

Provider Update

Amerigroup Encourages High-Risk Members to get a Flu Shot

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released its report in June on influenza activity during last year's flu season, and announced the composition of the 2015–16 influenza vaccine.

According to the CDC, the 2014–15 influenza season was moderately severe overall and especially severe in adults aged ≥ 65 years, with predominant circulation of influenza A (H3N2) viruses. Previous influenza A (H3N2)–predominant seasons have been associated with increased hospitalizations and deaths, especially among children aged < 5 years and adults aged ≥ 65 years.

Influenza activity peaked during late December, with influenza A (H3N2) viruses predominant early in the season. Influenza B became the predominant virus starting in late February, through the end of flu season in May.

The Food and Drug Administration has recommended a change in the influenza A and influenza B components for the 2015–16 influenza vaccine, according to the report. Vaccine recommendations are based on several factors, including global influenza surveillance, genetic characterization, antigenic characterization, antiviral resistance, and the candidate vaccine viruses available for production.

Since 2010, the CDC has recommended that everyone six months and older get a flu vaccine annually with rare exception.

Amerigroup* Community Care has launched its annual member outreach campaign to encourage high-risk members to visit their provider for a flu vaccine. Outreach includes automated outbound telephone calls, text messages, and newsletter articles. Providers may receive an increase in phone calls and early appointments for the flu vaccine.

Antiviral drugs used to lessen flu duration and symptoms, as well as many cough and cold products, are included on the formularies found [here](#).

Flu surveillance and patient education materials are available at the [CDC website](#).

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Amerivantage is a DSNP plan with a Medicare contract and a contract with the State Medicaid program. In New Mexico: Amerivantage is an HMO with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Amerivantage depends on contract renewal.

*In New Mexico, Amerigroup Community Care of New Mexico, Inc. In Texas, Amerigroup members in the Medicaid Rural Service Area are served by Amerigroup Insurance Company; all other Amerigroup members are served by Amerigroup, Texas, Inc. In Washington, Amerigroup Washington, Inc.

