Medical Policy: IMMUNIZATIONS

Benefit Type: Medicare

Original Date: Sept. 3, 2026 | **Last Review Date:** Sept. 3, 2026 | **Effective Date:** Sept. 3, 2026

Policy Statement

In accordance with Medicare, it is the policy of Gold Coast Health Plan Total Care Advantage (HMO D-SNP) to include Medicare covered Immunizations for all Total Care Advantage eligible beneficiaries following evidence based guidelines.

Purpose

To provide guidance related to the coverage medical necessity and indications for immunizations.

Health Equity Statement

Total Care Advantage is committed to the vision in which all Californians equitably benefit from resources and systems that give everyone the opportunity to achieve their optimal health, resulting in communities that thrive.

Total Care Advantage adopts the American Medical Association (AMA) and the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) commitments to whole-person centered, evidence-based and integrated strategies to advance health equity, addressing social and structural drivers of health. Decisions are therefore based on the evidence-based criteria as well as considerations of the member's social and structural drivers of health, and considerations that the decisions create no harm nor exacerbate existing harms.[1, 2]

Definitions

Medicare Part B covered drugs: Drugs or biologicals that are furnished "incident to" a physician's service provided that the drugs are not usually self-administered by the patients who take them. Refer to Medicare Benefit Policy Manual Chapter 15, Section 50 – Drugs and Biologicals

Medicare Part D covered drugs: A drug that is included in a Part D plan's formulary or treated as being included in a Part D plan's formulary as a result of a coverage determination or appeal and obtained at a network pharmacy or an out of-network pharmacy. Refer to 42CFR 423.100

Coverage

Coverage of Immunizations under Medicare Part B:

- Pneumococcal pneumonia (PPV)
- Influenza, which currently includes both a seasonal flu shot and an H1N1 (swine flu) vaccination.
- Hepatitis B when the member is at intermediate or high risk for contracting Hepatitis B
- COVID-19
- Vaccinations when directly related to the treatment of an injury or direct exposure to a virus or bacteria, disease or condition. Examples include but are not limited to:
- anti-rabies treatment

- tetanus antitoxin vaccine*
- botulin antitoxin
- antivenin

* Treat (Part B) vs. Prevent (Part D) – tetanus vaccine due to a puncture wound is covered by Part B vs. tetanus booster unrelated to injury or illness is covered by Part D.

Coverage of Immunizations under Medicare Part D:

- All commercially available vaccines (excluding Part B) when reasonable and necessary to prevent illness are covered under Medicare Part D as indicated in the current Total Care Advantage Part D Formulary
- Providers may call Gold Coast Health Plan (GCHP) Member Services for inquiries regarding vaccines not listed in the Total Care Advantage Part D Formulary and/or refer to the following for additional information:
- GCHP Provider Operations Manual
- CMS Part D Pharmacy Benefits

Guidelines

Guidelines applied include, but are not limited to:

California Department of Public Health (CDPH)	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/
California Department of Public Health (CDPH) – Immunization Branch	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/immunize.aspx
California Department of Public Health (CDPH) - EZIZ	https://eziz.org/ https://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-395.pdf
Medicare Preventative Services	https://www.cms.gov/medicare/prevention/prevntiongeninfo/medicare-preventive-services/mps-quickreferencechart-1.html
United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF)	https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/
Medi-Cal Provider Manual	https://mcweb.apps.prd.cammis.medi-cal.ca.gov/publications/manual?q=immunizations&search=immunizations

References

1. American Medical Association (AMA). (2023, December 21). AMA Center for Health Equity Mission and Guiding Principles.
2. Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Comprehensive Quality Strategy. (PDF).
3. Refer to 42CFR 423.100
4. GCHP Provider Operations Manual
5. CMS Part D Pharmacy Benefits
6. Medicare Coverage Database (MCD) Immunizations
7. COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit
8. Medicare Billing for COVID-19 Vaccine Shot Administration

9. Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Manual Chapter 6 – Part D Drugs and Formulary Requirements
10. Medicare Benefit Policy Manual Chapter 15 – Covered Medical and Other Health Services

Disclaimer

Guidelines provide references identified at the time of review. New guidelines or medical literature may emerge and/or been published. Treating health care professionals are solely responsible for diagnosis, treatment and medical guidance. Total Care Advantageregularly reviews and updates these guidelines to provide the most current information.

History

CREDENTIALING PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE (C/PRC) GUIDELINE HISTORY			
Adopted By CPRC	**Reapproved**	**Revised**	**Retired**
Sept. 3, 2026			