R. 4056) that seeks to designate audiologists as “practitioners,” and allow them direct access to Medicare beneficiaries without a physician referral.

Your voice is needed to amplify our efforts on Capitol Hill and ensure your patients continue to receive the highest quality care. Please click [here](#) to access the action alert on the AAO-HNS Advocacy website, . The alert includes a sample letter you can use to make your voice heard and stop this misguided legislation from

advancing in Congress. With your support, we can make a difference and tell Congress to say no to S. 2446/H.R. 4056 “The Medicare Audiologist access and Services Act of 2019”.

Legislative & Political Reports

AAO-HNS Applauds Long-Sought Action to Increase Minimum Purchasing Age for Tobacco

In response to prolonged advocacy efforts by a broad coalition of stakeholders, including the AAO-HNS, Congress has passed legislation to further protect American youth from the deadly harms of tobacco. [H.R. 1865, the Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriations Minibus package](#), included a provision to increase the federal minimum purchasing age for tobacco from 18 to 21 years of age. This bill passed both bodies of Congress with bipartisan support and was signed into law by the President on December 20. The Academy applauds this first step to enact meaningful legislation to reverse the alarming rise in youth tobacco use. AAO-HNS looks forward to working with Congress and the Administration to advance additional necessary policies to protect Americans from the harms of tobacco use. AAO-HNS looks forward to working with Congress and the Administration to continue enacting policies that will protect Americans from the harms of tobacco use.

AAO-HNS Endorses Magnet Injury Prevention Act

The Academy is proud to announce our endorsement of [S. 3143, the “Magnet Injury Prevention Act”](#) introduced by Senator Blumenthal (D-CT). This important legislation would ban the sale of dangerous toy magnets that can negatively impact the health of children. When two or more magnets are ingested, their strong magnetic force allows the magnets to “find” each other once inside the digestive tract. These connections across the digestive system can lead to obstructions, infections, perforations and even death. Introduction of this legislation is essential to prevent unnecessary harm and protect America’s children.

Check Your Initial 2020 MIPS Eligibility on the CMS Website

Clinicians can now use the updated [CMS Quality Payment Program \(QPP\) Status Lookup Tool](#) to check initial 2020 eligibility for the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) program. Enter your National Provider Identifier (NPI) in the Lookup Tool to determine whether you need to participate in MIPS during the 2020 performance period. Eligibility does change during the second half of the year, so it is recommended that you check your status throughout the year.

MIPS 2019 Data Submission Period is Now Open

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has opened the data submission period for MIPS eligible clinicians who participated in the 2019 performance period of the Quality Payment Program. [Data can be submitted and updated](#) until 8:00 p.m. EDT on March 31, 2020. For those clinicians reporting through the Reg-ent registry, please continue to work with the Client Account Support team to complete the data review and submission process via your Reg-ent MIPS 2019 dashboard. Questions about Reg-ent? Email Reg-ent@entnet.org.

AAO-HNS Comments on Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Final Rule

On December 30, the Academy [submitted a comment letter to CMS](#) reiterating concerns with the overall E/M coding restructure scheduled to take effect in 2021. The agency only solicited stakeholder comments on the evaluation and management (E/M) provisions of the 2020 Physician Fee Schedule final rule. The AAO-HNS letter also requests that CMS reconsider the decision not to apply increased E/M payments to the corresponding E/M values in the global surgery package.

Other News

Register Now for AAO-HNS/F 2020 Leadership Forum and BOG Spring Meeting!

Join your colleagues at the AAO-HNS/F 2020 Leadership Forum & BOG Spring Meeting, May 1-3, in Alexandria, VA, for a weekend of leadership discussions, Board of Governors (BOG) meetings, informative speakers, advocacy updates, and mentoring/networking opportunities. Registration is complimentary to AAO-HNS members who are otolaryngology practitioners; however, [you must register to attend](#).

Sincerely,

David Boisonneau, MD
BOG Legislative Affairs Committee Chair
and the AAO-HNS 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 contribution 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 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. ENT PAC is a program of the AAO-HNS which is exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (6) of the Internal Revenue Code.

American Academy of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery
1650 Diagonal Road, Alexandria, VA 22314-2857
Phone: 1-703-836-8444 | Fax: 1-703-683-5100