



Related MLN Matters Article #: SE0748

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2007 - 2008 Influenza (Flu) Season Resources for Health Care Professionals

Key Words

SE0748, 2007, 2008, Flu, Season, Resources

Provider Types Affected

All Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) physicians, non-physician practitioners, providers, suppliers, and other health care professionals who bill Medicare for flu vaccines and vaccine administration provided to Medicare beneficiaries

Key Points

- People with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes and heart disease are considered to be at high risk for serious complications from the flu, as are people in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

Prevention is Key to Public Health!

- While flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May, the optimal time to get a flu vaccine is in October or November. However, protection can still be obtained if the flu vaccine is given in December or later.
- The flu vaccine continues to be the most effective method for preventing flu virus infection and its potentially severe complications. Providers can help their Medicare patients reduce their risk for contracting seasonal flu and serious complications by recommending that they take advantage of the annual flu shot covered by Medicare.
- Medicare Part B reimburses health care professionals who accept the Medicare-approved payment amount for the flu vaccine and its administration.
- There is no beneficiary coinsurance or copayment, and beneficiaries do not have to meet their deductible to receive the flu shot.

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- Health care providers and their staff are also at risk for contracting the flu, so they should not forget to immunize themselves and their staff. Providers should protect themselves, their patients, their staff, and their family and friends. **Get The Flu Shot – Not the Flu!**

Helping Providers Stay Informed

- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has developed a variety of educational resources to help promote increased awareness and utilization of the flu vaccine among beneficiaries, providers, and their staff and to ensure that Medicare FFS health care professionals have the information they need to bill Medicare correctly for the flu vaccines and their administration.
- The following educational products have been developed by CMS to be used by Medicare FFS health care professionals and are not intended for distribution to Medicare beneficiaries:

MLN Matters Articles

- **MM5744:** “Payment Allowances for the Influenza Virus Vaccine and the Pneumococcal Vaccine When Payment is Based on 95 Percent of the Average Wholesale Price (AWP)” located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5744.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MM5511:** “Update to Medicare Claims Processing Manual (Publication 100-04), Chapter 18, Section 10 For Part B Influenza Billing” located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5511.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MM4240:** “Guidelines for Payment of Vaccine (Pneumococcal Pneumonia Virus, Influenza Virus, and Hepatitis B Virus) Administration” located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM4240.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MM5037:** “Reporting of Diagnosis Code V06.6 on Influenza Virus and/or Pneumococcal Pneumonia Virus (PPV) Vaccine Claims and Acceptance of Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Code 90660 for the Reporting of the Influenza Virus Vaccine” located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/MM5037.pdf> on the CMS website.

MLN Influenza Related Products for Health Care Professionals

- **Quick Reference Information: Medicare Immunization Billing** - This two-sided laminated chart provides Medicare FFS physicians, providers, suppliers, and other health care professionals with quick information to assist with filing claims for the influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B vaccines and their administration. It is available in print and as a downloadable PDF file at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/qr_immun_bill.pdf on the CMS website.
- **The Guide to Medicare Preventive Services for Physicians, Providers, Suppliers, and Other Health Care Professionals, Second Edition** - This updated comprehensive guide to Medicare-covered preventive services and screenings provides Medicare FFS physicians, providers, suppliers, and other health care professionals information on coverage, coding, billing, and reimbursement guidelines of preventive services and screenings covered by Medicare. The guide includes a chapter on influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B vaccines and their administration. It also includes suggestions for planning a flu clinic and information for mass immunizers and roster billers. It is available as a downloadable PDF file (Updated August 2007) at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/mps_guide_web-061305.pdf on the CMS website.

- **Medicare Preventive Services Adult Immunizations Brochure** - This two-sided tri-fold brochure provides health care professionals with an overview of Medicare's coverage of influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B vaccines and their administration (Updated August 2007). It is available in print and as a downloadable PDF file at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/Adult_Immunization.pdf on the CMS website.
- **Medicare Preventive Services Series: Part 1 Adult Immunizations Web-based Training (WBT) Course** - This WBT course contains four modules that include information about Medicare's coverage of influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B vaccines. Module Four includes lessons on mass immunizers, roster billing, and centralized billing. This course was updated September 2007 and has been approved for .1 IACET* CEU for successful completion. This course can be accessed through the MLN Product Ordering web page located at http://cms.meridianksi.com/kc/main/kc_frame.asp?kc_ident=kc0001&loc=5 on the CMS website.
- **An Overview of Medicare Preventive Services for Physicians, Providers, Suppliers, and Other Health Care Professionals Video Program** - This educational video program provides health care professionals with an overview of Medicare-covered preventive services. The program includes a segment on Medicare's coverage of influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B vaccines. Included in the segment are strategies that providers may use to increase the use of these vaccines in their practices and tips for setting up a flu clinic. This educational video has been approved for .1 IACET* CEU for successful completion. This video program can be ordered through the MLN Product Ordering web page located at http://cms.meridianksi.com/kc/main/kc_frame.asp?kc_ident=kc0001&loc=5 on the CMS website.
- **Quick Reference Information: Medicare Preventive Services** - This two-sided laminated chart gives Medicare FFS physicians, providers, suppliers, and other health care professionals a quick reference to Medicare's preventive services and screenings, identifying coding requirements, eligibility, frequency parameters, and copayment/coinsurance and deductible information for each benefit. This chart includes influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B. It is available in print or as a downloadable PDF file at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MPS_QuickReferenceChart_1.pdf on the CMS website.
- **Medicare Preventive Services Bookmark** - This bookmark lists the preventive services and screenings covered by Medicare (including influenza) and serves as a handy reminder to health care professionals about the many preventive benefits covered by Medicare. Appropriate for use as a give away at conferences and other provider related gatherings. It is available in print or as a downloadable PDF file at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/medprevsrvcesbkmrk.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MLN Preventive Services Educational Products Web Page** - This Medicare Learning Network (MLN) web page provides descriptions of all MLN preventive services related educational products and resources designed specifically for use by Medicare FFS providers. PDF files provide product ordering information and links to all downloadable products, including those related to the influenza vaccine and its administration. This web page is updated as new product information becomes available. Providers may bookmark this page (http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/35_PreventiveServices.asp#TopOfPage) for easy access.

Other CMS Resources

- CMS Adult Immunizations Web Page located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/AdultImmunizations> on the CMS website.
- CMS Frequently Asked Questions located at http://questions.cms.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/cmshhs.cfg/php/enduser/std_alp.php?p_sid=l3ALEDhi on the CMS website.
- *Medicare Benefit Policy Manual* - Chapter 15, Section 50.4.4.2 – Immunizations located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/manuals/downloads/bp102c15.pdf> on the CMS website.
- *Medicare Claims Processing Manual* – Chapter 18, Preventive and Screening Services located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/manuals/downloads/clm104c18.pdf> on the CMS website.

Other Resources

- The following non-CMS resources are just a few of the many available in which clinicians may find useful information and tools to help increase flu vaccine awareness and utilization during the 2007 – 2008 flu season:
 - Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices located at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/acip/default.htm> on the Internet.
 - American Lung Association's Influenza (Flu) Center located at <http://www.lungusa.org> on the Internet. - This site provides a flu clinic locator at <http://www.flucliniclocator.org> on the Internet. Individuals can enter their zip code to find a flu clinic in their area. Providers can also obtain information on how to add their flu clinic to this site.
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu>
 - Immunization Action Coalition - <http://www.immunize.org>
 - Immunization: Promoting Prevention for a Healthier Life - <http://www.nfid.org/pdf/publications/naiaw06.pdf>
 - Medicare Quality Improvement Community - <http://www.medqic.org>
 - National Alliance for Hispanic Health - <http://www.hispanichealth.org/>
 - The National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) (established spring 2007) replaces the name National Immunization Program (NIP) - <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/about/>
 - National Foundation For Infectious Diseases - <http://www.nfid.org/influenza>
 - National Network for Immunization Information - <http://www.immunizationinfo.org>
 - National Vaccine Program - <http://www.hhs.gov/nvpo>
 - Office of Disease Prevention and Promotion - <http://odphp.osophs.dhhs.gov>
 - Partnership for Prevention - <http://www.prevent.org>
 - World Health Organization - <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>

Important Links

The related MLN Matters article can be found at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0748.pdf> on the CMS website.

For information to share with their Medicare patients, providers may visit <http://www.medicare.gov> on the Internet.