



The following information was e-mailed to QIOs on 10/2/09 in a memo from the CMS Office of Clinical Standards and Quality. Please distribute to applicable healthcare staff in your facility.

Subject: PN-7 Influenza Vaccination Performance Measure – Seasonal and H1N1 Vaccine Impact on Data Collection

As the new H1N1 influenza virus (swine flu) continues to cause illness, there is some uncertainty as to what this year's flu season will bring. The availability of two vaccines this year to address seasonal flu and the H1N1 virus has already generated several questions from hospitals that will shortly begin collecting data for the National Hospital Quality measure Influenza Vaccination (PN-7). This memorandum is being distributed to provide guidance in the collection of performance measure data for this year's flu season.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has not changed its recommendation regarding immunizations for seasonal flu, however it does recommend that those appropriate for the vaccine receive it early. The seasonal vaccine is expected to be plentiful with no shortages expected. Distribution of the vaccine began in August with 114 million anticipated doses to be distributed by the end of this year's flu season. While manufacturers are reporting some delays in distribution of the seasonal influenza vaccine this year, there should be no shortage.

While there is no expectation that there will be a shortage of the H1N1 vaccine, quantities of the vaccine may be limited initially. Following a series of tests to determine safety and efficacy, the vaccine should be available later this fall, perhaps as early as October. To address this concern, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) met in emergency session and set priorities and issued recommendations on 7/31/2009 as to who should be vaccinated against the swine flu should vaccine quantities be limited. These priority groups include:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than six months of age
- Health-care and emergency services personnel
- Persons between the ages of six months and 24 years
- People aged 25-64 years who are at higher risk for swine flu due to chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems

The CMS/Joint Commission's Influenza Vaccination measure (PN-7) focuses entirely on seasonal vaccination for influenza, and the measure population includes only hospitalized pneumonia patients age 50 and older. However, it is clear that there could be some overlap in hospitalized patients between the PN-7 measure population and the H1N1 vaccine priority populations that could cause some confusion with respect to collection of the performance measure data. The current measure specifications do not distinguish between the administration of the two types of vaccines and for that reason administration of either vaccine will meet the intent of the measure. As a general guideline, whenever the medical record documentation indicates the administration of both vaccines, select the data element value for the data element Influenza Vaccination Status most

appropriate for the administration of the seasonal vaccine. The following examples are provided as guidance in collecting PN-7 data for this year's flu season.

- If the medical record documents the patient received a seasonal influenza vaccine this season prior to hospitalization and also received the H1N1 vaccine during this hospitalization, select value 2 for the data element *Influenza Vaccine Status* (received prior to admission— as the measure focus is on seasonal vaccine).
- If the medical record documents the H1N1 vaccine was given during hospitalization and there is no mention of seasonal vaccine given prior to or during hospitalization, select value 1 for the data element *Influenza Vaccination Status* (given during this hospitalization).
- If both vaccines are given during hospitalization, select value 1 for the data element *Influenza Vaccination Status* (given during this hospitalization).
- If the seasonal vaccine is refused by the patient and the H1N1 is administered during hospitalization select value 1 for the data element *Influenza Vaccination Status* (given during this hospitalization).
- For those hospitals that have ordered the seasonal influenza vaccine but not yet received their supply due to distribution delays, they should record allowable value "6" for the data element, "Influenza Vaccination Status" as instructed in the *Specifications Manual for National Hospital Inpatient Quality Measures*, version 3.0b.

If hospital staff and vendors have further questions, they may be directed to the QualityNet Help Desk at gnetsupport@sdps.org if information and/or assistance are needed.
