

**December 8 – 14, 2008 is National Influenza Vaccination Week.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced the week of December 8-14, 2008, 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 in December, January, and beyond. Since flu activity typically does not peak until February or later, December and January still provide good opportunities to offer flu shots. This year, Thursday, December 11th, is designated as Seniors' Vaccination Day. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) needs your help to ensure that people with Medicare get their flu shots. Please use this week long event as an opportunity to place greater emphasis on flu prevention. If you have Medicare patients who have not yet received their annual flu shots, 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 flu shot benefit covered by Medicare. And remember, health care professionals and their staff are also at risk for contracting and spreading the flu virus, 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 vaccine plus its administration are covered Part B benefits. Influenza vaccine is NOT a Part D covered drug.

**For More Information**

Health care professionals and their staff can learn more about Medicare's coverage of the flu vaccine and other Medicare Part B covered vaccines and related provider education resources created by CMS, by reviewing Special Edition *MLN Matters* article SE0838 located at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0838.pdf> on the CMS website.

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