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### **CMS Releases More Reasonable MUEs**

(Washington, D.C.) – The American Clinical Laboratory Association (ACLA) appreciates that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Phase II list of “Medically Unlikely Edits” (MUEs) are now more consistent with CMS’s stated purpose.

CMS’s latest action comes after a concerted effort by ACLA, and other medical specialty and health provider groups, in raising serious concerns about how the MUEs were originally developed and proposed for implementation. ACLA was one of the first groups to meet with high level CMS officials to raise concerns soon after the MUE proposal was first announced in January 2006.

ACLA was concerned that the originally proposed unit of service edits for pathology and clinical laboratory medicine were inconsistent with accepted medical practice, needed clearer explanation of the selection criteria, should include the opportunity to appeal the proposed edit, and, if implemented, would have had negative healthcare consequences for Medicare recipients.

After meeting with CMS in May 2006, ACLA was informed that CMS would establish a more narrowly defined, reasonable set of pathology and clinical laboratory MUEs, and that the process would focus on truly abnormal situations where a provider bills for anatomic impossibilities or clearly outrageous or egregious situations. While ACLA is still reviewing the Phase II MUE list, it appears that the list generally reflects that understanding and addressed ACLA’s concerns.

Alan Mertz, President of ACLA, expressed his gratitude to CMS and their contractor, Correct Coding Solutions LLC, in revising the MUE edits to reflect current medical practice and thus not imposing edits that would have negatively impacted patient care.

ACLA represents leading local, regional, and national clinical laboratories.

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