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December 16, 2024

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), I am writing to thank you for conveying your support to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) for the inclusion of the add-on code “HCPCS code G0545” in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule CY 2025 Final Rule. Your outreach to CMS was instrumental in this important first step towards the goal of improving infectious diseases (ID) physician reimbursement, recruitment and retention.

This new code will provide additional payment for complex inpatient ID services, including complex disease transmission risk assessment and mitigation; public health investigation, analysis and testing; and complex antimicrobial therapy counseling and treatment. CMS has confirmed that this code can be used for one or any combination of the three service elements. The creation of this code is a game changer for ID physicians to be reimbursed for the complex and quality work they do every day to treat patients.

The new add-on code will demonstrate to medical students and residents, who are urgently needed to strengthen the ID physician workforce, that ID services are valued and that ID is becoming a more financially feasible specialty. Medical students and residents often cite low reimbursement as a key barrier to entering the field of ID. Almost 80% of counties in the U.S. do not have an ID physician, and this year only 51% of ID physician training programs were filled. More ID physicians are needed in underserved communities and to provide telehealth care for more remote areas.

ID physicians are critical to support many types of lifesaving care that carry a high risk of infection, including cancer chemotherapy, organ transplantation, surgeries and treatment of various conditions that involve immunosuppressing medicines. ID physicians are central in addressing public health threats including antimicrobial resistance, influenza, infections associated with opioid use, and other outbreaks and pandemics. Patients with serious infections who are treated by an ID physician have better outcomes, shorter hospital stays and lower health care costs.

Thank you again for your leadership. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your office to strengthen and grow the ID workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tina Q. Tan MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tina Tan, MD, FIDSA, FPIDS, FAAP
IDSA President