PHYSICIANS ADVOCACY INSTITUTE STATEMENT:
UPDATES TO 2018 PAYMENT RULE ARE MIXED BAG FOR PHYSICIANS

Robert Seligson, president of the Physicians Advocacy Institute and president & CEO of the North Carolina Medical Society, today issued the following statement:

“The long-awaited Medicare Quality Payment Program final regulation for 2018 is a mixed bag of policies from the physician perspective. We are pleased to see CMS trying to provide continued flexibility for physicians, incentivize small practices to participate and ease the transition to the quality payment program.

“However, we are concerned with policies that could unintentionally put some patients, physicians, and practices at a disadvantage, particularly:

• Increasing the weight of the cost category from 2017 at 0 percent to 2018 at 10 percent
• Utilizing Medicare Spending per Beneficiary (MSPB) and total per capita cost measures, while new episode-based cost category measures that more accurately assess health care service utilization and appropriately attribute costs are still under development and not part of the scoring.

“We encourage CMS to further simplify the Quality Payment Program and reduce the burden on physicians as they transition to it. The 2018 Physician Payment Rule was intended give physicians support and flexibility. Certain aspects of the new rule may miss the mark.”

“PAI will continue to collaborate with CMS to ensure physicians get the clarity they need and patients are not harmed by the complexity of this regulation.”

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As an ongoing element of its QPP Physician Advocacy and Education Initiative, PAI will closely analyze the details of this final rule to further inform and assist physician practices of all sizes, especially small and solo physician practices, be successful across all areas of the QPP.

The Physicians Advocacy Institute, Inc. (PAI) is a not-for-profit 501(c) (6) advocacy organization established in 2006 whose mission is to advance fair and transparent payment policies in order to sustain the profession of medicine for the benefit of patients.