

MDS Coding Tip Sheet

Seasonal Influenza Vaccine (Long Stay)

As states are in the midst of the annual influenza (flu) season, it is an opportune time to discuss the coding of item O0250 (Influenza Vaccine). From the MDS 3.0 Resident Assessment Instrument (RAI) User's Manual, the Steps for Assessment for item O0250 are as follows:

1. Review the resident's medical record to determine whether an influenza vaccine was received in the facility for this year's influenza season. If vaccination status is unknown, proceed to the next step.
2. Ask the resident if he or she received an influenza vaccine outside of the facility for this year's influenza season. If vaccination status is still unknown, proceed to the next step.
3. If the resident is unable to answer, then ask the same question of the resident's responsible party/guardian or primary care physician. If vaccination status is still unknown, proceed to the next step.
4. If vaccination status cannot be determined, administer the vaccine to the resident according to standards of clinical practice.

One of the most commonly asked questions regarding item O0250 is "When should staff stop coding that the resident received the influenza vaccine in the facility for this year's flu season?" The answer: **DO NOT STOP** coding until the next year's flu season begins.

Note: If the resident receives a flu vaccine anytime during the designated flu vaccination season months, it should be coded appropriately on the MDS assessment and carried forward until the new influenza vaccination season begins.

For coding examples and clarification, ALWAYS refer to the [MDS RAI Manual](#).

Influenza can occur at any time, but most cases occur from October through May. However, residents should be immunized as soon as the vaccine becomes available and continue until influenza is no longer circulating in your geographic area.

- ✓ Information about the current influenza season can be obtained by accessing the [CDC Seasonal Influenza \(Flu\) website](#). This website provides information on influenza activity and has an interactive map that shows geographic spread of influenza.
- ✓ Facilities can also contact their local health department website for local influenza surveillance information.

This Tip Sheet contains information from the MDS 3.0 RAI Manual. The content does not take the place of, and is not at all inclusive of the comprehensive information and instructions provided by the MDS 3.0 RAI Manual. Any updates to the RAI manual will supersede this content. Reader should utilize the most current manual at all times.

