



MLN Matters®



Information for Medicare Fee-For-Service Health Care Professionals

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2008 - 2009 Influenza (Flu) Season Resources for Health Care Professionals

Note: This article was updated on September 5, 2012, to reflect current Web addresses. All other content remains the same.

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

Provider Action Needed

- Keep this Special Edition *MLN Matters* article and refer to it throughout the 2008 - 2009 flu season.
- Take advantage of each office visit as an opportunity to encourage your patients to protect themselves from the flu and serious complications by getting a flu shot.
- Continue to provide the flu shot as long as you have vaccine available, even after the new year.
- Don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff – **Get the Flu Shot – Not the Flu!**

Introduction

Historically the flu vaccine has been an under-utilized benefit by Medicare beneficiaries. Yet, of the nearly 36,000 people who, on average, die every year in the United States from seasonal flu and complications arising from the flu, the majority of deaths occur in persons 65 years of age and older. 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

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pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reminds health care professionals that Medicare Part B reimburses health care providers for flu vaccines and their administration. *(Medicare provides coverage of the flu vaccine without any out-of-pocket costs to the Medicare patient. No deductible or copayment/coinsurance applies.)* All adults 65 and older should get flu and pneumococcal immunizations. People with Medicare who are under 65 but have chronic illness, including heart disease, lung disease, diabetes or end-stage renal disease should get a flu shot.

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. You can help your Medicare patients reduce their risk for contracting seasonal flu and serious complications by using every office visit as an opportunity to recommend they take advantage of the annual flu shot benefit covered by Medicare. And don't forget, health care providers and their staff can spread the highly contagious flu virus to their patients. Don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff. **Protect yourself, your patients, your staff, and your family and friends. Get Your Flu Shot – Not the Flu!**

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.

Educational Products for Health Care Professionals

CMS has developed a variety of educational resources to help Medicare FFS health care professionals understanding coverage, coding, billing, and reimbursement guidelines for flu vaccines and their administration.

1. MLN Matters Articles

- **MM6153:** Influenza Vaccine and the Pneumococcal Vaccine Payment Allowances Based on 95 Percent of the Average Wholesale Price (AWP) at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM6153.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MM6121:** 2008 Reminder for Roster Billing and Centralized Billing for Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccinations at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning->

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[Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM6121.pdf](http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM6121.pdf) on the CMS website.

- **MM6079:** Pneumococcal Pneumonia, Influenza Virus, and Hepatitis B Vaccines at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM6079.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MM5511:** Update to Medicare Claims Processing Manual, Chapter 18, Section 10 for Part B Influenza Billing at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM5511.pdf> on the CMS website.
- **MM4240:** Guidelines for Payment of Vaccine (Pneumococcal Pneumonia Virus, Influenza Virus, and Hepatitis B Virus) Administration at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/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 at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM5037.pdf> on the CMS website.

2. MLN Influenza Related Products for Health Care Professionals

- **Quick Reference Information: Medicare Part B 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. Available in print and as a downloadable PDF at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/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. Also includes suggestions for planning a flu clinic and information for mass immunizers and roster billers. Available as a downloadable PDF file at

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http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/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. Available in print and as a downloadable PDF file at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/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. To register, free of charge, to take this course go to the MLN Products web page <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/> and select "Web-Based Training Modules" from Related Links Inside CMS at the bottom of the web page.
- **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 vaccines. Available in print or as a downloadable PDF file at http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/MPS_QuickReferenceChart_1.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 health care professionals. 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. Bookmark this page (<http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/PreventiveServices.html>) for easy access.

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3. *Other CMS Resources*

- CMS Adult Immunizations Web Page is at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Prevention/Immunizations/index.html> on the CMS website.
- CMS Frequently Asked Questions are available at <http://questions.cms.gov/> on the CMS website.
- Medicare Benefit Policy Manual - Chapter 15, Section 50.4.4.2 – Immunizations available at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/bp102c15.pdf> on the CMS website.
- Medicare Claims Processing Manual – Chapter 18, Preventive and Screening Services available at <http://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/clm104c18.pdf> on the CMS website.
- Medicare Part B Drug Average Sales Price Payment Amounts Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccines Pricing found at <http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Medicare-Fee-for-Service-Part-B-Drugs/McrPartBDrugAvgSalesPrice/index.html> on the CMS website.

4. *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 2008 – 2009 flu season:

- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices are at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/acip/default.htm> on the Internet.
- American Lung Association's Influenza (Flu) Center is at <http://www.lungusa.org> on the Internet. This website 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.
- Other sites with helpful information include:
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>;
- Food and Drug Administration - <http://www.fda.gov/>;
- Immunization Action Coalition - <http://www.immunize.org/>;
- Immunization: Supporting a Healthy Life Throughout the Lifespan - <http://www.nfid.org/pdf/publications/naiaw08.pdf>;

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- Indian Health Services - <http://www.ihs.gov/>;
- Medicare Quality Improvement Community - <http://www.qualitynet.org/> and select the MedQIC tab;
- National Alliance for Hispanic Health - <http://www.hispanichealth.org/>;
- The National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD) - <http://www.cdc.gov/ncird/>;
- National Foundation For Infectious Diseases - <http://www.nfid.org/influenza/>;
- National Library of Medicine and NIH Medline Plus - <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/immunization.html>;
- 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/>; and
- World Health Organization - <http://www.who.int/en/> on the Internet.

Beneficiary Information

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

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