

COVID-19 & Flu Season

How to talk to your Medicare patients

What's happening?

- It's likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both be spreading this fall and winter, making it more important than ever that you discuss the benefits of the flu vaccine with your patients. *To learn how Cigna is educating your patients, see the back of this flyer.*

What this means to you

- Your strong vaccine recommendation is a critical factor in whether your patients get a flu vaccine. Research indicates that most adults are likely to get their flu vaccine if their doctor or health care professional recommends it to them. Most adults believe vaccines are important, but they need a reminder from you to get vaccinated.
- If you do not offer vaccine, make a referral, and then follow up with each patient during subsequent appointments to ensure they got vaccinated.

The CDC's *SHARE** initiative helps guide the conversation:

- **S**HARE reasons why getting the flu shot is important:

"You are older than 65 years and that puts you at high risk of being hospitalized or dying from flu. By getting vaccinated today, you'll be protecting yourself and other people around you who may be more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like your grandchildren."

- **H**IGHLIGHT positive experiences:

"The CDC recommends that everyone get a flu vaccine each year. I always get one myself so I don't pass along flu to my patients and my family members."

- **A**DDRESS patients' questions and any concerns:

"A flu vaccine cannot cause flu infection. The most common side effects of an influenza vaccine are mild, like redness, swelling, soreness, or low-grade fever for a flu shot. This should go away within a few days."

- **R**EMIND patients that influenza vaccines protect them and their loved ones:

"Flu activity is going to start to pick up, and CDC says to expect more cases in the coming months. That is why I want to make sure I help protect you and your loved ones."

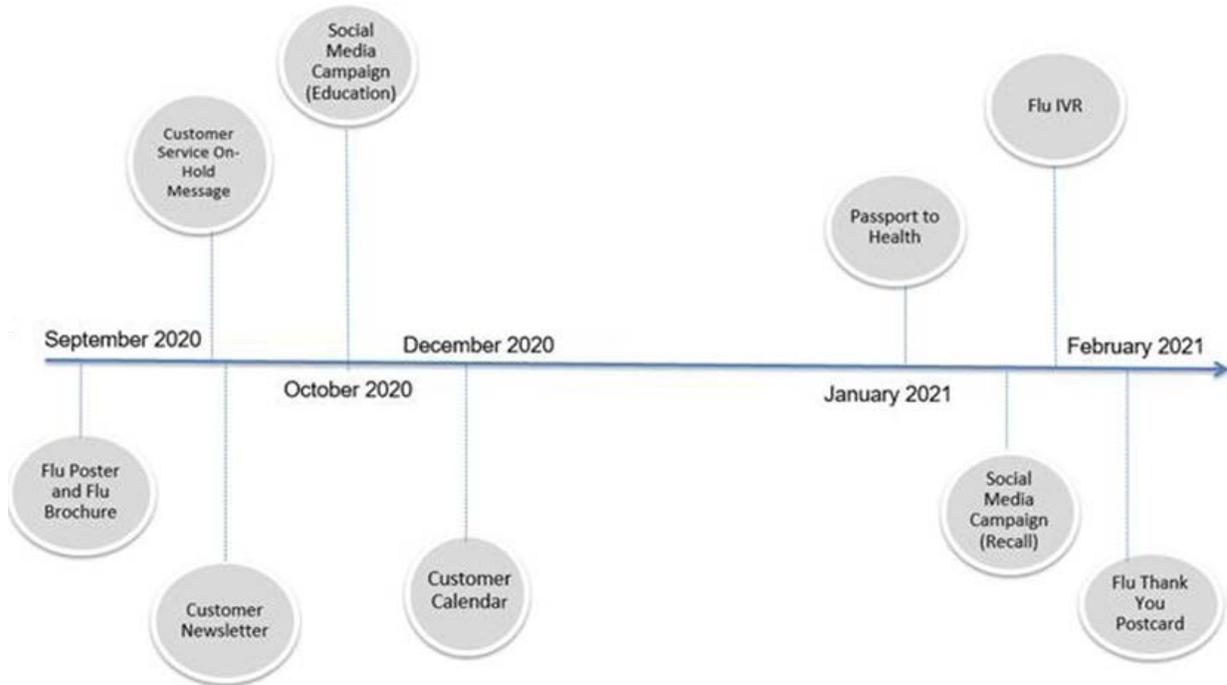
- **E**XPLAIN the potential costs of getting flu, including serious health effects and time lost:

"It's important to get vaccinated this season because flu vaccination can reduce potential flu illnesses, doctor visits, and missed work and school due to flu."

*For a downloadable educational flyer for your staff regarding the SHARE program, go to: www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/freeresources/healthcare/flu-vaccine-rec_65_2020.pdf

Cigna partners with you

Each year, we conduct an extensive multi-media educational campaign to your Cigna Medicare patients on the importance of getting their annual flu vaccine. Below is a timeline of these communication initiatives.



Questions? If you would like to know more, please contact your local Cigna Medicare Network Operations Representative.