

Qs and As on the Increased Medicaid Payment for Primary Care

CMS 2370-F (set V)

Do allergists qualify for higher Medicaid payment under this regulation?

CMS recently received information from the American Board of Medical Specialties attesting that the American Board of Allergy and Immunology (ABAI) is an ABMS-recognized sub-discipline of the American Board of Pediatrics and the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Specifically, the ABAI is a conjoint board of the American Board of Pediatrics (ABP) and the American Board of Internal medicine (ABIM). All physicians certified by the Board of Allergy and Immunology must first be board certified by either ABP or ABAI. Medical specialists certified by the Allergy and Immunology Board remain subspecialists of Internal Medicine and Pediatrics. However, it is possible that some holders of a certificate from ABAI will not have a current certificate in Internal Medicine or Pediatrics because some diplomats of the ABP and ABIM who hold subspecialty certificates are not required to maintain their primary certificates. The ABMS was concerned that these diplomats might be excluded from eligibility for higher payment under a strict interpretation of the rule even though they do act as their patients' primary care provider in many cases and urged that CMS formally recognize that diplomats of ABAI are, in fact subspecialists in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics and eligible for higher payment up to the Medicare rate.

Based on this information, CMS agrees that allergists are eligible for higher payment under the rule.