

## **Hanger Institute for Clinical Research and Education Releases 2025–2026 Annual Report, Highlighting Landmark Advances in Orthotic and Prosthetic Care**

**AUSTIN, Texas- May 12, 2026-** The Hanger Institute for Clinical Research and Education today released its [2025–2026 Annual Report](#), revealing significant strides in evidence-based orthotic and prosthetic (O&P) care. This year's report documents how rigorous research is being translated into real-world clinical improvements and highlights major advancements in understanding patient outcomes, optimizing clinical decision-making, and shaping the future of access in O&P.

"Behind every data point in this report is an opportunity to better understand the people we serve and the care they deserve," said Chief Clinical Officer Shane Wurdeman, PhD, FAAOP(D). "By aligning research, shared decision-making, and advocacy, we are helping build a future in which orthotic and prosthetic care is more accessible, more personalized, and more responsive to individual goals."

### **Breakthrough Research Across Key Clinical Areas**

#### **Lower Limb Orthotic Care for a High Need Population**

Conducted in partnership with the University of Washington, new research helps define the complex mobility, pain, and safety challenges experienced by lower limb orthosis users in the United States. These findings reinforce the importance of individualized orthotic care for a population that may otherwise face even greater limitations in function, independence, and quality of life.

The Institute also advanced the Orthotic Patient Reported Outcomes–Mobility (OPRO-M) measure, now supported by peer-reviewed evidence of strong construct validity and test-retest reliability—poised to become a foundational clinical assessment tool.

#### **Lower Limb Prosthetic Optimization**

Research demonstrated that prosthetic optimization – including socket replacement, alignment refinement, and appropriate component selection – can produce meaningful improvements in mobility, satisfaction, quality of life, and participation.

#### **Strengthening the O&P Workforce**

The Institute advanced a team-based care model showing how trained clinical aides and certified assistants boost clinic efficiency, freeing clinicians for high-impact patient work.

The national O&P Residency Program—which has trained over 950 residents since 1996—underwent strategic restructuring, transitioning to a centralized training model with new

advisory councils and expanded board exam preparation. The program now supports 150 NCOPE-approved sites and 395 mentors.

### **A Year of Impact**

Institute members presented at major conferences including the International Society of Prosthetics and Orthotics World Congress, the American Orthotic and Prosthetic Association's National Assembly, and the American Academy of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Annual Assembly, while publishing 14 peer-reviewed articles spanning bone-anchored, lower limb, and upper limb prosthetics and orthotics. Through this work, the Institute continues to strengthen the evidence base, support clinicians, and advance access across orthotic and prosthetic practice.

### ***About the Hanger Institute for Clinical Research and Education***

*The Hanger Institute for Clinical Research and Education is an assembly of experts and resources dedicated to advancing clinical practice and improving patient outcomes through leading-edge research, evidence-based care, and quality education.*

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