



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health – Women’s & Children’s Health Section
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Michael F. Easley, Governor

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

August 15, 2007

MEMORANDUM

TO: LHD Senior Vaccination Season Coordinators
LHD Nursing Directors
LHD Directors

FROM: Beth Rowe-West, R.N., B.S.N., Head
Immunization Branch

SUBJECT: Adult Immunization and Influenza Season, 2007-2008

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide updated information to assist with your preparation for the upcoming influenza season.

The CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has published influenza recommendations for 2007-2008. The June 29, 2007 MMWR recommendations include six principal changes or updates, as follows:

- ACIP reemphasizes the importance of administering 2 doses of vaccine to all children aged 6 months--8 years if they have not been vaccinated previously at any time with either LAIV (doses separated by ≥ 6 weeks) or TIV (doses separated by ≥ 4 weeks), on the basis of accumulating data indicating that 2 doses are required for protection in these children (see Vaccine Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Safety).
- ACIP recommends that children aged 6 months--8 years who received only 1 dose in their first year of vaccination receive 2 doses the following year (see Vaccine Efficacy, Effectiveness, and Safety).
- ACIP reiterates a previous recommendation that all persons, including school-aged children, who want to reduce the risk of becoming ill with influenza or of transmitting influenza to others should be vaccinated (see Box and Recommendations for Using TIV and LAIV During the 2007--08 Influenza Season).
- ACIP emphasizes that immunization providers should offer influenza vaccine and schedule immunization clinics throughout the influenza season (see Timing of Vaccination).
- ACIP recommends that health-care administrators consider the level of vaccination coverage among health-care personnel (HCP) to be one measure of a patient safety quality program and implement policies to encourage HCP vaccination (e.g., obtaining signed statements from HCP who decline influenza vaccination) (see Additional Information Regarding Vaccination of Specific Populations).
- The 2007--2008 trivalent vaccine strains are A/Solomon Islands/3/2006 (H1N1)-like (new for this season), A/Wisconsin/67/2005 (H3N2)-like, and B/Malaysia/2506/2004-like viruses. (see Recommendations for Using TIV and LAIV During the 2007--08 Influenza Season).

For the references to the full MMWR text mentioned above, go to:
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5510a1.htm>.

Beginning January 1, 2007, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) announced the approval of an infection control standard requiring accredited organizations to offer influenza vaccinations to staff, volunteers and licensed independent practitioners with close patient contact. This standard is for the Critical Access Hospital, Hospital and Long Term Care accreditation programs. The full JCAHO press release is available at www.jointcommission.org/NewsRoom/NewsReleases/nr_06_13_06.htm.

Please also copy the following enclosed forms and use them as needed:

- Declination Form
- Form entitled "Some of N.C.'s Health Care Workers Didn't Get a Flu Shot Last Year Because"

Useful influenza resources are listed below for your convenience:

- A comprehensive site for healthcare professionals includes Vaccine Information Statements, the Pink Book and toolkits, see: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp.htm
- For flu planning, go to: "CDC Guidelines for Large-Scale Influenza Vaccination Clinic Planning," available at www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/vax_clinic.htm.
- The AMA's National Influenza Vaccine Summit home page may be accessed at:
<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/13732.html>

For Medicare Part B billing payment information visit the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services web site: <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/>. Use the following numbers with any billing questions: for Medicare call CIGNA, (866) 655-7996, and for Medicaid billing questions call EDS Provider Services, (800) 688-6696. Also, CIGNA provides NetCourses (online tutorial and training courses) offering billing guidelines for three types of Part B covered immunizations – influenza, pneumococcal, and hepatitis B. The interactive courses provide users with resources for finding key Medicare information. These courses may be accessed at: <http://www.cignamedicare.com/webtraining/logon.asp>.

The tool link below provides answers to frequently asked questions from providers regarding billing for influenza vaccination and also provides the codes that should be utilized when billing a payer. Click on: http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/qr_immun_bill.pdf.

Thank you for your strong commitment to immunize your patients *and your staff* against the flu. If you have questions about adult vaccines, please call Sandy Allen, Adult Immunization Coordinator, at (919) 707-5566 or email sandy.allen@ncmail.net.

Enclosures

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