



September 6, 2019

Dear ENT Advocacy Network Member:

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 Comments on the CMS 2020 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule

On August 30, the AAO-HNS submitted a [comment letter](#) to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) on the CY 2020 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule and Quality Payment Program proposed rule. The Academy's comments focused on the agency's proposed changes to E/M codes and their value in the global surgery package, valuation of specific codes affecting the specialty, special endoscopy rules, market-based supply and equipment pricing, physician assistant (PA) supervision requirements, as well as comprehensive updates to the Quality Payment Program (QPP).

## Legislative & Political Reports

### AAO-HNS Sponsors Capitol Hill Visit to NIH

The AAO-HNS sponsored a Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus tour of the NIH's National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) on August 21, 2019. The event, which included congressional staff members and representatives from the hearing health community, featured an overview of the NIDCD's intramural research program, followed by tours of labs conducting research on hearing and balance impairments and HPV-related head and neck cancer.

### Successful Passage of Missouri Bill will Enact a Low-Income Hearing Aid Distribution Program

The AAO-HNS's most recent state advocacy victory, the amendment and passage of Senate Bill 101, occurred through the combined efforts of the Academy, the Missouri State Trackers, the Missouri Society of Otolaryngology and most notably the Missouri Medical Association. SB 101 became a new act, effective August 28, 2019, that requires the establishment of a statewide hearing aid distribution program for low-income individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Need assessment and distribution of hearing aids, originally exclusive to audiologists or hearing instrument specialists, now includes "licensed physicians."

### Second Quarter "Your PAC Dollars at Work" Report Now Available

In an effort to provide more transparency and a greater understanding about how decisions are made regarding the specialty's political action committee, in 2018 ENT PAC launched a new report titled "Your PAC Dollars at Work." ENT PAC is an invaluable tool that strengthens the Academy's overall legislative advocacy efforts. [View the latest edition](#) summarizing ENT PAC activities during the second quarter of 2019.

## Other news

### Coding Alert

The Academy recommended the use of CPT code 31299 for non-balloon-related sinus dilation. [The coding alert can be found here.](#)

### AAO-HNS Signs Letter to FDA on In-office Compounding

The AAO-HNS joined other impacted medical specialties in signing a [joint letter](#) to the FDA, sent August 13, regarding an impending revised guidance document on compounding. The current FDA guidance contains an exemption for physicians who compound medications in their offices. The AMA-led letter seeks assurances that the FDA will continue differentiating between physicians and compounding pharmacies.

## Legislative & Political Reports

### AAO-HNS Needs Your Support! Say No to H.R.4056

Now, more than ever, the AAO-HNS needs your support. Legislation has been introduced (H.R.4056) that seeks to designate audiologists as “practitioners” and allow them direct access to Medicare beneficiaries without a physician referral. The Academy has been advocating on Capitol Hill expressing opposition to this legislation to Members of Congress on the relevant committees of jurisdiction.

Raise your voice and sign up for our “Calls to Action” by **texting “otoadvocate” to 313131**. With your support, we can make a difference by **telling Congress to say no to H.R.4056** “The Medicare Audiologist Access and Services Act of 2019”

Sincerely,

David S. Boisoneau, MD  
BOG Legislative Affairs Committee Chair  
and the AAO-HNS Advocacy Team

For more information, contact [govaffairs@entnet.org](mailto:govaffairs@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.

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