

**(For release on Friday November 23, 2007)**

## National Influenza Vaccination Week

**November 26 – December 2, 2007 is National Influenza Vaccination Week.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has designated the week after Thanksgiving as **National Influenza Vaccination Week**. This week long event is designed to raise awareness of the importance of continuing influenza (flu) vaccination, as well as foster greater use of flu vaccine through the months of November, December and beyond. Since flu activity typically does not peak until February or later, November and December still provide good opportunities to offer flu shots. Although Medicare provides coverage for the flu vaccine and its administration, there are still many beneficiaries who don't take advantage of this benefit. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) needs your help to ensure that people with Medicare get their flu shot. If you have Medicare patients who have not yet received their annual flu shot, we ask that you encourage these patients to protect themselves from the seasonal flu and serious complications arising from the flu virus by recommending that they take advantage of the annual flu shot benefit covered by Medicare. – And remember, health care professionals and their staff are also at risk for contracting the flu, so don't forget to immunize yourself and your staff. **Protect yourself, your patients, and your family and friends. Get Your Flu Shot -- Not the Flu!**

**NOTE:** - Influenza vaccination is a covered Part B benefit; however, the influenza vaccine is NOT a Part D covered drug.

### **For More Information**

CMS has developed a variety of educational resources for health care professionals and their staff to assist with understanding coverage, coding, and billing of adult immunizations covered by Medicare. To learn more, please refer to *MLN Matters* article SE0748 at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0748.pdf> on the CMS website.

For more information about National Influenza Vaccination Week, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/>, on the Web.