GLAO
THE GREAT LAKES ASSOCIATION OF ORTHODONTISTS

Council on Orthodontic Practice, September 2026

Chairman, Adam Welmerink presided over the in-person meeting on September 26, 2026. COOP has one in-person meeting in the fall, one virtual meeting in the summer, and one virtual meeting early in the calendar year.

At the meeting, we received several updates from the AAO Learning Team:

1. Webinar attendance has doubled in the last two years compared to previous years. Webinars are on the 2nd Tuesday (Thinking Tuesday) of each month and generally feature a webinar for doctors and a webinar for teams on the same day
2. COOP members have been involved in several steps of developing the Learning Management System Platform which is a part of AAO's Tech Transformation. The new LMS is slated to be operational on June 1st of next year. There will be a pause in the webinar schedule as information is transferred over to the new platform from the old CE library. The new LMS will feature on-demand CE, webinars, podcasts, and video shorts.
3. We discussed potential new AAO learning subscription plans at our meeting for orthodontists and teams

UGOATF: Some members of COOP were on a special AAO-appointed task force; the Universal Guidelines of Orthodontic Assisting Task Force this past year. This task force developed a list of 74 tasks orthodontic assistants perform in orthodontic practices. We discussed and decided on a two-tier credentialling categorization: entry-level and advanced tasks. 54 of the tasks were labeled as entry-level and 20 were labeled as advanced. Advanced level tasks were characterized by the need for advanced training, or enhanced risk to patient safety if not performed correctly. This information will be used for advocacy and to investigate task-oriented training and credentialing.

2026-27 Subcommittees and scope of work:
Content Review & Podcasts: LeCadre, Goodman, Helms, Welmerink
Will continue to review existing AAO content to move to new software or turn into short audio podcasts. Identify gaps in content to develop new webinars or request for future annual sessions.

Video Shorts & Webinars: Hubbard, Phillis, LaFerla, Hammen, Dong

Work with AAO staff to schedule and moderate Thinking Tuesday webinars. Identify topics that would be good content for short videos, use existing content to make videos or recommend development of new videos.

Practice Management Resources: Phillis, LeCadre, Goodman, Welmerink
Review Office Design Series, receive requests and update/create new forms, review sustainability efforts.

Ortho Team Resources: Helms, LaFerla, Hubbard, Hamman
Identify and develop resources to help practices recruit and retain quality, well-trained teams. Investigate potential partnerships for the AAO to participate in to provide team benefits.

COOP has edited language for a revised AAO Informed Consent Video. Development is still in progress.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact me at lrhelms@sbcglobal.net

Thank you for allowing me to represent the GLAO on this AAO Council,
Sincerely,
Lana R. Helms