



For Immediate Release

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Academy to invest more than \$210,000 in O&P research

*Largest source of direct funding to date will support six initiatives
to develop research-based protocols to create an unprecedented standard of care*

Washington, DC (November 17, 2016) —The American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists (the Academy) announced it will invest an unprecedented \$210,000 in orthotic and prosthetic (O&P) research initiatives. Using scientific, research-based tactics, the Academy hopes to develop new protocols to significantly enhance patient care standards. Through these research initiatives, the Academy also aspires to help practitioners to increase insurance reimbursements.

This investment combines the best practices of all Academy pillars: education, research, and advocacy. After commissioning extensive scoping reviews last year, the Academy identified six key areas for funding priority and has announced the first initiatives.

The Academy dove into its first research initiative last month by convening a State-of-the-Science Conference in Florida on “Body Powered Versus Myoelectric Upper Extremity Prostheses.” A variety of subject matter experts convened for two days to discuss the topic.

“Currently, there is insufficient evidence regarding the functional differences in upper-limb prostheses,” said M. Jason Highsmith, PT, DPT, PhD, CP, FAAOP, chair of the research council and immediate past president of the Academy. “This State-of-the-Science Conference will help to inform upper-limb prosthesis selection and design to ensure that patients experience the best functional benefit for their specific needs.”

Another conference is planned to discuss and brainstorm the “Economics of Transtibial Prostheses.” In light of recent reimbursement challenges based on a lack of clinical and economic evidence, there is a pressing need to understand and document the cost-effectiveness of prosthetic rehabilitation for transtibial amputee patients.

Funding has also been allocated for a broader systematic review on “Outcome Measures for Persons Post-Stroke Who Utilize Orthoses.” The Academy aims to research a variety of recommended clinically viable outcome measures and to document the effect of ankle foot orthoses (AFOs) on stroke patients.

Also, research funding from the Academy will evaluate “Metabolic Expenditure on Transtibial Prosthetic Users.” The goal is to provide practitioners a valuable resource to improve clinical practice, select interventions suited to the needs of individual patients, provide justification for prosthetic-related components and services, and inspire evidence-based care.

Academy president, Rick Miller, CO, FAAOP, is excited about the opportunities that will result from these research initiatives. “The Academy is making a significant investment in the future of O&P clinical care,” he declared. “I am thrilled that we are taking a leading role in developing research opportunities across such a broad range of focus areas.”

About the Academy

The Academy, founded in 1970, is the professional organization representing certified practitioners, state-licensed practitioners, assistants, technicians, fitters, and others affiliated with the profession of orthotics and prosthetics (O&P). It is dedicated to helping its members provide the highest level of professionalism and service to their patients. To learn more about the Academy, please visit www.oandp.org.

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