

REMOVE BARRIERS TO INTERDISCIPLINARY PAIN CARE APPROACHES

POSITION:

The American Pain Society (APS) supports improving the viability of effective clinical pain management services through the removal of barriers hampering access to and reimbursement for interdisciplinary approaches to care.

APS is a multidisciplinary organization of basic and clinical scientists, practicing clinicians, policy analysts and others who research and treat pain and advocate for patients with pain. Its mission is to advance pain-related research, education, treatment and professional practice.

JUSTIFICATION:

Pain is associated with a wide range of injury and disease, and is sometimes the disease itself. Millions suffer from acute or chronic pain every year and the effects of pain exact a tremendous cost on our country in health care costs, rehabilitation and lost worker productivity as well as the emotional and financial burden it places on patients and their families.

Pain is maintained by multiple mechanisms; and its proper management can vary on a case by case basis. Currently only a relatively small subset of treatments is easily accessible and appropriately reimbursed. While this subset may be wholly appropriate for some cases, clinical pain services need to be able to offer broader resources in order to address the needs of patients in pain as a population.

Specifically, greater access to and augmented reimbursement for multidisciplinary pain care is needed. Such approaches include (but are not limited to): psychological and behavioral approaches targeting pain and function, physical and occupational rehabilitation, interventional approaches, traditional medical approaches, and long term care coordination.

Despite great scientific strides in the past decade, we are far from accomplishing a satisfactory impact on this enormous world-wide health problem. Too many people suffer daily, severe pain. Much more needs to be done to meet these challenges and to increase public awareness of them.

REQUEST:

To remove barriers hampering access to and reimbursement for interdisciplinary approaches to pain care, APS requests that your office support legislation that:

- 1) requires Medicare Advantage plans offer appropriate care for the treatment of patients in pain, including specialty and tertiary care for patients with intractable pain;
- 2) requires CMS to submit to Congress an annual report on Medicare expenditures for pain care under parts A, B, and D of the program; and
- 3) support a Medicare demonstration program providing alternative payment arrangements for multidisciplinary chronic pain care.