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May 27, 2020

The Honorable Alex Azar
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to provide you with an update on how the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is continuing to strain the finances of our members, which include medical groups and health systems that provide care to one in three Americans, have changed their practice patterns and delivery models to meet the needs of their patients. Based on surveys of our membership and reports from the leadership of our member organizations, we assert it is critical that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) expedite the disbursement of the money appropriated to the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund (Provider Relief Fund) through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act. We are concerned that most of our members have not received a second payment from the \$50 billion general allocation fund, despite providing the required financial documentation. It is critical that HHS distribute the remaining funding, as an increase of in-person care alone will not alleviate the financial crisis facing AMGA members. HHS should also provide information to the provider community on how it plans to distribute the remaining federal monies in the Provider Relief Fund.

The lost revenues, increased expenses to treat patients with COVID 19, and the real uncertainty on how patients will respond when practices begin to offer more in-person care continue to demonstrate that the financial crisis facing our multispecialty medical groups and integrated systems of care has not passed. Fortunately, Congress appropriated \$175 billion to the Provider Relief Fund. HHS quickly moved to release the initial \$30 billion and announced it would begin distributing the remaining funds on April 24. After submitting the necessary information via the General Distribution Portal, HHS told providers to expect payment within 10 business days.¹ However, we have heard from the vast majority of our members that they have yet to receive their share of this funding. It has been weeks since they completed the attestation process, and HHS needs to move swiftly to distribute these desperately needed funds.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this situation. If AMGA or its members can be of service

¹ CARES Act Provider Relief Fund FAQs: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/provider-relief-fund-general-distribution-faqs.pdf>

during this public health emergency, please do not hesitate contact Darryl M. Drevna, M.A., AMGA's senior director of regulatory affairs, at 703.838.0033 ext. 339 or at ddrevna@amga.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jerry Penso".

Jerry Penso, M.D., M.B.A.
President and Chief Executive Officer
AMGA