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BOC Certified Orthotic Fitter (COF®) Scope of Practice

I. Definitions

A. Practice of Orthotics

Orthotics is the practice, pursuant to a physician's order, of addressing medical conditions of the lower limbs, upper limbs, and spinal anatomical structure. Drawing on knowledge of biomechanics and a variety of devices and components, the Orthotic Fitter may measure, fit, and adjust prefabricated (custom fitted) orthoses appropriate to the conditions presented. Follow-up appointments are required to evaluate the efficacy of the orthosis, make adjustments / service the devices as necessary, and promote patient compliance with the goal of achieving desired outcomes.

B. Certified Orthotic Fitter

A BOC Certified Orthotic Fitter is an entry-level professional whose competence in fitting prefabricated (custom fitted) and/or non-custom fabricated orthoses, is evaluated and verified by the Board of Certification/Accreditation.

C. Orthotic Devices

"Orthotic Devices/Modalities" include ankle-foot orthosis, knee-ankle-foot orthosis, hip-knee-ankle-foot orthosis, hip orthosis, knee orthosis, cervical orthosis, thoracic and lumbar orthosis, wrist-hand orthosis, shoulder-elbow orthosis, foot orthosis, and gradient compression garments. An Orthotic Fitter fits prefabricated (custom fitted) and/or non-custom fabricated orthotic devices designed to provide for the support, alignment, prevention, and/or correction of neuromuscular or musculoskeletal disease, injury, or deformity.

II. General Requirements for a Certified Orthotic Fitter

To become certified as an Orthotic Fitter, a candidate must meet initial educational requirements and pass a comprehensive written Multiple Choice examination (MCE) given by the Board of Certification/ Accreditation (BOC). Once certified, an Orthotic Fitter must meet continuing education and annual renewal requirements to maintain BOC certification. The BOC-certified Orthotic Fitter must also adhere to a code of ethics designed to ensure a comprehensive scope of professional competence and deportment. A certified Orthotic Fitter's activities must reflect his/her certification(s) and education.

III. Roles of an Orthotic Fitter

Patient Assessment

Ascertain physician/clinician's diagnosis, gather information, examine patient, and evaluate. Determine patient's realistic expectations and consult with clinician as appropriate. A clinician is defined as any healthcare provider who has the legal and/or licensed authority in the state to order or prescribe medical care.

Implementation

Select appropriate orthosis, device(s), measure, assemble, and apply orthosis to patient. Modify, adjust and conduct trial fittings. Facilitate patient's understanding and conduct appropriate follow-up. Orthotic Fitters are authorized to treat primary diagnoses as provided by the physician/clinician.

Practice Management
Comply with universal precaution procedures and occupational safety and health rules. Document all patient matters and communicate with other professionals.

Professional Development and Responsibility
Adhere to legal and ethical Scope of Practice, participate in continuing education, fulfill civic responsibilities, participate in research as appropriate, and educate the public and health professionals on available orthotic services. Refer to allied healthcare practitioners when patient/customer presents with medical conditions that require custom-fitted orthotic devices, prefabricated, or non-custom orthoses that are outside of this scope of practice.

IV. Miscellaneous

A. Geographic Scope
The geographic scope of the certified orthotic fitter program is the United States.

B. Setting
Certified Orthotic Fitters can practice in DME businesses, pharmacies, chiropractic offices, and any other businesses that work with customers who need prefabricated (custom fitted) and/or non-custom fabricated orthoses.

C. Population
There are at least 10,000 possible orthotic fitters in practice.

D. Test Administration Modality
The Certified Orthotic Fitter exam is given as a computer based test.