



Protect Patient Health and Earn Medicare Incentive Payments: Improving Adult Immunization Rates

Vaccines are an important part of good health for patients of all ages. The CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) provides comprehensive adult immunization schedules, including the following recommendations for two of the most common vaccine-preventable diseases: seasonal influenza and pneumonia.

Vaccine	ACIP Recommendation
Seasonal influenza	Once per flu season for patients 6 months or older
Pneumonia	Both PCV13 and PPSV23 should be routinely administered in series to all adults aged ≥65 years

Complete schedules can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html>

Billing Medicare for Seasonal Influenza and Pneumonia Vaccines

Seasonal flu and pneumonia vaccines are covered by Medicare Part B (also known as Original Medicare). Claims for these vaccines should be submitted as part of your practice’s Medicare Part B fee-for-service billing.

Vaccine	Administration Code	Diagnosis Code
Seasonal influenza	G0008	Z23
Pneumococcal	G0009	Z23

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services provides more detailed information about billing codes and processes in the CMS Medicare Learning network (MLN) document last updated June 2017.

http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/gr_immun_bill.pdf

Vaccines and Quality Payment Program

Because seasonal influenza and pneumonia vaccines are billable under Medicare Part B, they can be included in your Quality Payment Program (QPP) data submission. There are two QPP measures related to these vaccines:

Measure Title	CMS	NQF	Quality ID	Measure Description
Preventive Care and Screening: Influenza Immunization	147v6	0041	110	Percentage of patients aged 6 months and older seen for a visit between October 1 and March 31 who received an influenza immunization OR who reported previous receipt of an influenza immunization.*
Pneumonia Vaccination Status for Older Adults	127v5	0043	111	Percentage of patients 65 years of age and older who have ever received a pneumococcal vaccine.

**Note that if the patient received the influenza immunization elsewhere (such as a pharmacy), the information can be verbally supplied and must be documented in the patient's record in order for your practice to receive a higher quality score.*

Tips for Improving Your Quality Scores

Improving your immunization QPP scores achieves two goals: keeping your patients healthy and helping your practice succeed in value-based payment programs. A few changes can bring about big results:

- Implement **standing orders** that authorize nurses and other appropriately trained health care personnel to assess a patient's immunization status and administer vaccinations according to a protocol approved by an institution, physician, or other authorized practitioner. These can be different by state so check your regulations. Here is a [sample standing order template](http://www.standingorders.org/standing-orders-templates/) from the Immunization Action Coalition that can be adapted to your practice. <http://www.standingorders.org/standing-orders-templates/>
- Use **clinical decision support tools** in your clinic and within your EHR to promote assessment, documentation, and administration of vaccines. **Standardize** best practices across teams.
- Include vaccine assessments as part of your routine practice for taking a patient's vital signs.
- For the pneumococcal vaccine, **run reports on all your patients over 65** to see if they have received the vaccine. If not, contact them and suggest they come to your office to start the vaccine sequence.
- Consult your state's **Immunization Reminder Information System (IRIS)** to see if patients have been immunized. These immunizations registries track all immunizations given to patients of all ages, not just children. Visit [Idaho](https://iris.dhw.idaho.gov/IRIS/portalInfoManager.do) (<https://iris.dhw.idaho.gov/IRIS/portalInfoManager.do>) and [Washington](http://www.waiis.wa.gov) (<http://www.waiis.wa.gov>) registries.

For More Information

Idaho practices:

Kelly Means, MPH
kellym2@qualishealth.org
(208) 383-5939

Washington practices:

Jeff Sobotka, MBA, PMP, CPHIT, CHP
jeffs@qualishealth.org
(206) 288-2529