

ORTHOPEDIC PRACTICE ADMINISTRATORS:

The Value and Integration of Certified Athletic Trainers (ATs)

ATPPS[®]
Athletic Trainers in the
PHYSICIAN PRACTICE SOCIETY

AAOE

American **Association**
of Orthopaedic Executives

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of Orthopaedic Executives

Introduction

This booklet aims to provide orthopedic practice administrators with comprehensive insights into the benefits of incorporating certified athletic trainers (ATs) into their practices. It outlines the roles, responsibilities, and qualifications of ATs, along with actionable strategies for successful integration and optimization of their skills to enhance practice efficiency and patient satisfaction.

Why Hire Athletic Trainers?

Versatility and Expertise

Successfully recruiting and hiring new physicians is integral to the long-term success and growth of orthopedic practices. Establishing competitive starting salaries and signing bonuses is one of the most challenging aspects of recruitment. This report provides data on starting salaries, signing bonuses, and moving expenses between 2018 and 2022 to provide insights into compensation strategies for new orthopedic physicians. Please see the AAOE Benchmarking Results to examine compensation data for individual physician specialties and for identified geographic regions and metropolitan population sizes.

- **Key Benefits:**
- Advanced knowledge in orthopedic braces and devices.
 - Ability to educate both patients and providers on various options.
 - Capacity to function in multiple roles, from clinical assistance to surgical support.

Implementing Athletic Trainers in Your Practice

Understanding State Practice Act Rules and Regulations

Before integrating ATs, it's crucial to comprehend state rules, regulations, and practice acts. These regulations vary significantly, with some states allowing broader scopes of practice than others. For instance, certain states restrict ATs from performing invasive procedures or working in operating rooms. Visit <https://atpps.org/state-practice-acts/> to review state practice acts.

Role and Scope of Practice

➤ Clinical Roles

- Assisting with patient throughput.
- Optimizing physician schedules.
- Providing patient education and post-operative care.

➤ Surgical Support:

- Prepping operating rooms.
- Assisting in surgeries, especially in non-billable roles.
- Enhancing surgical block time efficiency.

➤ Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Management:

- Managing DME programs to increase revenue.
- Educating patients and providers about orthopedic devices.
- Tracking DME usage and compliance to optimize practice efficiency.

Hiring and Onboarding Certified Athletic Trainers

Qualifications and Certifications

Look for candidates with advanced skills and certifications, such as the Board of Certification for Athletic Trainers' specialty certification in orthopedics (BCS-O). This credential ensures that the AT has a deeper orthopedic knowledge and specialized skills.

Onboarding Process

➤ Orientation:

- Introduce ATs to the roles of all staff members.
- Familiarize them with clinic workflows and systems.

➤ Skill Development:

- Provide training in casting techniques and DME management.
- Ensure ATs understand state-specific rules and regulations and practice acts.

➤ Competency Checklists:

- Develop checklists based on existing standards for non-physician first assistants.
- Customize checklists to meet the specific needs of your practice.

Maximizing the Impact of Certified Athletic Trainers

Indirect Revenue Generation

ATs can significantly enhance indirect revenue by optimizing clinic efficiency. They handle pre- and post-operative patient education, allowing physicians and physician assistants to focus on billable activities. This role not only improves patient satisfaction but also increases the number of billable visits.

Tracking and Reporting

► Track the following metrics to measure the impact of ATs:

- Number of patients seen.
- Diagnostic and imaging orders entered.
- Surgical volume and outcomes.
- Patient satisfaction scores.

Advocating for Athletic Trainers

► Communicate the value of ATs by highlighting their ability to:

- Increase clinic throughput and efficiency.
- Provide specialized orthopedic care.
- Enhance patient education and satisfaction.

Conclusion

Integrating certified athletic trainers into your orthopedic practice can lead to significant improvements in patient care, practice efficiency, and revenue generation. By understanding their roles, ensuring proper onboarding, and utilizing their full potential, you can create a more dynamic and effective healthcare team. For further resources and support, visit the Athletic Trainers in Physician Practice Society (ATPPS) website.

Contact Information

For more information on integrating certified athletic trainers into your practice, contact:

ATPPS™

Athletic Trainers in Physician Practice Society (ATPPS)

info@atpps.org www.atpps.org

AAOE

American Alliance for Orthopaedic Executives (AAOE)

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About this Booklet

This booklet provides an overview of the key aspects to consider when hiring and integrating Athletic Trainers into orthopedic practices, drawing from the extensive knowledge shared during the recent webinar. Use this guide to make informed decisions and optimize the roles of ATs within your healthcare team.

This booklet was produced with the transcript from a webinar that representatives of the Athletic Trainers in Physician Practice Society conducted with the American Alliance of Orthopaedic Executives in June 2024. Artificial intelligence was used to summarize and distill the salient points from that webinar; this was then reviewed by the speakers for accuracy.

Speakers

► *Jennifer Kitano, MS, ATC, BCS-O, Certified Athletic Trainer* *Maine Medical Partners Orthopedics and Sports Medicine*

Jennifer Kitano began her athletic training career by receiving her Bachelor of Science degree in Athletic Training from Boston University and her Master of Science degree in Kinesiology and Health Promotion from the University of Kentucky. Following her academic career, Jennifer worked as an instructor in entry-level athletic training education while also working as a staff athletic trainer for Division II and Division III athletics.

In 2008, Jennifer completed the Athletic Trainer Physician Extender Residency Program at the Steadman Clinic in Vail, CO, and then served on their staff as an athletic trainer in clinic, surgery, and US Snowboarding events with Dr. Thomas Hackett. In 2013, Jennifer created the Physician Practice Workgroup while serving as the District 1 representative on the Committee on Practice Advancement as part of the National Athletic Trainer's Association.

Jennifer co-directed the Athletic Trainers in Physician Practice NATA Pre-Conference Workshop from 2013-2015 and has lectured at the event on multiple occasions. Jennifer served as a contributor to the Orthopedic Specialty Certification Practice Analysis for the creation of the first specialty certification within the Board of Certification. Jennifer is a founding board member of the Athletic Trainers in the Physician Practice Society. She has served as the Education Chair and Secretary previously and currently serves as an at-large board member for the organization. Jennifer currently works at Maine Medical Partners Orthopedics and Sports Medicine as an athletic trainer in the physician clinic and orthopedic surgery.

► *JJ Wetherington, MS, ATC, BCS-O* *Certified Athletic Trainer and Residency Program Director, St. Luke's Health System*

JJ Wetherington MS, LAT, ATC is a clinical athletic trainer for a fellowship-trained sports medicine surgeon at St. Luke's Sports Medicine in Boise, ID. In addition to his clinical duties, he serves as a preceptor for St. Luke's CAATE-accredited orthopedic residency program. His professional career began in 2009 at Flagler College where he provided care for the men's soccer and baseball teams. In 2014, JJ went on to further his training by completing an orthopedic athletic training residency at St. Luke's Sports Medicine.

Following his residency, JJ was recruited to Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids, MI, to develop an athletic training residency along with his duties as a clinical athletic trainer. JJ served as program director from 2015 to 2017. In 2017, JJ returned to St. Luke's to work clinically and in the operating room specializing in shoulder pathologies. Additionally, JJ is currently an adjunct faculty member at AT Still University and affiliate faculty at Indiana State University for both of their DAT programs.

Historically, JJ served as the co-leader of the NATA's Committee on Practice Advancement (COPA) Athletic Trainers in the Physician Practice Workgroup. Currently, he serves the athletic training profession in numerous capacities within many members of the strategic alliance. JJ is currently serving the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) as a member of the Standards Committee and as a site visitor for residency programs. He is currently serving the Board of Certification (BOC) as a member of the Specialty Council.

Additionally, for the BOC, he has worked on the practice analysis and exam generation of the orthopedic specialty certification. He also serves as the vice president of the Athletic Trainers in Physician Practice Society (ATPPS). He has authored and contributed to numerous peer-reviewed and professional publications focusing on athletic training specialization and athletic training residency programs.

JJ is a sought-after speaker with multiple presentations nationally on athletic training specialization, improving physician practice efficiencies, and the implementation and utilization of athletic trainers. JJ is also a section editor for Clinical Practice in Athletic Training. JJ earned his bachelor's degree in athletic training in 2007 from Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory, North Carolina, and a post-professional master's degree in athletic training in 2009 from Indiana University in Bloomington.

► ***Allyson Hoops, MAT, ATC, Certified Athletic Trainer, DME Coordinator***
Northern Ohio Medical Specialists – NOMS Healthcare

Allyson Hoops graduated from The University of Findlay in 2010 with a Bachelor's Degree in Strength and Conditioning and a Master's Degree in Athletic Training. She obtained a job with PT Services in Fremont, OH shortly after graduation and worked as the Wellness Coordinator and an outreach Athletic Trainer. While with PT Services, she worked with Lakota High School, Old Fort High School, and Clyde High School.

Allyson left PT Services in 2015 to move to Columbus and work at The Ohio State Wexner Medical Center in their Sports Medicine Department. She spent a year working with the Ohio State team physicians and decided to leave Ohio State for a new opportunity at Northern Ohio Medical Specialists (NOMS). Allyson was asked to create and build the DME department, work as an athletic trainer in physician practice, and cover Clyde High School.

In the physician practice, she evaluates and treats patients in a family medicine office that has three Physicians and 10 Certified Nurse Practitioners. Allyson manages the DME department with 40 locations consisting of orthopedic, podiatry, and sports medicine offices. Lastly, she covers all sporting events at Clyde High School.