

THE RESOURCE

Information for Nebraska Healthcare Providers

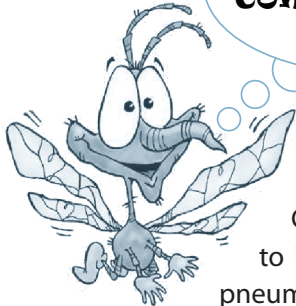
September 2009
Special Immunization Edition



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The Flu Season is Upon Us...

Vaccinate & Communicate



CIMRO of Nebraska's *Vaccinate & Communicate* campaign focuses on the need to communicate the vaccination status of the patient with healthcare providers. It is also important for the individual to update his/her primary care provider(s) on his/her vaccination status. Communication is a key element to ensure patients are immunized properly and to help reduce missed opportunities or duplication of immunizations from multiple providers.

CIMRO of Nebraska continues to work intensively with a select number of physician practices to improve the quality and frequency of preventive healthcare services. Increasing influenza and pneumonia immunization rates is an element of this work. Because there seems to be an ever increasing number of venues where a patient can get immunized, CIMRO of Nebraska is providing pharmacies, homecare agencies, hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and health departments, in these selected communities, resources to enhance communication. In addition to these provider resources, CIMRO of Nebraska has cards available for patients/residents to record their immunization information to share with their primary care provider and other healthcare providers. Through our efforts, participating physician practices and their community partners will see better patient outcomes and an improved immunization rate as a result of better tracking and reporting of immunization status of their patients.

The Issue

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 36,000 persons die each year from influenza. Another 200,000 persons are hospitalized with influenza-related symptoms. Older adults are especially vulnerable - pneumonia and influenza are the fifth leading cause of death in older adults in the US. The CDC also reports that those aged 65 and older comprise 90 percent of deaths that occur each year from complications related to influenza and pneumonia.



What Can You Do?

As a healthcare professional, you play an important role in helping your Medicare patients and others understand the importance of disease prevention through immunizations. Your recommendation is one of the most important factors in increasing immunization rates among people with Medicare. Be aware of the recommended vaccines for adults of all ages and particularly seniors. Encourage your Medicare patients to stay up-to-date on recommended vaccines including the pneumococcal vaccination and the annual influenza vaccination.

Vaccinations can reduce the risk for or the severity of illness, yet one-third of people age 65 and older do not get their influenza immunization and more than one-third have never been vaccinated against pneumococcal disease, according to CDC data. Vaccination rates for both influenza and pneumonia are lower among persons who need the vaccines the most, those with chronic illnesses like diabetes, heart disease and kidney disease.

Battle the Bug this Flu Season
~ **Vaccinate & Communicate** ~

2009-10 Recommendations for the Influenza Vaccination

- ▣ Children aged 6 months up to their 19th birthday
- ▣ Pregnant women
- ▣ People 50 years of age and older
- ▣ People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- ▣ People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- ▣ People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including:
 - Healthcare workers
 - Household contacts of persons at high risk for complications from the flu
 - Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age (these children are too young to be vaccinated)

Nebraska Adult Immunization Coalition Web Site



Nebraska Adult Immunization Coalition

The Nebraska Adult Immunization Coalition (NAIC) Web site houses immunization resources for Nebraska healthcare providers and the general public. The site is a vehicle to announce upcoming events, dialogue about immunization efforts, discuss vaccine availability and share resources. Also included are resources and tools to download and use.

The mission of the NAIC is to promote and encourage awareness, education and the appropriate provision of adult vaccinations to all Nebraskans.

Members of the NAIC support coalition efforts by sharing ideas and resources to assist in reaching out to Nebraskans to increase immunizations, while reducing duplication of efforts.

**Visit the Web site for immunization resources and tools,
www.nebraskaimmunizations.org.**

Free Resource for Standing Orders

CIMRO of Nebraska has a CD available to help hospitals, nursing homes, physician offices and homecare agencies with the implementation of standing orders for influenza and pneumococcal vaccination.

“Pathway to Prevention: Standing Orders for Influenza and Pneumococcal Vaccination” includes a video, a powerpoint presentation and sample standing orders developed by the Oklahoma Foundation for Medical Quality, Inc. to share with your physicians and staff.

To order, free of charge, contact Sandy Kilgore at skilgore@neqio.sdps.org.

H1N1 Vaccine and Seasonal Flu Coverage and Reimbursement

A new special edition *MLN Matters* article regarding billing for the administration of the influenza A (H1N1) vaccine is now available. This article explains Medicare coverage and reimbursement rules for the H1N1 vaccine and also addresses seasonal flu coverage and reimbursement.

Though Medicare typically pays for one vaccination per year, if more than one vaccination per year is medically necessary (i.e., the number of doses of a vaccine and/or type of influenza vaccine), then Medicare will pay for those additional vaccinations. Medicare claims processing contractors have been notified to expect and prepare for earlier-than-usual seasonal flu claims and there should not be a problem in getting those claims paid. Furthermore, in the event that it is necessary for Medicare beneficiaries to receive both a seasonal flu vaccination and an influenza A (H1N1) vaccination, then Medicare will pay for both.

Please be advised that if either vaccine is provided free of charge to the healthcare provider, then Medicare will only pay for the vaccine's administration (not for the vaccine itself).

All providers administering flu vaccine should review this article and be sure that their billing staffs are aware of this information. For more information, read the article at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNMattersArticles/downloads/SE0920.pdf>.

For the latest H1N1 information, go to <http://www.flu.gov/>.

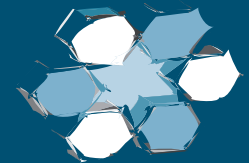
For Nebraska-specific flu planning and response information, go to <http://www.flu.gov/professional/states/nebraska.html>.

National Adult Immunization Awareness Week

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) has announced the week of September 27 - October 3, 2009, as National Adult Immunization Awareness Week. For more information and updated factsheets on adult vaccine-preventable diseases, visit <http://www.nfid.org/docs/naiaw.shtml>.

Save the Date

Nebraska Healthcare Quality Forum
Tuesday, May 11, 2010
Omaha - La Vista Embassy Suites



For more information regarding this publication or to share comments, please contact Keri McDermott, Communications Director, at kmcdermott@neqio.sdps.org or 800-458-4262.



Resources for better healthcare

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