



**American Orthotic &
Prosthetic Association**

Mandatory Certification and Accreditation: What It Means For Your Practice

Under authorization from the U.S. Congress, Medicare will soon mandate orthotic and prosthetic quality standards for all O&P patient care locations. Facility accreditation is an essential component of these new regulations. Recently, ABC and BOC were selected as nationally recognized accrediting agencies.

What does accreditation mean for your facility, and for the O&P profession?

For O&P facilities, this means that if you serve and bill Medicare patients, you must become accredited. Accreditation isn't optional. For our profession, the Medicare requirements will effectively raise patient care standards to the uniform standards of accreditation. This is an important milestone in the evolution of O&P patient care, as the accreditation standards measuring patient management, quality care, assessment, evaluation, and safety will ensure a uniformly high standard of care for all Medicare patients. We can expect that the Medicare standards will be adopted by other third party payers.

What is certification, and why do I need it?

A certified practitioner is an allied health professional who is specifically educated and clinically trained to manage the provision of comprehensive orthotic and prosthetic care, based upon a clinical assessment and a physician's prescription, to restore physiological function. As the practitioner responsible for all patient care, the certified practitioner independently provides or supervises the provision of comprehensive orthotic and prosthetic care. This includes patient assessment, formulation of a treatment plan, implementation of the treatment plan, follow-up, and practice management. In addition, the certified prosthetist and/or orthotist is obligated to support and conform to the professional responsibilities which promote and assure the overall welfare of the patient and the integrity of the profession. Certification/licensure from ABC and BOC guarantees that O&P patients are receiving high quality care from qualified providers.

ABC and BOC require practitioner certification or licensure as part of their federally recognized accreditation programs.