

The Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and Research Foundation (OPERF)

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Why is research important to O&P?

- We strive to be a *profession*
 - So, what does it mean to be a “profession?”

“A profession is a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and who hold themselves out as, and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others. It is inherent in the definition of a profession that a code of ethics governs the activities of each profession.”

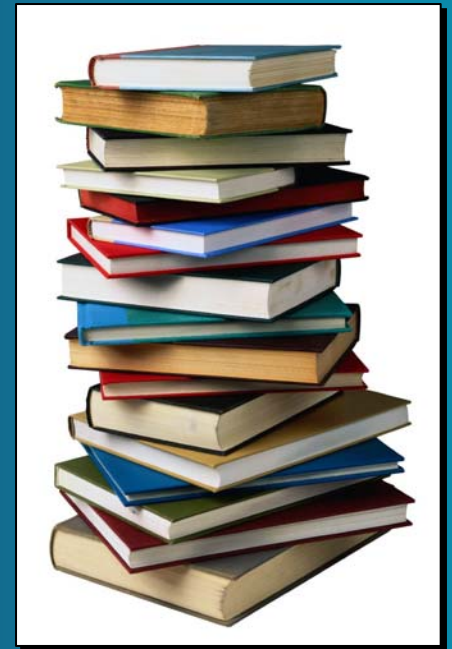
- Australian Council of Professions

Why is research important to O&P?

- We strive to be a *profession*
 - So, what does it mean to be a “profession?”
- Characteristics of a profession
 - Acquisition of specialized knowledge
 - Development of a unique set of skills
 - Provision of ethical service to others
 - Self-regulation in the methods of service

Why is research important to O&P?

- A body of knowledge derived from...
 - Research
 - Education
 - Training
- Knowledge requires research
 - Who takes ownership of this need?
 - If we do not, can we truly call this “our profession?”



What are the most pressing needs?

- **Priorities**
 - We need to make research important
- **Education**
 - We need to create a culture of understanding
- **Motivation**
 - We need to find those who are interested and capable
- **Opportunity**
 - We need to encourage research to be done

Research Foundations

- Organizations that serve the community
 - Advance science and research
 - Create research and educational opportunities
- Examples
 - Orthopaedic Research and Education Foundation
 - Foundation for PM&R
 - Foundation for Physical Therapy
 - American Occupational Therapy Foundation
 - The Center for O&P Learning and Outcomes
 - O&P Education and Research Foundation (OPERF)



O&P Education and Research Foundation

- Independent foundation for scientific research & education
 - Advance O&P education and research
 - Sponsor awards for deserving individuals and institutions
 - Raise the standards of science, research, and education
 - Develop a foundation of quality research in O&P
 - Cultivate a community of experienced educators
 - Promote, support, and stimulate research and education

OPERF

www.operf.org

Orthotic and Prosthetic Education and Research Foundation

What is OPERF doing?

- Promote
 - Provide research education
 - Community
 - Applicants
 - Advocate for award recipients
 - Presentation
 - Publication
 - Lead by example
 - Collaboration with other O&P organizations
 - Elevate perceptions



“**Bad** research is better than **no** research”

What is OPERF doing?

- Support
 - Recruit funds to support O&P research
 - Sponsor awards across the continuum
 - Top-down/Bottom-Up
 - Residents
 - Graduate Students
 - Clinicians
 - Investigators
 - Appropriate support for appropriate research
 - More than \$100,000 in awards



What is OPERF doing?

- Stimulate
 - Research is expensive
 - NIH pilot grants (R03) = \$50k/year
 - NIH research grants (R01) = 250k-500k/year
 - Research is evolutionary
 - Needs to grow from within
 - Created a three-tier seeding program
 - Resident travel awards (\$1,000)
 - Graduate fellowships (\$5,000)
 - Investigator initiated small grants (\$25,000)



What next?

- We need to develop research priorities
 - Foundational research
 - Applied research
 - Translational research
 - Outcomes research
 - Comparative effectiveness
- Industry collaborations
 - Partnerships can be mutually beneficial
 - Independent, but targeted research
- Build the body of knowledge in O&P
 - Demonstrate that we are indeed a profession



www.opert.org