



DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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To: Wisconsin Physicians, Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Pharmacists, Long Term Care Facility Directors, Local Health Departments and Tribal Health Clinics

From: Daniel J. Hopfensperger, Immunization Program Director *Dan Hopfensperger*
Bureau of Communicable Diseases

Re: Change in Medicare Coverage of Pneumococcal Vaccination

On September 19, 2014, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published new Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations pertaining to pneumococcal vaccination. The ACIP recommends that adults aged ≥ 65 years now receive the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13, Prevnar-13[®]) followed by the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23, Pneumovax[®]23) 6 to 12 months later. The full recommendations are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6337.pdf>

At the time these recommendations were published, Medicare was covering one lifetime pneumococcal vaccine dose but was in the process of reviewing the new recommendations and determining whether there would be a change in coverage.

Both pneumococcal vaccine doses are now covered for seniors under Medicare Part B, retroactive to September 19, 2014 to be implemented on February 2, 2015. For more details, see the link below. Note that the prescribed interval between the two doses must be 12 months. <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNMattersArticles/Downloads/MM9051.pdf>

Therefore, effective February 2 we will no longer be allowing local health departments (LHDs) to vaccinate persons with Medicare Part B coverage with pneumococcal vaccine as both the first dose and now their second dose will be covered by Medicare. We did not anticipate that Medicare would review and approve coverage of the second dose this quickly; therefore we apologize for the sudden reversal of the LHDs' scope to provide PCV13 and PPSV23 to adults.

If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact Stephanie Borchardt at 608-266-9923 or Stephanie.Borchardt@wi.gov.

Your efforts in improving the health of Wisconsin's residents are greatly appreciated. Please make adult immunization a priority even if you do not provide vaccination services in your office.