

## Flu vaccines

How Mercy Care partners with you to raise the Flu Vaccine Rate

1

Proprietary and Confidential



Good Morning and thank you for attending this brief webinar regarding the upcoming flu season.

## Objectives

- Flu HEDIS
- Outreaches
- Ideas/resources
- Statistics/logistics



In this presentation I will review:

The Flu HEDIS Measure

The Annual MC-MCA Outreaches for both Providers and Members

A few ideas on ways to increase flu vaccine rates including some available resources to help encourage and educate patients

And Some statistics, coverage and access information

## HEDIS CAHPS® Measure: Flu Vaccinations for Adults Ages 65 and Older (FVO)

Medicare members 65 years and older who got a flu shot between July 1 of the measurement year (2023) and the date when the Medicare CAHPS survey was completed.



3

Proprietary and Confidential



The HEDIS CAHPS® measure for flu is abbreviated as FVO which stands for Flu Vaccinations for Adults Ages 65 and Older

What is measured:

The percentage of Medicare members age 65 and older who have received an influenza vaccination between July 1 of the measurement year and the date when the Medicare CAHPS survey was completed.

CAHPS stands for Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems. It is an annual survey (conducted by the health plan) that collects data based on patient evaluation of their health care, their health plan, their health care provider, and asks whether they received the flu vaccine or not. The survey is usually completed in late spring of the year following the measurement year. **We recently received our 2023 CAHPS Flu Rate of 68% which increased over the 2022 CAHPS Flu rate of 63%**

**CAHPS Survey**  
**Flu vaccinations for Adults Ages 65 and Older (FVO)**

Question	Response Choices
Have you had either a flu shot or flu spray in the nose since July 1, YYYY*  <i>*YYYY= the measurement year</i>	Yes  No  Don't Know

This is how the question regarding the flu vaccine appears on the CAHPS survey.

## Provider outreaches

PCP Annual  
Wellness  
letter

Newsletter  
article

Flu webinar

5

Proprietary and Confidential



Mercy Care Advantage provides various outreaches to both providers and members to help members get immunized each year.

For providers, the outreaches include:

A PCP Annual Wellness letter

An annual newsletter flu article published in October

and This Provider webinar

## Member flu outreaches



6

Proprietary and Confidential



For MC-MCA members there are the following FLU outreaches:

An annual flu newsletter article

An annual flu shot letter mailed in early fall

Flu certificates for members who have received a flu shot

A Follow up postcard reminder for members without a flu vaccine claim by mid-December

Digital member engagement, we are working with a vendor to leverage digital member communication programs

CVS Bag Tags is an informational reminder to get the flu shot. This is provided with the 1<sup>st</sup> prescription filled during the flu season

And Information on our member website on the importance of annual flu vaccines.

## Ideas to increase Flu Vaccine Rates among your patients, our members

- Health maintenance alerts
- EMR member portal
- Standing orders
- Document vaccine status and discussion
- Motivation, game plan via telehealth
- Provide info, common misconceptions



7

Proprietary and Confidential



As health care providers your recommendation of any vaccine is of critical value.

Here are some ideas to help promote flu vaccine rates:

- Using Health Maintenance Alerts noting vaccine status. Many EMR programs offer the option to set up alerts indicating when services due.
- Using your EMR member portal to send members informational messages promoting influenza vaccines such as (“did you know...”) messages
- Putting Standing Orders in place in your EMR to allow the flu vaccine to be given as soon as a member agrees without requiring a separate physician order
- Documentation of vaccine status and any discussion about the vaccine throughout the season
- For visits via telehealth, though a vaccination cannot be administered through cyberspace, they DO provide an opportunity to motivate, provide encouragement, address fears or concerns, and discuss a game plan (e.g., go to a pharmacy for vaccination)

- For additional questions, concerns, hesitancy or even refusal, there are several educational flyers available on the CDC website that can be downloaded and printed for free. I'll share some links coming up in this slide deck and this presentation will be sent out to you sometime later this week.



## Additional suggestions

- Remind patients vaccines protect them and their loved ones
- Proactively schedule appointments in advance
- Share positive experiences with vaccines as appropriate
- Assign a “Vaccination Champion”



8

Proprietary and Confidential



- Remind patients that vaccines do not just protect them but those around them too
- Proactively schedule appointments for members to get their flu shot. Research has shown people are more likely to follow through with getting a flu shot if an appointment is scheduled by the provider vs being told to set one up on their own.
- Share positive experiences as appropriate
- Consider assigning a member of your practice staff to be the “Vaccination Champion.” This person could assume tasks such as staying up-to-date on current vaccine recommendations, updating staff of any changes accordingly, and work to simplify or streamline vaccine administration in the office by implementing some of the ideas mentioned (this may be more feasible within a larger provider office).

## Educational resources

- CDC: Prevent Seasonal Flu - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/>
- CDC: Misconceptions about Seasonal Flu + Flu vaccines - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/misconceptions.htm>
- CDC: This Flu Season - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/season/index.html>
- CDC: Flu and Flu Vaccine Resources and Materials - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/index.htm>

The CDC website has a variety of information on the flu and flu vaccines to help you educate your patients on the importance of getting an annual flu vaccine. These links go directly to the influenza homepage; there are a variety of subjects on the flu you may find useful

## 2022-2023 US flu season: Preliminary in-season burden estimates

Preliminary in-season burden estimates for the 2023-2024 season will begin again in the fall when the season starts. The preliminary in-season burden estimates below for the 2022-2023 season will no longer be updated weekly. The preliminary end of season estimates for the 2022-2023 season will be posted during Fall 2023.

CDC estimates\* that, from **October 1, 2022** through **April 30, 2023**, there have been:

27 – 54 million  
flu **illnesses**



12 – 26 million  
flu **medical visits**



300,000 – 650,000  
flu **hospitalizations**



19,000 – 58,000  
flu **deaths**



Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/preliminary-in-season-estimates.htm#print>

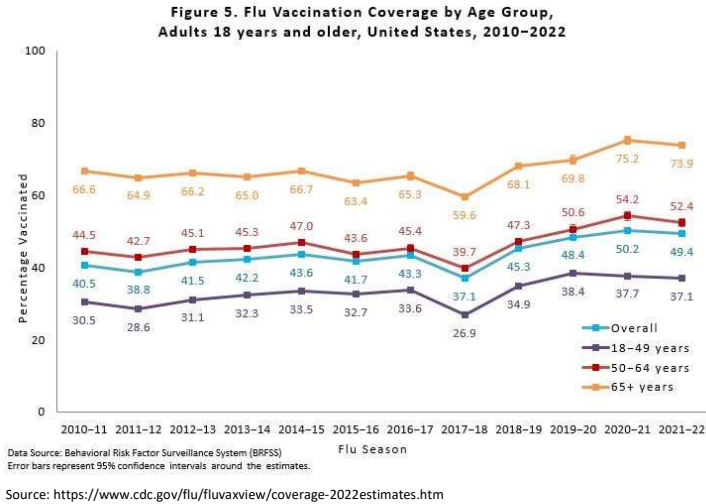
10

Proprietary and Confidential



Now that social distancing practices have eased, we see that the numbers for illness, hospitalization and deaths have doubled since 2021.

## Flu vaccine coverage for adults 18 and older



11

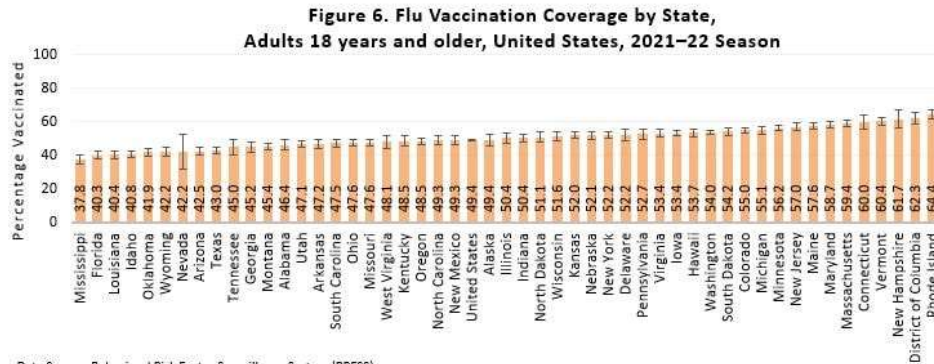
Proprietary and Confidential



This graph, found on the FluVaxView page on the CDC website, shows Flu Vaccination Coverage for Adults 18 years and older in the US over the last decade.

- The average national rates for flu vaccination of people 18 or older has ranged between 37% to 48%
- The highest rates of vaccinations are seen in the 65+ age group
- The lowest rates are seen in the 18-49 age group

## Flu vaccine coverage by state



Data Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals around the estimates.

California estimate was 40.5% but excluded from the figure because this estimate represents vaccinations only through November 2021. For the 2020-21 season among adults 18+ years in California, coverage increased from 35.7% by end-November to 47.0% by end-May.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/coverage-2022estimates.htm>

This graph is found on the same page and shows Flu Vaccination Coverage by State for the 2021-2022 flu season. It shows Arizona at the 8<sup>th</sup> lowest flu vaccination rate in the nation for adults 18 and older at 42.5%. Rhode Island had the highest rate for the same age group coming in at 64.4%.

## National and local flu activity

National data - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>

Arizona data -

<https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/flu/index.php>

You may find these links helpful in tracking flu activity nationally and for the state of Arizona from the Department of Health. The state site will also let you see activity county by county.

## Coverage and transportation



- No cost to the member
- No appointment (most pharmacies)
- Transport available – set up a few days in advance

14

Proprietary and Confidential



And last,

- Mercy Care and Mercy Care Advantage cover flu shots 100% for the member
- Most pharmacies offer flu shots without an appointment and Mercy Care In-Network pharmacies are listed on the Mercy Care member website
- Transportation is available and covered to get a flu shot. Members need to schedule the ride a few days ahead. It is also a good idea to call ahead to be sure the pharmacy has flu vaccine in stock.



## Questions?

Thank you very much for your time this morning, it is very valuable to us. I'll now open the lines for any questions.



**Follow us**  
**@MercyCareAZ**



# Thank you

