

July 19, 2019



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Ortho News This Week

**COA Member Gets New Appointment**

Thomas K. Donaldson, MD, appointed as the Department of Orthopedic Surgery chair at Loma Linda University



Loma Linda University School of Medicine

Congratulations to Thomas K. Donaldson, MD, on his appointment as chair of the Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Loma Linda University School of Medicine. Dr. Donaldson also serves on COA's Board of Directors and as an AAOS Councilor representing the Inland Empire.



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**CMS releases Quality Payment Program results: 5 takeaways**

Becker's Hospital CFO Report



CMS released preliminary second-year participation data for the Quality Payment Program on July 11. Five things to know:

1. There are two pathways for eligible clinician participation in the Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act's Quality Payment Program: the Merit-based Incentive Payment System, or MIPS, and the Advanced Alternative Payment Model, or Advanced APM.
2. CMS said 98 percent of clinicians eligible to participate in MIPS did so in 2018, up from 95 percent in 2017.
3. Nearly 90 percent of clinicians in small practices participated in MIPS in 2018, up from 81 percent in 2017. "Primary flexibilities introduced in the Physician Fee Schedule rule for the 2018 performance year were increases in the Medicare patient count and Medicare Part B allowed charges required to participate in MIPS, which meant that fewer clinicians in small practices were required to participate, but results show they elected to do so anyway," CMS Administrator Seema Verma wrote in a blog post July 11.
4. The number of physicians participating in Advanced APMs nearly doubled year over year, increasing from 99,076 in 2017 to 183,306 in 2018. CMS attributed the increase to new participation opportunities in 2018, particularly through ACOs in the Medicare Shared Savings Program.
5. Under MIPS, performance is measured through the data clinicians report in four areas: quality, clinical practice improvement, interoperability and cost. Based on performance in 2018, 97 percent of clinicians participating in MIPS will earn a positive payment adjustment in 2020. Ninety-three percent of clinicians earned a positive payment adjustment based on MIPS performance in 2017.

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## New oral certification examinations are different from what you remember



American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

The Oral Certification Examination has always been a part of the process to become Board certified by the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery (ABOS). In 1936, the oral examination — now known as the Part II examination — consisted of Candidates being questioned over three separate sessions with four examiners in each section. Although the process has changed over the past 80 years, it remains an important part of Board certification and — to some — the continuing certification process. This article seeks to clear up some misconceptions and encourage readers to consider taking the Oral Certification Examination at the next opportunity. [READ MORE](#)

## 7 common questions in foot and ankle coding



American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

A previous article published in AAOS Now ("How to Avoid Common Mistakes When Coding Hand Procedures," March 2019) identified common coding issues for hand procedures. This article presents seven coding conundrums and frequently asked questions pertaining to foot and ankle procedures. [READ MORE](#)

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## CMS proposes to cover acupuncture for chronic low back pain for Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in approved studies



CMS.gov

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed to cover acupuncture for Medicare patients with chronic low back pain who are enrolled participants either in clinical trials sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or in CMS-approved studies. Currently, acupuncture is non-covered by Medicare. CMS conducted evidence reviews to inform today's proposal, and the agency recognizes that the evidence base for acupuncture has grown in recent years, but questions remain. [READ MORE](#)

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