AAO Council on Orthodontic Benefits Report
June 2026

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The AAO Council on Orthodontic Benefits met in person in June 2026. This was my first meeting as the GLAO representative. I have big shoes to fill after Dr. Tasha Hall's successful tenure with the Council.

We had a very productive meeting and are excited about the continued momentum. The Council remains focused on staying at the forefront of insurance-related developments, developing useful resources for AAO members, and pursuing code revisions that better reflect the needs of a modern orthodontic practice.

Important Topics Discussed as well as Action Items of the Council Include:

1. Insurance/Industry Collaboration
   a) Council members continue to participate in industry meetings, including the National Association of Dental Plans (NADP), ADA Code Maintenance Committee (CMC), and American Association of Dental Consultants (AADC) meetings, to stay informed about changes in the dental insurance industry and maintain relationships with insurance industry representatives.
   b) The Council discussed the importance of continuing to build long-term relationships with representatives at the ADA CMC, particularly as the AAO works to advance orthodontic-specific code proposals. The council unanimously motioned that the Board of Trustee's consider monetary compensation of $5,000 to remunerate the COB Code Consultant for their services which extend beyond the typical volunteer duties. Payment should be conditioned on attendance to the CMC, NADP, and AADC meetings. Again, the priority here is to build long-term relationships at these meetings.
   c) The Council will continue monitoring the use of AI by insurance companies in claims review, as discussed at the recent AADC meeting.
2. Member Education Resources
   a) The Council continues to develop educational resources to help members better understand orthodontic insurance and coding. The Council was happy with the attendance at the presentation in Orlando and aims to continue to educate members on the existence of the Council and how it can benefit them.
   b) The Council unanimously approved changing the name of Coding Corner to "Claim Game: Navigating Orthodontic Insurance." in order to draw more attention and engage the audience at future Annual sessions.
   c) The Council discussed the importance of providing practical, case-specific examples of new coding changes, including examples of appropriate and inappropriate use of new codes.
   d) The Council discussed a possible session at the Winter Conference in order to help

educate members on the 2027 changes to the CDT. More information on the changes coming in 2027 can be found here.
e) The Council is also working on resources to help AAO members better understand the process of joining and leaving insurance networks.

3. TINA/Member Benefits
   a) The Council continues to be encouraged by the success of TINA, the AAO's insurance and coding chatbot.
   b) Since its launch in summer 2025, TINA has answered approximately 1,300 member questions with no notable reports of issues.
   c) TINA is averaging approximately 20 daily active sessions, demonstrating continued value in providing members with immediate coding and insurance guidance. Additional support materials are being developed for billing teams.
   d) Larger dental groups and OSOs/DSOs are beginning to adopt TINA more rapidly than smaller, private practices.
4. CDT Code Review/Proposed Changes
   a) The Council reviewed the CDT code changes and discussed ways to proactively educate members about the changes.
   b) The Council discussed the need for case/patient-specific examples and additional resources to help members understand how new codes should be used.
   c) Discussion also included whether Phase I treatment should utilize comprehensive or limited treatment codes, possible changes to the Limited Treatment codes, and the need to update TINA regarding D8020 vs. D8070.
   d) The Council will work with AAO staff to develop additional educational materials regarding the new codes, including a potential handout for Winter Conference and an updated CDT At-a-Glance resource.
5. Medically Necessary Orthodontic Care
   a) The Council discussed the AAO's current definition of Medically Necessary Orthodontic Care and corresponding AutoQualifiers.
   b) The Council agreed that the AutoQualifiers should remain evidence-driven and be updated as new evidence becomes available.
   c) A subcommittee was formed to review the history and current language of the AAO's definition of Medically Necessary Orthodontic Care and corresponding AutoQualifiers and make recommendations for next steps.
   i) The subcommittee will be chaired by Dr. Mary Cooke and will report back to the Council by August 15, 2026.

I thank you for the opportunity to serve on the Council. I look forward to the continued work of the Council and the resources we will be able to provide to AAO members. Please let me know if you have any questions!

Respectfully submitted,



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GLAO Representative to the AAO Council on Orthodontic Benefits