

**AOTA HILL WEEK
(DAY)!!**

TONIGHT'S GOALS

- Learn about the importance of advocacy for our profession!
- Learn about issues facing our profession
- Write letters to congress in support of AOTA's legislative agenda
- Be together as BSOT student community



ADVOCACY!

WHAT IS IT ANYWAY?
ANY IDEAS?

ADVOCACY

WHAT IS IT ANYWAY??

- Advocacy is the act of influencing decisions within political, economic and social institutions
- OT 10 Commandments (OT Code of Ethics)
 - Justice: OT personnel shall promote fairness and objectivity in the provision of OT services
 - Advocacy must happen for ourselves AND our clients!

HOW TO BE AN ADVOCATE

- Organizing
- Educate Legislators
- Protest!
- Lobby
- Educate yourself/peers
- Media campaign
- So many more ways!

WHAT DOES AOTA HAVE TO DO WITH PUBLIC POLICY ANYWAY?



AOTA ADVOCACY AND POLICY

- Congressional affairs
- AOTPAAC
- Federal Regulatory Affairs
- Health Care Reform Implementation
- State Policy

AOTA HILL WEEK ISSUES

- OT via Telehealth for Medicare Beneficiaries
- Education Funding
- Student Loan Relief
- Medicare Payment Cuts

- ***Interesting Hill Week Event: Thursday, September 17th**-Live conversation with members of Congress or their staff led by AOTA staff & volunteer leadership.
 - Accessing information and schedule will be shared with registrants

TONIGHT'S ISSUES

- Education Funding
- Student Loan Relief
- 2021 Medicare Payment Cuts

EDUCATION FUNDING+ STUDENT LOAN RELIEF

- Congress provided quick and robust funding to the nation with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.
- Congress needs to pass more funding to continue this coverage
- Schools are cutting funds to arts/special education/athletics to fund PPE and other requirements to be safe in school during Covid.
- Urge Congress to include additional and specific funding in the next COVID response package.
 - OT in K-12 schooling
 - Early intervention in the community
 - Student loan relief
 - Congress should place federal student loans in automatic forbearance, lowering their interest rate to 0%, and considering those months as qualified payments for federal student loan repayment programs

2021 MEDICARE CUTS

- 2021 proposed Medicare Physician Fee Schedule rule, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recommends significant payment reductions to more than three dozen health care professions, including occupational therapy.
- CMS is using the revenue from these cuts to offset an increase in payments for primary care physicians.
- As a part of these payment reductions, occupational therapy practitioners are facing up to a **9% cut** to Medicare Part B reimbursement, despite ongoing advocacy with Congress, the Department of Health and Human Services, CMS, and the Office of Management and Budget by AOTA, the American Physical Therapy Association, and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, and multiple physician specialty groups throughout 2019 and 2020.
- If adopted in the final rule, the cuts will be effective January 1, 2021, at a time when providers and patients will still be feeling effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- These cuts are the result of a Medicare statutory requirement known as “budget neutrality” which requires that any increase in costs to the Medicare program must result in decreased spending elsewhere in the Medicare program.

EMBODIED EMPOWERMENT!



TAKE ACTION!

- Medicare Cuts:
 - [Write to Congress](#)
 - [Public Comment](#)
- Education Funding:
 - [Write an email to your Congressperson](#)
 - [Call your Congressperson](#)
 - [Tag your congressperson in a Tweet](#)
- Student Loan Relief:
 - [Write a letter to your Congressperson](#)
 - [Tag your Congressperson in a Tweet](#)

*Advocacy tip: Share YOUR story

- In your letter/phone call/tweet share why this issue matters to YOU!

NEXT RELEVANT EVENT!

- Who: **Dr. Sarah McKinnon**, OTD, OTR/L, BCPR, MPA, AOTPAC Board of Directors
- What: **Occupational Therapy, AOTPAC, and Advocacy**
- Where: Zoom
- When: **Wednesday, September 23 from 7-8pm**
- Why: Dr. McKinnon will be speaking about her experience with OT and advocacy on AOTPAC, sharing resources about legislation and advocacy, and providing more information on understanding the legislative process.

Let's impress Dr. McKinnon with our advocacy skills!