

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

We greatly appreciate that the CY 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule includes a proposed new add-on code for complex inpatient infectious diseases (ID) physician services. We encourage you to maintain this new add-on code in the final rule and to work with relevant professional societies, such as the Infectious Diseases Society of America, to ensure that implementation of the new add-on code meets the goal of improving ID physician reimbursement and recruitment.

This add-on code is urgently needed, as medical students and residents often cite low reimbursement for ID specialists as a key barrier to entering this field. Nearly 80% of counties in the US do not have a single ID physician, and last year only half of ID physician training programs filled. ID physicians are critical to support many types of life-saving 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 healthcare costs.

Thank you for proposing this new add-on code which will boost ID physician payment, thereby making it possible for many more to enter this crucial field to improve patient safety and public health.

Sincerely,