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December 16, 2024

The Honorable Raul Ruiz
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Ruiz,

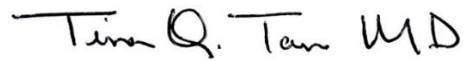
On behalf of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA) and the over 13,000 members we represent, I am writing to thank you for your tireless leadership to support the infectious diseases (ID) workforce, resulting in the successful creation of the new add-on code “HCPCS code G0545” in the Medicare Physician Fee Schedule CY 2025 Final Rule. This new code will provide additional payment for complex inpatient services provided by ID physicians, including complex disease transmission risk assessment and mitigation; public health investigation, analysis and testing; and complex antimicrobial therapy counseling and treatment.

Your leadership was instrumental in the creation and ultimately inclusion of the new ID add-on code. This is a step (hopefully one of many) towards IDSA’s goal of improving ID physician reimbursement, recruitment and retention. The new add-on code will demonstrate to medical students and residents, who are urgently needed to strengthen the ID physician workforce, that ID physicians provide care that is valued and that the specialty is becoming more financially feasible. 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 services to more remote areas.

As you know, 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