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Infectious Diseases Society of America

April 30, 2015

The Honorable Johnny Isakson
131 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner
475 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Isakson and Warner:

On behalf of the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA), I write to express support for the Medicare Home Infusion Site of Care Act of 2015, S. 275. The legislation promotes access to necessary therapies in a manner that is cost-effective and often most desired by patients. Home infusion therapy allows a patient to be treated safely and in the comfort of their own residence, while avoiding the increased costs associated with inpatient care. Unfortunately, while private medical insurance typically covers such services, Medicare does not.

IDSA represents over 10,000 infectious diseases physicians and scientists devoted to patient care, disease prevention, public health, education, and research in the area of infectious diseases. Our members care for patients of all ages with serious and often life-threatening diseases, such as hepatitis C virus, pneumonia, HIV/AIDS, and antibiotic-resistant infections. These conditions may require prolonged use of medications that are not easily administered, such as those given intravenously or intramuscularly.

We have long advocated for Medicare Part B coverage of home infusion-related care and services, such as antibiotics, antivirals, antifungals, immunologic therapies, and intravenous fluids, for patients who require multiple daily doses or are living in remote areas. Home infusion therapy is often the best treatment for patients with a wide variety of serious infections, such as pneumonia, bone and joint infections, skin and soft tissue infections, blood stream infections, and urinary tract infections. As more pathogens develop resistance to existing oral antibiotics, the number of patients who need home infusion services to treat their infections is growing. The absence of coverage for home infusion services has led Medicare beneficiaries who need these services to be admitted to extended care facilities where they are less comfortable and more likely to be exposed to healthcare-acquired infections that unnecessarily complicate treatment and increase costs.

As such, we thank you for your reintroducing this important legislation and for your commitment to provide Medicare beneficiaries with increased access to healthcare. If IDSA can be of assistance to your efforts, please have your staff contact Jonathan Nurse, Director of Government Relations, at 703-299-0202 or jnurse@idsociety.org.

Sincerely,

Stephen B. Calderwood, MD, FIDSA
President, IDSA