



## August 2024 Champions Digest

IDSAs recently achieved a critical victory in our efforts to increase ID compensation – the inclusion of a [new add-on code for inpatient ID services](#) (GIDXX) in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule to better account for the complexity of this care. The proposed relative value of GIDXX is 0.89. Under the proposed conversion factor, that translates to a \$28.80 boost to hospital and inpatient evaluation and management services where the code is appended. As our champions, your longstanding advocacy was instrumental in delivering this victory for ID – thank you!

**Tell your colleagues: IDSA’s advocacy is having an impact, and you can help us achieve even more by joining the [Member Advocacy Program](#).**

Now, let’s take a deeper dive to understand how IDSA reached this milestone, what comes next and how this policy fits into broader IDSA advocacy efforts on this topic.

### How did we get here?

For years, IDSA has been making the case to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for increased ID reimbursement, without much tangible progress. Previous efforts had been focused on improving the valuation of inpatient E/M codes, which are heavily used by an array of cognitive specialists, including ID. Over the past couple of years, IDSA increased the intensity of pressure on CMS – meeting with more senior CMS officials; mobilizing more of our members to contact CMS directly; convincing congressional representatives, other federal officials and patient organizations to weigh in with CMS; and more visibly communicating the value of ID.

Collectively, these efforts led CMS to ask IDSA in the fall of 2023 to provide a list of key ID services that are not adequately captured and valued by existing inpatient E/M codes. IDSA’s Public Policy and Advocacy Committee, Coding and Payment Subcommittee and staff compiled this information and organized it to serve as the basis for a new ID add-on code. We then organized another round of advocacy to urge CMS to include our recommended new add-on code in the 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule Proposed Rule – and it worked!

### What can you do?

Take note: The new ID add-on code is in a **proposed rule**. IDSA is now mounting another advocacy push to ensure the new add-on code is included in the final rule, due out this fall.

Thanks to advocacy from IDSA, Reps. Van Drew, Crow and Dingell are currently circulating a congressional letter to CMS to urge the agency to maintain the new ID add-on code in the final rule. Please [complete this action alert to reach out](#) to your House representative today and ask them to

sign onto the letter. **Please encourage your colleagues to take action as well – there is power in numbers.**

We'll also review the add-on code closely with our volunteer experts to determine if we need to advocate for any modifications to ensure the add-on code achieves maximum impact. And we'll be reviewing the rest of the proposed rule to provide input to CMS on other relevant provisions.

## The bigger picture

While this is an important step forward, there is far more work to do to ensure that ID physicians are appropriately compensated for their work. IDSA will continue pursuing federal policy opportunities to achieve this goal – with an eye toward increasing opportunities for ID to participate in and benefit from value-based care models. The Senate Finance Committee leadership has announced its intention to undertake Medicare physician reimbursement reform; notably, the initial steps are bipartisan, including the following:

- The Committee released a [white paper](#) outlining key topics for consideration, to which [IDSA responded](#).
- A bipartisan working group of senators on the committee held a roundtable in May with physician organizations, at which Dan McQuillen, MD, FIDSA, represented IDSA.
- Two senators on the Committee – Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) – sought IDSA's input on opportunities to incorporate ID into their draft legislation to improve reimbursement for primary care. IDSA's [recommendations](#) for the bill include prioritizing and funding the development of ID quality measures and creating mechanisms to better incorporate ID physicians into leadership roles within alternative payment models.

The common thread between our current and future advocacy achievements is you. Thank you for consistently answering our call – and stay tuned!