

**Alberta Health**

**Alberta Aids to Daily Living  
Orthotic Benefits**  

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**Policy & Procedures Manual**

July 1, 2015



## Revision History

Description	Date
Minor wording changes throughout. Policy O-10 removed.	July 1, 2015
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# Policy O – 01

## Orthotic Benefits Background

### Policy Statement

The provider of orthotic benefits must be an Orthotic Specialty Assessor, as defined in Policy O-14. The Orthotic Specialty Assessor must be employed by a facility that has an agreement with AADL to provide Orthotic benefits.

Clients must meet general AADL criteria and specific clinical eligibility criteria for AADL orthotic benefits.

AADL orthotic benefits include, but are not exclusive to: spinal braces, hip control orthoses, ankle foot orthoses, knee ankle foot orthoses, knee braces, thoracic-hip-knee-ankle orthoses, shoulder, elbow and wrist braces, hand and finger orthoses.

## Policy O - 02

### Process for Obtaining Orthotic Benefits

#### Policy Statement

Clients and orthotists will follow the AADL procedure for obtaining and providing orthotic benefits.

#### Procedure

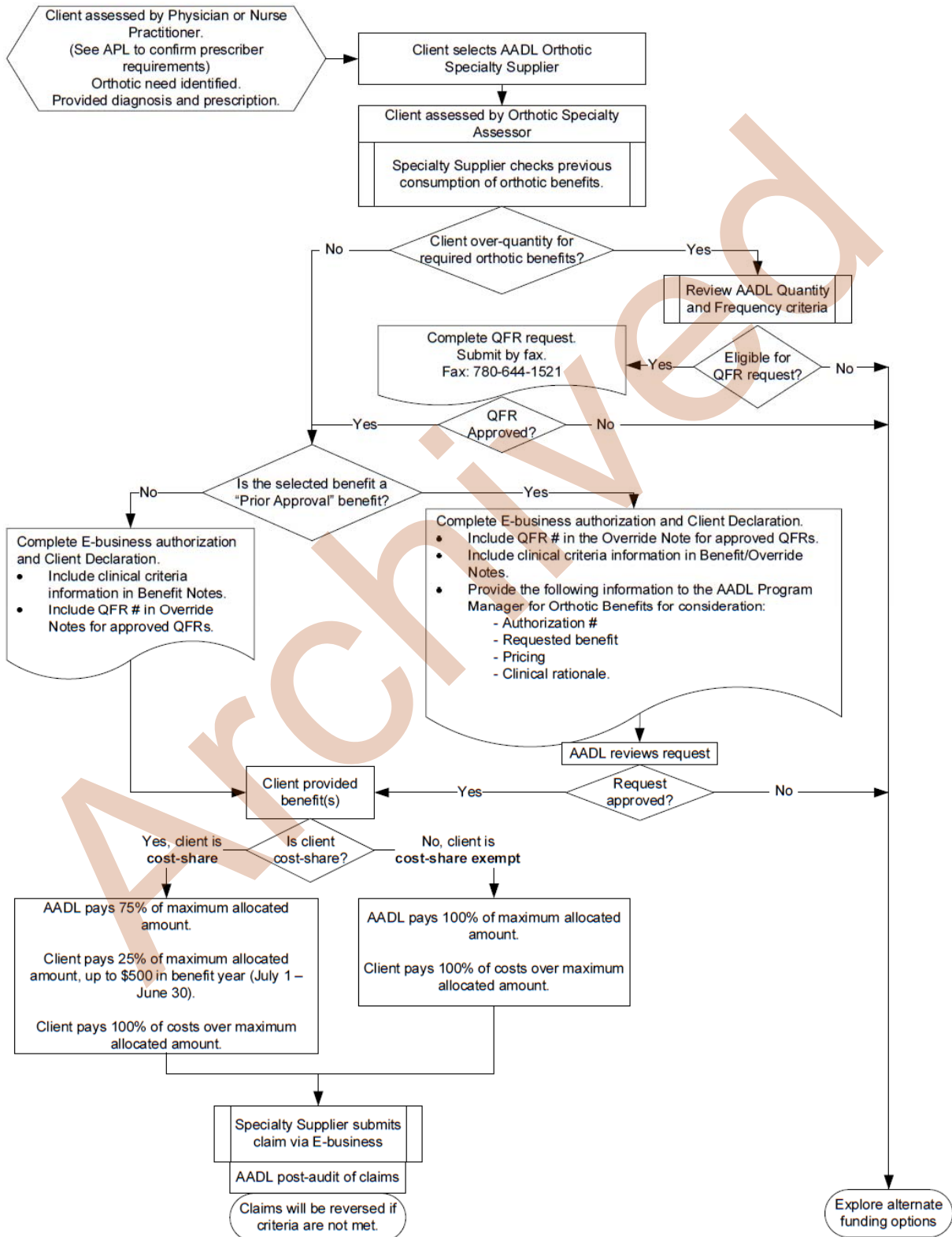
##### Clients:

1. Follow process outlined on page 7 of this policy.

##### Orthotists:

1. Follow process outlined on page 7 of this policy.

## Process for Obtaining Orthotic Benefits



# Policy O - 03

## Eligibility Criteria for Orthotic Benefits

### Policy Statement

Clients must meet the general eligibility criteria from the AADL Policy and Procedure Manual and must obtain a generic prescription (free of any vendor advertising) from a physician or nurse practitioner. The prescription is valid for three months from the date on the prescription.

The AADL Program does not fund orthotics used exclusively for sport or recreational activities.

### Procedure

#### Clients:

1. Obtain a prescription from a physician or nurse practitioner indicating the need for an Orthotic device. Refer to the approved product list as some benefits require prescriptions from specific specialist physicians.
2. Sign the “AADL Client Declaration” form.
3. Must seek alternative funding for orthotic devices if ineligible or if used for strenuous sport or recreational activities.

#### Orthotists:

1. Determine client eligibility.
2. Retain the original prescription and original signed client declaration on client file.
3. Do not accept prescriptions greater than three months old or with vendor advertising.



## Policy O - 04

### Functional Outcome Determination

#### Policy Statement

In consultation with the client, the Orthotist must determine the “Functional Outcome” that the client should be able to achieve with an orthotic device.

#### Procedure

##### Clients:

1. Upon receipt, may complete and return the Client Satisfaction Survey to AADL, if desired, to assist AADL in determining that benefits provided are meeting the identified outcomes.

##### Orthotists:

1. Indicate the Functional Outcome on the applicable E-business “Orthotic History” screen for each affected joint. The Orthotic Functional Outcomes are listed below.

##### AADL:

1. Gathers and analyses Functional Outcome data as part of ongoing program planning activities.

#### Functional Outcomes

Outcome #	Outcome Description
100	Restrict range of motion of a joint to reduce/prevent the need for surgical or medical treatment
101	Restrict range of motion of a joint to reduce/control tone or spasticity
102	Control spinal deformity (e.g., scoliosis)
103	Protection of a body part (e.g., helmet)
104	Improve function by providing stability of the joint
105	Improve function by positioning body part for activities of daily living
106	Improve function by assisting muscle weakness
107	Improve function by enabling lying, sitting, and standing (likely the more disabled client)
108	Improve function by enabling walking and/or increased walking efficiency/endurance
109	Facilitate healing of a body part
110	Reduce pain (e.g., arthritis-related)
111	Support soft tissue (e.g., hernia)
112	Repairs

## Policy O – 05

### Diagnostic Coding

#### Policy Statement

Diagnostic coding must be provided to assist in determining client eligibility for benefits.

#### Procedure

##### Orthotists:

1. Indicate the exact diagnostic code on the AADL E-business authorization form. Choices are listed in the drop down box on the AADL E-business “Create/Maintain” authorization screen.
2. If “Other” is used, the Orthotist must indicate the specific diagnosis in the AADL E-business Client Benefit note.

# Policy O – 06

## Choice of Orthotic Provider

### Policy Statement

Clients have a choice of Orthotic Specialty Supplier, unless they are inpatients in a healthcare facility, which employs a publicly funded Orthotist.

Exceptions are at the discretion of the healthcare facility.

### Procedure

#### Clients:

1. Select an Orthotic Specialty Supplier from the AADL approved Orthotic Vendor list.

#### Orthotists:

1. If in a healthcare facility, at discharge will advise the client they have a choice of Orthotic Specialty Supplier and provide a list of AADL approved Orthotic Vendors.

#### AADL:

1. Maintains a list of AADL approved Orthotic Vendors.

# Policy O – 07

## New Product Submission

### Policy Statement

New products may be submitted throughout the year.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Complete AADL Fee Guide Addition form available at <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AADL-Prosthetics-Orthotics-Fee-Guide-Addition.pdf> and submit it to the AADL Program Manager.

#### AADL:

1. Reviews request.
2. Adds the new product to the next Approved Product List if approved.

## Policy O – 08

### Orthotic Devices Quantity and Frequency Limits

#### Policy Statement

Clients are eligible for one orthotic device per joint every two years.

AADL acknowledges the growth and developmental needs of children and as such, provides an extra orthotic device within the two-year period to meet the child's evolving needs. The cost of a third orthotic device within the two-year period must be referred to alternative funding sources.

#### Procedure

##### Clients:

1. Follow the Quantity and Frequency Review (QFR) process as outlined in the general AADL Policy and Procedure Manual for quantities over the AADL maximums.
2. Is responsible for the cost of the device if the QFR is denied.

##### Orthotists:

1. Confirm client consumption on the AADL E-business "PHN Inquiry" screen:
  - If the client uses bilateral devices, contact the benefit clerk for the service dates of orthotic benefits provided for each limb.
2. Advise the client of quantity and frequency limits.
3. Documentation procedure:
  - If it is over two years since the client was provided a similar device – document the clinical rationale for replacing the orthotic device on the AADL E-business Client Benefit Note screen.
  - If it is prior to the two-year period since the client was provided with a similar device, follow QFR process as outlined in the AADL general Policy and Procedure Manual.

Approved QFR:

- Include QFR reference number in the override note.

Exceptions to submitting a QFR:

- New bilateral clients will be indicated as an over quantity. Indicate bilateral on override note.

- Bilateral clients after two years – indicate bilateral to AADL and the rationale for replacement.
- If the client is pediatric (under 18 years of age), indicate the clinical rationale for replacement in the override note for the second orthotic device in a two-year period. The cost of a third device is to be referred to alternate funding.

**AADL:**

1. Provides information on actual quantities and service dates to specialty supplier.
2. Audits overrides.
3. Reverses claims if claims are submitted to AADL without an approved QFR or appropriate override notes as outlined in this policy.

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# Policy O – 09

## Orthotic Device Repairs

### Policy Statement

Orthotic devices funded by the AADL Program are eligible for repair.

- The total cost of all repairs per device should not exceed 50 percent of the cost of a replacement device.
- The total cost of a repair to a component should not exceed 50 percent of the AADL maximum contribution for the component.
- Repairs over \$800 require prior approval from the AADL Prosthetics and Orthotics Program Manager.
- If a new device is prescribed within three months of a major repair (\$800.00), 50 percent of the cost of the repair will be deducted from the initial procedure on the cost of a new device.
- There is a separate repair catalogue number for knee braces.

### Procedure

#### Clients:

1. Take device to Orthotist for repair.

#### Orthotists:

1. Assess device to determine cost effectiveness of repairing.
2. The Client Benefit note for CAT# O514 must indicate the following documentation:
  - a. Description of repairs/modification procedures.
  - b. Number of labour hours and total cost e.g. 3 hours: 3x\$177.00 = \$531.00.
  - c. Cost of materials.
  - d. Total cost of repairs (labour hours and materials).
  - e. Percentage of total repair cost of device/component.
  - f. Base the percentage on replacement cost of the component, not the whole Orthotic device.

- g. Indicate the number of hours as the quantity on the authorization and invoice:
  - i. Example - 4 hours labor is quantity “4”.

Example – Modification to KAFO:

Cat# O514 – modify KAFO
1 hour- \$177.00, materials - \$ 78.00
Total cost - \$255.00, 8% of replacement cost of KAFO (\$3321.43)

- 3. Documentation in AADL E-business Client Benefit notes the materials used in the repair/modifications using catalogue number “O615”.
  - Example – O615 - materials \$78.00 – padding and lamination material.
  - a. Invoice quantity of one per repair/modification. A quantity of one is up to a maximum of \$300.
  - b. Indicate cost of materials only on the invoice.
- 4. Shipping and brokers fees where a component is:
  - a. Under warranty and is being repaired/replaced by the manufacturer:
    - i. No billing for “materials”, “shipping or brokerage fees”.
    - ii. Labor to remove, install or repair component may be submitted.
    - iii. Exceptions can be discussed with AADL.
  - b. Not under warranty and being replaced:
    - i. The component can be provided under the appropriate AADL catalogue number (shipping and brokerage fees are already included in the price).
  - c. Not under warranty and being repaired by the manufacturer:
    - i. Shipping and brokerage fees may be included under Cat# “O615”.
- 5. Activities not considered a repair benefit include:
  - a. Trialing new components.
  - b. Gait training.
  - c. Time to review a working functional device/component.

**AADL:**

- 1. AADL Program Manager will review any exceptions and approve or deny.



# Policy O – 11

## Changing Orthotic Providers

### Policy Statement

Clients must have orthotic benefits provided by only one Orthotic Specialty Supplier at a time.

### Procedure

#### Clients:

1. Responsible for providing current Orthotist the opportunity to provide a device that meets the client's needs.
2. Contact the AADL Program Manager regarding concerns on service or device.
3. Submit a formal "AADL Complaint" if applicable.  
<http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AADL-Complaint-Form.pdf>

#### Orthotists:

1. Check E-Business to verify if client has been provided orthotic benefits by AADL. If yes, contacts AADL benefit clerk to find out who was the previous Orthotic Specialty Supplier.
2. Refer client back to original Orthotic Specialty Supplier for ongoing service and follow-up with orthotic device.
  - a. If client refuses to return to previous provider, the Orthotist must not provide service to the client unless the client is willing to fund the services privately.
3. May choose to contact previous Orthotic Specialty Supplier to discuss transferring care to the new Orthotist.
  - a. Advise AADL Program Manager if agreement of a transfer of care is reached.
4. Do not submit a Quantity and Frequency Review for a request to switch Orthotic Specialty Suppliers.
5. Advise the client to submit a formal "AADL Complaint" if applicable.  
<http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AADL-Complaint-Form.pdf>
6. Contact AADL Program Manager for advice as required.

#### AADL:

1. Reviews client's concerns via formal complaint process.
2. Refers client to a multidisciplinary team for assessment if available.

# Policy O – 12

## Service Dates

### Policy Statement

The service date used for submitting claims for an orthotic device/component is the date the client actually receives the device or component.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Indicate the service date for each procedure/component on the claim according to the date the client received the benefit.

# Policy O – 13

## Statement of Account

### Policy Statement

Orthotists must provide every client with a statement of account for each orthotic service invoiced to the AADL Program. The statement of account must include the AADL contribution and cost-share portion of each orthotic benefit, even if the client's cost share is zero.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Provide client with a statement of account for AADL orthotic benefits when invoiced to the AADL Program.
2. For cost-share clients, identify the AADL contribution and the client's cost-share contribution for each orthotic service.
3. For cost-share exempt clients, identify AADL's contribution for each orthotic service.
4. Retain a copy of statement of account on client file.

#### AADL

1. Conducts audits to identify discrepancies of costs between the claims received and the Statement of Account received by the client.

# Policy O – 14

## Orthotic Suppliers Qualifications

### Policy Statement

Orthotic Specialty Assessors for AADL Orthotic Benefits must:

- Have successfully completed the certification exam for a Certified Orthotist via the Canadian Board for Certification of Prosthetists and Orthotists.
- Be registered as a “Certified Orthotist” who is a member in good standing with Orthotics Prosthetics Canada.
- Be employed by a facility with an agreement to provide AADL Orthotic Benefits.

In limited circumstances, AADL may consider approving Orthotic Specialty Assessors with other professional qualifications for a limited range of orthotic benefits. Consideration is only given to healthcare professionals with documented competency in the assessment and provision for the types of orthotic devices that are benefits of the AADL Program. Competency is defined by fulfillment of all of the following requirements to the satisfaction of AADL:

- Successful completion of an education program related to assessment and provision of orthotic devices.
- Current professional certification with an appropriate Alberta or Canada-based certification body.
- Ongoing membership in good standing with an appropriate Albertan or Canadian professional college or association.
- Be employed by a facility with an agreement to provide AADL Orthotic Benefits.

### Procedure

#### Orthotist Specialty Assessors:

1. Notify AADL when changing employment location.

#### AADL:

1. Verifies membership with the appropriate professional organization.
2. Provides a Specialty Assessor number.
3. Updates employment location information.

# Policy O – 15

## Orthotic Suppliers Roles and Responsibilities

### Policy Statement

Orthotic Specialty Suppliers are responsible for providing benefits and services to clients in accordance with the AADL policies and procedures. General roles and responsibilities include:

- Assessing clients.
- Determining eligibility to receive AADL benefits.
- Providing education to clients regarding the AADL program and device specific information.
- Supplies eligible clients with AADL benefits.
- Fabricating and providing benefits.
- Providing clients with follow-up service.
- Maintaining clinical notes.
- Submitting authorizations and invoices for benefits.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Conduct Assessment which includes:
  - a. Determines the client eligibility and cost-share status through:
    - i. History of provision of benefits.
    - ii. The cost-share status of clients.
    - iii. Obtaining appropriate physician or nurse practitioner prescription(s).
  - b. Recommend the most appropriate benefit that will meet the client's assessed needs.
  - c. Recommend the quantity of benefits required.
  - d. Explain cost-sharing and cost-share exemption policies to clients.
  - e. Explain to clients the quantity and frequency limit related to benefits.
  - f. Determine with the client the functional level that the device should enable the client to achieve.
  - g. Discuss client's expectations regarding functional outcomes of the device.

- h. Obtain client's signature on both the Client Declaration and the Validation Certification prior to provision of benefits.
2. Provide Benefits:
    - a. Provide only approved AADL Program benefits as per the current Approved Product List.
    - b. Ensure replacement items are only funded by AADL when the current device no longer meets the client's functional needs and/or is not cost effective to repair.
    - c. Obtain prior approval as necessary.
    - d. Advise a client of their responsibilities.
    - e. Educate clients regarding proper wear and care of their device.
    - f. Have client sign Validation Certificate for receipt of all components/devices.
    - g. Have client sign Validation Certificate confirming client satisfaction with complete device.
    - h. Provide a statement of account to the client for all AADL benefits provided and invoiced to the AADL Program.
  3. Provide Service:
    - a. Provides appropriate follow-up activity that will ensure benefits serve the purpose for which they were provided.
    - b. Do not bill AADL for additional service or modifications relating to the provided benefit for a period of ninety (90) days after the final fitting.
    - c. Ensures trained staff is accessible and available to clients.
    - d. Ensures defective supplies and equipment are replaced at no cost to the client or AADL.
    - e. Honours manufacturers' warranties.
    - f. Provides advice to clients.
    - g. Promptly resolves all errors relating to the assessment of a client's benefits (e.g., duplication of benefits, client's eligibility status, and assessment errors).
    - h. Resolves specialty supplier's errors at no cost to the client or AADL.
  4. Maintain Clinical Notes:
    - a. Maintains clinical notes for all patient encounters. Notes must be:
      - i. Date and time logged.
      - ii. Signed by a Certified Orthotist.

**AADL:**

1. Ensures Orthotic Specialty Supplier complies with roles, responsibilities and contractual obligations.
2. Conducts post-audit reviews and compliance with business practices.

# Policy O – 16

## Multidisciplinary Team Consultation

### Policy Statement

- Clients are assessed by a multidisciplinary team when appropriate. Recommendations for orthotic benefits may or may not result from the multidisciplinary team assessment.
- Clients are eligible for either a multidisciplinary team consultation or an off-site facility fee, not both, for the same device.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Invited by the multidisciplinary team or recommended by AADL to attend the consultation as a functional member of the team.
2. Only attend the consultation relevant to his/her specific client.
3. Obtain client signature on the AADL Client Declaration Form available at:  
<http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AADL-Client-Declaration.pdf>
4. Submit authorization under catalogue # O403, according to E-business procedure.
5. Must indicate name/location of team visit and justification for attendance in the benefit note.
6. Invoice AADL a maximum of one hour per client consult with multidisciplinary team.

#### Clients:

1. Attend multidisciplinary team meeting.
2. Sign the AADL “Client Declaration” Form.
3. Pay cost-share portion if applicable.

#### AADL:

1. Conducts periodic reviews of compliance with policy.

## Policy O – 17

### Schedule Simplification – Generic Catalogue Numbers

#### Policy Statement

Determination of pricing of orthotic benefits is administratively efficient while ensuring client's functional needs are met.

AADL uses generic catalogue numbers for some benefits.

A generic catalogue number:

- Represents a specific type of benefit, not a specific product or manufacturer.
- Has a designated AADL maximum contribution amount. Costs over the maximum are considered an upgrade.
- Maximum contribution amounts are determined by the following:
  - Labour hours
  - Charge-out rate
  - Material/manufacturer component cost
  - Mark-up cost on materials
  - Shipping costs.
- The price invoiced to AADL is determined using the material cost/manufacturer invoice cost. Refer to the Approved Product List for the pricing procedure.

#### Procedure

##### AADL:

1. Reviews individual catalogue numbers by orthotic schedule group to identify opportunities for simplification. Comparable products that meet the generic description may be combined under the generic catalogue number.
2. Sets generic catalogue number price based on the manufacturer component cost of a benchmark item.
3. Monitors the generic catalogue number pricing application.



**Specialty Suppliers:**

1. Determine price of generic catalogue number by referring to the Approved Product List.
2. Document on E-business benefit note the manufacturer's name and part number, component cost and price to be invoiced to AADL.

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# Policy O – 18

## Off-Site Facility Fee

### Policy Statement

AADL will assist in funding Orthotists to provide orthotic benefits to clients who are in a healthcare facility and are non-transportable or medically fragile and thus unable to travel to an orthotic facility. This is not to be used for reasons of convenience: such as home visits, or if the Orthotist operates a clinic in an alternate city. Clients are eligible for either one off-site facility fee or one multidisciplinary team consultation fee per device, not both.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Assess client or fits client with an orthotic device at the healthcare facility.
2. Submit authorization under catalogue # O405 according to e-business procedures.
3. Must indicate name of off-site facility and justification for off-site facility visit on benefit note.
4. May combine off-site facility fee on an Authorization created for other orthotic benefits provided as a result of the off-site facility visit.
5. May submit an Authorization for only an off-site facility visit and obtains client signature on the AADL Client Declaration Form available at <http://www.health.alberta.ca/documents/AADL-Client-Declaration.pdf>
6. Invoice AADL one hour per client if a single client is seen at the off-site facility.
7. Invoice AADL a cost that is less than one hour per client if several clients are seen during the same off-site facility visit.

#### Clients:

1. Sign the AADL “Client Declaration” form.
2. Pay cost-share portion if applicable.

#### AADL:

1. Conducts periodic reviews of compliance with policy.
2. Reverses claims as appropriate.

# Policy O – 19

## Ninety (90) Day Follow-Up

### Policy Statement

AADL will not fund any modifications to an orthotic device within ninety (90) days of provision of the device. AADL expects that the Orthotist will provide all necessary follow-up to ensure the device is able to be used for the purpose intended without additional cost to AADL or the client.

If the Client experiences a significant medical change and the device is no longer functional and is no longer meeting the Client's needs a Quantity and Frequency Review (QFR) request should be submitted to AADL. See the AADL General Policies and Procedures.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Provide timely follow-up to ensure the orthotic device is able to be used for the purpose intended.
  - a. Do not bill AADL or the client for follow-up.
2. Submit a QFR if there has been a significant medical change and the device is no longer functional and is no longer meeting the Client's needs under 2 years.
3. Submit authorization under the repair catalogue # O514 only more than ninety days after the provision of the device.
  - a. Ninety days is calculated starting the day the client signs the satisfaction section of the Validation Certificate.

#### Clients:

1. Pay cost-share portion if applicable.

#### AADL:

1. Monitors compliance with this policy.
2. Reviews QFR requests per the AADL General Policies and Procedures.

## Policy O – 20

### Approved Orthotic Supplier List

#### Policy Statement

AADL will only provide funding to eligible clients who receive their orthotic devices from the “Approved List of Orthotic Vendors”.

#### Procedure

##### Clients:

1. Select an orthotic specialty supplier from the current Orthotic Vendor list available upon request or on the AADL website.

##### AADL:

1. Provides clients with information in writing upon request, or refers to AADL website.
2. Maintains list of approved orthotic specialty suppliers.

# Policy O – 21

## Validation Certificate

### Policy Statement

The Validation Certificate is a document intended to ensure accountability and clarify expectations for all parties involved in the provision of an Orthotic device.

The Validation Certificate is a three part form, in that the client will sign this form on three separate occasions:

1. At time of assessment: acknowledging agreement to the type of device being provided.
2. During fabrication of device: acknowledging receipt of major components.
3. After final provision of the device: acknowledging satisfactory fit and function of final device.

The AADL Program Manager should be contacted if the client refuses or feels they are unable to sign the form.

A Validation Certificate is not required for minor repairs or adjustments or if supplying additional soft supplies after original fitting.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Discuss device to be provided and ensure client understands their responsibilities.
2. Have client sign first section of Validation Certificate prior to starting fabricating the device.
  - a. Provide client with a copy of the Validation Certificate if requested and retain the original on the client's file.
3. Upon providing any components to the client, have the client sign the second section of the Validation Certificate to confirm receipt. For example, after fitting an AFO, have the client sign the Validation Certificate even if further modifications are required.
4. Once the device is completed and the final fitting complete, the client must sign the Validation Certificate to confirm satisfactory fit and function of the device.
  - a. The client should be provided with a reasonable length of time to trial the device prior to being asked to sign the Validation Certificate. For some clients, the trial period may be very short. A client may be able to sign both the second and third sections on the same day.

- b. The client should only sign once all concerns are addressed.
- c. The Orthotist should not submit a claim for the final components or procedures until the last section of the Validation Certificate is signed by the client, which is considered the service date for these components and/or procedures.
- d. If the client fails to return for the final fitting or refuses to sign the final section of the Validation Certificate, the Orthotist may claim for a portion of the cost of the procedure and/or components as follows:
  - Provide AADL with a copy of the Validation Certificate signed in the first two sections.
  - Provide evidence of attempts to resolve issues or contact client for follow-up.
  - Provide catalogue numbers and cost for unclaimed items to AADL. AADL will provide billable amount.
- e. Clients who are unable to return for follow-up may sign and submit the final section of the Validation Certificate by alternate methods (i.e., fax, mail).

**Clients:**

1. Fully read and understand the Validation Certificate prior to signing it.
2. Contact the AADL Program Manager if they are unable to sign the Validation Certificate.

**AADL:**

1. Responds to questions and concerns from orthotists or clients regarding the Validation Certificate.
2. May request copies of the completed Validation Certificates.
3. Reviews cases of client refusal to sign Validation Certificate.

# Policy O – 22

## Orthotic Residents

### Policy Statement

AADL Orthotic Specialty Suppliers may employ the services of an orthotic student, resident and/or intern for the provision of AADL Orthotic Benefits.

Orthotic residents, students and interns:

- Are not eligible for AADL Specialty Assessor numbers.
- Are permitted to provide benefits to AADL clients only under direct supervision of a certified orthotist. This includes conducting the assessment, developing the treatment plan, manufacturing or modifying orthotic devices, fitting orthotic devices and follow-up activities.

### Procedure

#### Orthotists:

1. Must be on-site and present and for all provision of benefits to AADL clients.
2. Are responsible for all benefits provided by orthotic residents.
3. Are responsible for all E-Business activity.
4. Are responsible for documenting their involvement in the client notes.
5. Ensure clinical notes clearly indicate who provided the orthotic benefits to the client.