

Improving Adult Immunization Rates

Together, we can improve the health of older adults

For more than 20 years, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Medicare Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs) have collaborated with a wide range of government, healthcare and community organizations to improve immunizations rates among Medicare consumers.

While we've made great progress, there's more work to be done. Influenza and pneumonia remain the 8th leading causes of death in the United States and immunization rates among adults, particularly racial and ethnic minority populations, show significant opportunity for improvement.

Great Plains Quality Innovation Network, the Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) serving Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota, is excited for the opportunity to continue to drive improvement in this area. With your help, we can take big steps to reduce the numbers of individuals who are hospitalized or die from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Bold Goals: What We Can Achieve

The task is large, but our goal is simple: significantly increase the number of Medicare consumers who receive recommended immunizations.

Specifically, over the next four years, we will work to achieve the following:

- **Immunization rates of 70 percent for influenza, 90 percent for cumulative pneumococcus and 30 percent for herpes zoster.**
For example, for pneumonia, this means one million previously unimmunized Medicare consumers in the U.S. will receive the vaccine (according to CMS).
- **An absolute rate of 90 percent for adult immunization status assessment, appropriate immunization or referral.**
Documentation of Medicare consumer immunization status will include reporting immunizations to the state or other Immunization Information Systems (IIS).
- **A significant reduction in immunization disparities.** Data show racial and ethnic minorities, as well as rural populations, are significantly less likely to receive immunizations. We aim to close the gap.

Collaboration: How We Can Work Together

Achieving the goal of significantly increasing immunizations requires participation from everyone across the healthcare continuum and within our communities. How can you help? We simply ask that you sign up to be part of our Learning and Action Network (LAN) and agree to collaborate.



Fast Facts

Approximately

42,000 adults die each year from vaccine preventable diseases.

90% of flu deaths are adults **65 and older.**

70 million adults at highest risk for contracting pneumonia remain unvaccinated.

Let's work **TOGETHER** to make a **POSITIVE IMPACT** on the health of people with Medicare.

Depending on your care setting, this may mean assessing patients for immunization status, immunizing or referring patients or promoting the initiative. We understand you are busy, so we will offer many ways to participate. We will also offer learning opportunities, technical assistance, resources and reports to jump start or support your immunization programs. We will work to offer assistance and education on:

- How to include immunization assessment in office visit workflow and to track immunization status where CEHRT is already in use.
- The importance of National Quality Forum (NQF) 0041 (Influenza Immunization) and NQF 0043 (Pneumonia Vaccination), which are two of the clinical quality measures to meet Meaningful Use (MU) requirements.
- The benefits of reporting to and querying Immunization Information Systems (IIS) in meeting requirements and determining patient's immunization status.
- How to use your EHR to target patients at highest risk and in greatest need of immunization.

Also, as a benefit of signing up, Great Plains Quality Innovation Network will develop and offer free evidence-based resources to promote influenza, pneumococcal and herpes zoster vaccination best practices, guidelines and tools to break down barriers to care for disparate populations.

The LAN will offer providers, community organizations and patients the opportunity to share, learn and make a difference. Ultimately, we will improve access to and quality of care through our efforts to increase immunization rates. Together, we play an important role in helping to educate patients about immunization recommendations and the health of our community.

Get Started Today: Join the Great Plains Learning and Action Network

For more information, contact Tammy McNeil, RHIA, CPHIT, CPEHR - Quality Improvement Advisor, Great Plains QIN, at 402/476-1399 (Ext. 504) or via email at tammy.mcneil@area-a.hcqis.org



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