

AOA Secures Eleventh - Hour Red Flags Rule Enforcement Delay

Facing mounting pressure from AOA and others, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has announced today that it will once again postpone enforcement of the Red Flags Rule, this time through Dec. 31, 2010. The FTC was scheduled to begin enforcement of the Rule June 1, 2010. However, AOA continued to pressure agency officials and urge key members of Congress to provide a permanent exemption for optometry practices and, ultimately, to secure the latest enforcement delay.

The May 28 announcement was the fifth consecutive delay and appears to signal an understanding on the part of the FTC that Congress is moving closer toward providing permanent relief for small business health care practices. Work will continue to secure a much needed permanent exemption.

The U.S. House has already approved AOA-backed legislation (HR 3763) sponsored by Rep. Adler (D-NJ) that would exempt small business optometry and other health care practices with 20 employees or fewer from Red Flags requirements. However, Rep.

Adler's bill has stalled before the U.S. Senate Banking Committee.

Within the past week, companion legislation to Rep. Adler's bill has been introduced into the U.S. Senate (S. 3416) by John Thune (R-SD). AOA will use this added

time to advance these bills and help ensure that Congress follows through on promises made and ultimately fixes the Red Flags issue. In a press release this morning, FTC Chairman Jon Leibowitz said "Congress needs to fix the unintended consequences of the legislation establishing the Red Flags Rule – and to fix this problem quickly. We appreciate the efforts of

Congressmen Frank and Adler for getting a clarifying measure passed in the House, and hope action in the Senate will be swift."

The FTC announcement can be viewed on their Web site at: <http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2010/05/redflags.shtm>.

'AOA continued to pressure Congress to provide a permanent exemption...'

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Get to Know : Veatch | 2 |
| Membership News | 3 |
| Legislative Updates | 4 |
| Classifieds | 5 |



MAY / JUNE 2010

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| In the News | 6 -9 |
| Medicare Payment Update 6/16 | |
| Free Coding Webinars | |
| OD Reimbursement Benefits | |
| AOA Congress 1910 | |
| AOA Foundation Progress | |

Associate Member Profile: *Veatch Ophthalmic Instruments*

Organization Name: Veatch Ophthalmic Instruments
Contact Name: Matthew Wess
Address: 136 W. Orion
Address: Ste. 3
City, State, Zip: Temp, AZ, 85283
Email: sales@voi2020.com
Web site: www.voi2020.com

Organization President's Name: Thomas Veatch
Year Founded: 1988
Number of Years in Business: 22
Number of Employees: 15

"Veatch Ophthalmic Instruments was established in 1988 as a distributor of traditional exam lane equipment. Our mission is to bring exciting new technologies to the market that offers clinical value, practice enhancement and revenue generation.

In 1992, ReSeeVit™ Digital Imaging was pioneered. ReSeeVit™ and this new digital imaging concept had an immediate and positive impact in the market. Our high technology division has grown from a single slit lamp imaging product to a full range of practice building products. As our company grows, we are constantly bringing new innovations to the marketplace by looking for more products to link to our ReSeeVit™ system. As the demand has grown, this division of our company travels worldwide to test and make available products that will heighten the success of any practice, large or small.

Importing products to our specifications allows us to insist on and maintain a high quality product and opens the door for our company to sell more products nationwide. We have also partnered with companies around the world such as Huvitz for high tech products.

During our company's 22 years in business, we have established ourselves as a reputable, value-oriented, service minded, nationwide manufacturer, distributor, and importer."

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Do you have questions about your membership? Need to change or confirm your contact information? Want to refer a colleague to the AZOA? Please contact us:

1702 E Highland Avenue, #213, Phoenix, AZ 85016
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www.azoa.org

MEMBERSHIP

When/how did you first realize you wanted to be an optometrist?

The end of my junior year I decided that I wanted to go into the Medical Field and hoped to eventually end up in overseas missionary. There was a poster about military scholarships for nursing and optometry. I never went into the military but ended up in a great profession!

Are you native to Arizona or did you move here from somewhere else? If you moved here, where are you originally from?

I'm a military brat and moved every 2-3 years until I graduated from High School. Flagstaff is the 19th city I've lived in during the course of my life. I lived in Tsaile, Arizona, on the Navajo Reservation for 6 years (the longest place I've ever lived.) It will always have a special place in my heart!

Early bird or night owl?

Both now....no choice when you have a baby!



Getting to Know Your Members: *Dr. Tracy Crane*

What do you do to relax?

Go to Macy's Coffee shop or Late for the Train and have a cup of joe with my husband.

Is there something you wish everyone knew about you?

I'm addicted to the outdoors!

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATES: BY DR. ANNETTE HANIAN

SB1285

SB 1285 was passed into law and becomes effective July 29th, 2010. You can look at our Optometry Statutes and Rules anytime online at: www.optometry.az.gov.

I encourage you all to visit the site and be familiar with our professions limitations and restrictions. Make sure that you are practicing in compliance with Arizona law.

If you read our statutes and are discouraged by all the limitations in our prescriptive authority compared to our equally educated colleagues practicing in other states that allow optometrists to practice full scope pharmaceuticals, then participate in the legislative process.

You can use your credit card to make Optometric Political Action Committee (OPACA) contributions through the AZOA office at 602-279-0055. You can contact Annette Hanian OD, Legislation Committee Chair, to get involved in Arizona politics directly or contribute personal checks towards worthy candidates this election cycle. Contact her at 623-202-9696 (mobile) or drhanian@completevisioncare.com.

AOA Advocacy Conference Report

Dr. Rand Siekert AOA-PAC, Dr. Shannon Steinhauser President-Elect and Dr. Annette Hanian AOA Federal Keyperson Coordinator attended the Annual AOA Advocacy meeting in Washington DC March 3-4th on behalf of Arizonans. We learned of the Federal AOA backed legislation that is currently being worked on. We visited with the offices of both our Senators and 7 of the 8 Congresspersons. We were able to discuss with some of the Legislators and all of their Legislative Advisors about Optometry and the Legislation that affects how and where we practice.

The AOA is backing the following bills:

HR 1884: National Health Service Corps Improvement Act:

Which would expand access to eye and vision care

through community health centers and offer loan payback alternatives for recent OD graduates.

HR 2697: Optometric Equity in Medicaid Act:

Which would require full recognition of Optometrists in Medicaid.

HR 4360: Honor Fallen Army Optometrist:

Which would name a CA VA blind rehabilitation center after Major Charles Robert Soltes, OD.

S 259: Vision Care for Kids Act:

Which would establish grants to the state's to bolster children's vision and learning initiatives.

More details on all of these bills are available to members at www.aoa.org.

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CLASSIFIEDS

OD WANTED

■ CIGNA is currently recruiting for an Optometrist Lead and an Optometrist for our Clyde Wright Healthcare Center in Phoenix (755 E. McDowell Rd.) I can gladly forward the job descriptions to you if helpful, but wondering if you could attach to your Doctors wanted classifieds. Candidates can email me at janna.trevino@cigna.com or go to www.cigna.com to apply online.

■ Optometrist needed for 3-5 days / week in Tucson. Could lead to FT in the future. If interested, please email tsowash@me.com or call Dr. Tom Sowash at 303-882-8235.

■ Looking for full time Optometrist. Preferably some fluency in Spanish. We are flexible with hours and days for someone interested in part time. We are a private/ family practice in Somerton, Az. and have been in practice for over 10 years. For more information, please contact Nancy at 928-627-4525.

■ OD/MD practice seeks full time or part time associate, Tucson. Fax resume to 520 615-8168.

■ Ever Dream of having your own practice? This is your chance to make dreams come true.

We are looking for Fulltime and Part Time Optometrists/Ophthalmologists for New practices opening in busy Arizona malls. Exciting Employment. Ownership Opportunities - 100% Financing Available!

For more information please call Alan at (480) 797-7066 or email alansinger@cox.net

OD AVAILABLE

■ Optometrist Available: Looking for FT/PT/Fill-in opportunity within East Valley or Scottsdale/Phoenix. Contact Amanda Misinco, OD at amanda.misinco@gmail.com or (714) 793-7464.

■ OD Available: Looking for full-time/part-time position. Will consider fill-

in if available. Residency Trained. Please contact Scott Klemens @ (805)907-2427 or sdcklemens@gmail.com

■ TPA and VSP certified private practice Optometrist with established patient base and 16 years of experience is seeking employment in the east valley. Any practice setting and FT/PT/Fill In will be sincerely considered. Would also be very interested in options involving an associate leasing space/sharing expenses in my present location. Please call 602-625-0546 anytime between 10 AM and 10 PM.

■ OD available: 2-3 days/week throughout AZ. Please contact Dr. Bradie Hopper at cell 602-628-4419.

■ Fill in OD available on some Fridays and Saturdays in the Tucson area or So. Eastern AZ. Full scope Optometry. Contact Yvonne Lee OD cell phone at 310-686-7890 or by email at: dryvonne1999@yahoo.com.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

■ FOR SALE: Reliance Model optometry chair located in central phoenix. It is an older model, do not know year, but is in full working order. Asking price is best offer. Person who buys it must pick it up. Located on 12th ave in Phoenix, AZ. For more information call Eric Clyde at (719)-210-3652.

■ Need a fill-in doctor fast? Looking for extra fill-in work yourself? We match Phoenix optometry offices with great fill-in doctors, even on short notice! At no charge! yourfillindoctor@aol.com.

■ For Sale - Paragon Corneal Molding Set. Everything you need. Will see for 50% off retail. Also for sale, like new scout corneal topographer. Will sell 50% off retail. Never used. Please call Dr. Tom Babu @ 480.231.9235 or email: drtbabu@2020image.com.

YOUR HELP NEEDED

■ VOSH Arizona is in need of phoropters, auto lensometers and auto refractors for our trips to Mexico. If you can donate equipment, please call John Reed, OD at 480/545.9120 or Deon Whipple at 480/545.8985.

INTERNS AVAILABLE

■ Practice in the Phoenix area and looking for some extra help this summer? As upcoming 2nd-Year students at the Arizona College of Optometry, we are interested in working for you!! We have a 3 month break this summer from late May until September and are eager to see how O.D.s here in the Valley do it-

This is a great opportunity for O.D.s in the Valley area to get to know the new optometry school in Glendale and mentor a young O.D. student in the process. No need to worry about finding or training a new employee this summer because we have completed an intense year of basic sciences, optics, ocular anatomy and physiology and thorough clinical skills training, and we're ready to put it to good use! For students, this could be an extremely valuable experience in a real practice setting to learn some of the most important skills not covered in an optometry school curriculum.

If you're an O.D. in the Phoenix Valley area and interested in giving a young O.D. student a chance this summer, please contact the EnVision - Practice Excellence program at the Arizona College of Optometry by emailing William Tantum at william.tantum@gmail.com

To place a classified ad, please contact the AZOA at azoa@azoa.org or by calling 602.279.0055.

Medicare Payment Update - June 16, 2010

Following up on the most recent Medicare payment update from the AOA Washington Office, the notice below from CMS details the steps the agency is taking with regard to the 21% fee cut that Congress allowed to take effect on June 1st. Right now, a broad tax and social program extender bill (HR 4213) remains under consideration in the U.S. Senate and it does include a measure of relief from these cuts through 2012, an improvement over the monthly extensions passed in March and April but far short of the long-term payment reform that is needed and that AOA is supporting.

Please note that CMS – citing the debate now taking place on Capitol Hill – has now instructed its contractors to extend the hold on claims through Thursday, June 18th. The AOA is continuing to push for immediate and long-term corrective action through meetings with Members of Congress and their aides to report on the severe impact of Medicare payment instability on ODs and their patients across the country.

The 2010 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule - From CMS

The Continuing Extension Act of 2010, enacted on April 15, 2010, extended the zero percent (0%) update to the 2010 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) through May 31, 2010. At this time, Congress is debating the elimination of the negative update that took effect June 1, 2010. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is hopeful that Congressional action will be taken within the next several days to avert the negative update.

To avoid disruption in the delivery of health care services to beneficiaries and payment of claims for physicians, non-physician practitioners, and other providers paid under the MPFS, CMS had instructed its contractors on May 27th to hold claims for services paid under the MPFS for the first 10 business days of June (i.e., through June 14, 2010). This hold only affects MPFS claims with dates of service of June 1, 2010, and later.

Given the possibility of Congressional action in the very near future, CMS is now directing its contractors to continue holding June 1 and later claims through Thursday, June 17, lifting the hold on Friday, June 18.

This action will facilitate accurate claims processing at the outset and minimize the need for claims reprocessing if Congressional action changes the negative update. It also should minimize the provider and beneficiary burdens and costs associated with reprocessing claims.

We understand that the delayed processing of Medicare claims may present cash flow problems for some Medicare providers. However, we expect that the delay, if any, beyond the normal processing period will be only a few days. Be on the alert for more information regarding the 2010 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Update.

AOA Offers Free Coding Webinars

AOA's staff and volunteers handle thousands of questions from members each month, with many of the questions related to medical records, coding, insurance contracts, Medicare and other third party issues. In an effort to educate members on increasing billing efficiency, AOA is launching a Billing & Coding Webinar Series. Free to members, and presented by AOA Coding and Medical Records Consultant, Charles Brownlow, several webinar sessions have been scheduled. Attendance is limited, so register today!

DATES: June 22, 12 p.m., CST / June 22, 6 p.m., CST / June 24, 2 p.m., CST / June 24, 8 p.m., CST

REGISTER AT: <http://www.aoa.org/x14936.xml>.



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AOA Offers New Value-Added Member Benefit

The AOA is proud to announce an exciting partnership with the PRS Network, a leading provider of physician reimbursement services. This relationship offers active and renewing members the benefits of AOACodingToday, an online, Optometric-coding and reimbursement resource tool at no cost. This is a \$349 value!

AOA members may access this tool in two ways:

1. www.AOACodingToday.com – login using their existing AOA.org username and password
2. www.aoa.org – accessible through several locations on the site, including the AOA Practice Resources section

The site features Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Reimbursement News and Coding Tips. Free training sessions and tutorial videos are available for new users. The site is continuously being updated with new content and the database of frequently asked questions will be updated soon with many more FAQs.

Historical Note: AOA Congress of 1910

By Irving Bennett, O.D.

Those of us who are interested in history think a lot about what happened 100 years ago. With the AOA's 113th convention occurring in Orlando, FL this summer, we can't help but conjecture on what transpired at the AOA Congress a century ago. The brief answer: a lot.

The meeting was held in Cedar Point, Ohio in August 1910, the year following a gubernatorial veto of the legislation that would have created an Ohio Optometry Law. This was a major setback for the fledgling Ohio association and the members of AOA all over the nation vowed to do something about it. The Ohio and American Medical Associations were so confident of their political prowess that, according to the book, *American Optometric Association – a History*, by deceased OD and prolific author James R. Gregg*, they openly told Ohio Governor Harman "if you have any Presidential aspirations, you will have us, the strongest political organization in America, to reckon with."

The AOA Convention of 1910 registered 310 members and changed the name of the national association from the American Association of Opticians to the American Optical Association. It was still too daring to use the word "optometrist" in the name – although efforts to do so came close to success.

Twelve States, Including Arizona, to Receive Federal Matching Funds for Electronic Health Record Incentives Program

In another key step to further states' role in developing a robust U.S. health information technology (HIT) infrastructure, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced today additional federal matching funds for certain state planning activities necessary to implement the electronic health record (EHR) incentive program established by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act).

The Recovery Act provides a 90 percent federal match for state planning activities to administer the incentive payments to Medicaid providers, to ensure their proper payments through audits and to participate in statewide efforts to promote interoperability and meaningful use of EHR technology statewide and, eventually, across the nation.

EHRs will improve the quality of health care for the citizens of the recipient states and make their care more efficient. The records make it easier for the many providers who may be treating a Medicaid patient to coordinate care. Additionally, EHRs make it easier for patients to access the information they need to make decisions about their health care.

This batch is part of a rolling announcement CMS began in November 2009. To date, including the new states, we will have awarded a total of \$43.56 million., of which Arizona received \$2.89 million.

Additional information on implementation of the Medicaid-related provisions of the Recovery Act's EHR incentive payment program may be found at: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/Recovery/11_HealthIT.asp

News from The AOA Foundation

Special thanks to Arizona Optometric Association and the following Arizona optometrists and their families for their donations to The AOA Foundation during 2009.

Thomas F. Determan, OD
Jeffrey L. Girardin, OD
Dr. and Mrs. Donald E. Jarnagin
George Kenneth Johnson, OD
Lester B. Kahn, OD
Alvin Levin, OD
Stanley F. Martin, OD
Robert H. Mulgrew, OD
Bernard J. Shannon, OD
Dr. and Mrs. E.H. Siefarth
David R. Stacy, OD
Lilien Anna Vogl, OD
Joel S. Waldstreicher, OD

InfantSEE® Partners in Unprecedented Public-Private Partnership to Address Rising U.S. Infant Mortality Rate

InfantSEE® recently became an outreach partner of text4baby—a new free mobile information service providing timely health information to pregnant women and new moms from pregnancy through a baby’s first year.

Women who sign up for the service by texting BABY to 511411 (or BEBE for Spanish) receive three free SMS text messages each week timed to their due date or baby’s date of birth. These messages focus on a variety of topics critical to maternal and child health, including birth defects prevention, immunization, nutrition, seasonal flu, mental health, oral health and safe sleep. Text4baby messages also connect women to prenatal and infant care services and other resources.

An educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition (HMHB), text4baby delivers timely health tips via text message to those who need it most. It is made possible through an unprecedented public-private partnership which includes the White House Office on Science and Technology Policy, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,

Voxiva, CTIA-The Wireless Foundation, Grey Healthcare Group (a WPP company) and founding corporate sponsor Johnson & Johnson. Premier sponsors include WellPoint, Pfizer and CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield and wireless carriers are distributing text messages at no charge to recipients. Implementation partners include BabyCenter, Danya International, Syniverse Technologies, Keynote Systems and The George Washington University.

Each year in the U.S., more than 500,000 babies are born prematurely and an estimated 28,000 children die before their first birthday—signifying a public health crisis. The infant mortality rate in the U.S. is one of the highest in the industrialized world, and for the first time since the 1950s, that rate is on the rise.

Research shows that while 90 percent of Americans have a mobile phone fewer have access to the Internet, and texting is more prevalent among women of childbearing age.

“InfantSEE® is proud to be a part of text4baby,” said Dr. Martha Rosemore Greenberg, president of The AOA Foundation. “Mobile health services around the world have demonstrated the ability to help change patient behavior and improve health outcomes, and we believe that this program can have a significant impact on maternal and child health in our country.”

InfantSEE® has Joined Facebook—Become a Fan Today

Become a fan of InfantSEE®, and help spread the word about the program to your friends, colleagues, InfantSEE® families—everyone with young children in their lives.

We want to reach 5,000 fans by June 8, 2010, when InfantSEE® celebrates its 5th birthday.

If you are already on Facebook, simply enter InfantSEE® into the search to become a fan. For those who are new to Facebook, visit www.facebook.com, create an account and join the InfantSEE® Fan Club today.

Preserving Your Past. Sharing Your Story.

The Archives collection includes documents related to the American Optometric Association and the history of optometry in the United States. Materials include reports, letters, catalogs, patents, photographs, journals, pamphlets, and much more. This is your history.

The Museum includes eyeglasses, contact lenses, instruments, and other artifacts that show the history of eyewear and the optical industry as well as methods of vision testing and care. Gifts from donors are important to the continuing development of these collections. To inquire about donating artifacts, photos, documents and other historical items, please contact: Linda Draper, Archives & Museum, The AOA Foundation, (314) 983-4102 LJDraper@AOA.org. To learn more about The AOA Foundation, please visit www.optometryscharity.org.

OD Business Academy - Registration Begins

Business education for the eye care professional is now available through a partnership between the Southern California College of Optometry (SCCO) and California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). The two educational institutions have combined specialties to produce a unique practice management program designed to specifically enhance optometry practices.

The five workshops will be held on the CSUF campus. The Sunday workshop dates are: July 18, August 1, August 15, August 29 and September 19. For fee and registration information contact: SCCO's CE Director Susan Atkinson @ 714.449.7442 or ce@scco.edu.

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