

# Memorandum

To: Gold Coast Health Plan Primary Care Providers

From: Kim Timmerman MHA, CPHQ, Director of Quality Improvement  
Nancy Wharfield, M.D., Chief Medical Officer

Re: **National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)**

Date: August 9, 2018

Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) appreciates your commitment to protecting the Plan's members by providing timely and appropriate immunizations and care.

Immunizations represent one of the greatest public health accomplishments of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Observed in August, National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) celebrates the benefits of vaccinations and highlights their importance for people of all ages.

A report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that in the last 20 years, vaccines have prevented 732,000 deaths and 21 million hospitalizations in children. The use of vaccines resulted in estimated savings of \$295 billion in direct costs and \$1.38 billion in societal costs. The significance of this data serves as a reminder of the impact providers have when they ensure patients are immunized appropriately and on time.

## Vaccine Facts

- Vaccines empower parents to protect their children from serious diseases.
- Vaccines prevent outbreaks from occurring in disease-prone environments, such as childcare facilities, work settings, and schools.
- Unvaccinated children put vulnerable individuals, such as babies or people with immune deficit illnesses, at risk.

Click [here](#) for the CDC's current immunization schedule for children and adolescents ages 18 years and younger.

## Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS<sup>®</sup>) Measures

GCHP tracks and reports the HEDIS<sup>®</sup> performance metrics for the Child Immunization Status (CIS) and the Children and Adolescents' Access to Primary Care Practitioners (CAP) measures to the

National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) and the state Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) annually.

**The CIS measure:** The percentage of children who had all of the following by their second birthday:

- ✓ Four diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis (DTaP)
- ✓ Three polio (IPV)
- ✓ One measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) – \*At least one between the first and second birthdays.
- ✓ Three haemophilus influenza type B (HiB)
- ✓ Three hepatitis B (HepB)
- ✓ One chicken pox (VZV) – \*At least one between the first and second birthdays.
- ✓ Four pneumococcal conjugate (PCV)
- ✓ One hepatitis A (HepA) – \*At least one between the first and second birthdays.
- ✓ Two or three rotavirus (RV)
- ✓ Two influenza (flu) vaccines

\*Please note the change in the 2019 HEDIS® measure specifications:

- ✓ Children must receive at least one MMR, one VZV and one HepA between the first and second birthdays.

**The CAP measure:** The percentage of members 12 months to 19 years of age who had a visit with a primary care provider (PCP).

- ✓ Children ages 12 to 24 months and 25 months to 6 years who had a visit with a PCP during the measurement year (MY).
- ✓ Children ages 7 to 11 years and adolescents 12 to 19 years who had a visit with a PCP during the MY or the year prior.

These HEDIS® measures emphasize the importance of the connection between children and adolescents and their PCP. Regular visits increase the opportunity for these patients to stay up-to-date on immunizations and receive care while providing the practitioner with the opportunity to educate on the importance of immunizations and other pertinent health issues.

## Provider Resources

The National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC), in collaboration with the CDC and the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), has developed a communication toolkit designed to help health care professionals communicate about the importance of immunizations during the month of August and throughout the year.

Click [here](#) to access the NIAM toolkit.

Practitioners also have access to GCHP's HEDIS® tip sheets that give information about and proper coding for each measure.

Click [here](#) and [here](#) for the CIS and CAP measure tip sheets.