

Operations Bulletin 02-11



Date: April 4, 2011

Re: **Dispensing and Administering Zostavax to Medicare Part D Beneficiaries**

Dear Doctor:

Geisinger Health Plan¹ would like to provide you with the following information regarding your Geisinger Gold patients and the shingles vaccine Zostavax. Shingles is caused by a reactivation of the chickenpox virus, which may result in severe pain that can last for weeks to years. The administration of Zostavax is recommended in people over 60 years of age to reduce the risk of acquiring shingles and its painful symptoms. Zostavax is covered only by Medicare Part D prescription drug plans. However, patient cost-sharing will depend on how the vaccine is dispensed and who administers it. The following options are available to your Geisinger Gold patients with Medicare Part D coverage who are given a prescription for Zostavax:

1. Zostavax can be dispensed at either a pharmacy or doctor's office.
2. The patient can pick up the prescribed vaccine at the pharmacy and take it to their doctor's office where a doctor or nurse can administer the medication. However, since the vaccine must stay frozen before use, the patient will need to take it to their doctor's office immediately for administration. The patient will be responsible for the applicable prescription drug copay at either the pharmacy or the physician's office.
3. If the doctor's office has the vaccine in the office, it can be administered immediately. The physician may directly bill Geisinger Gold by using a special electronic billing system called eDispense™. The patient will be responsible for the applicable prescription drug copay or coinsurance. If the physician does not use the electronic billing system, the patient will have to pay the full cost of the vaccine, as well as an administration fee, and submit a claim to Geisinger Gold for reimbursement.

It is important that you discuss these options with your Geisinger Gold patients to determine the best course of action. If you have any questions about this mailing or your patients' Geisinger Gold Part D benefits, please call the Geisinger Health Plan Pharmacy Department at **(800) 988-4861**. This Operations Bulletin amends the Participating Provider Guide Dev. 10/08.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Roth".

Ray Roth, D.O.
Vice President, Pharmacy / Medical Director

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\ProvComm\2010\Zostavax_ops_0411.pdf
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¹ Geisinger Health Plan, Geisinger Indemnity Insurance Company, and Geisinger Quality Options, Inc. shall be collectively referred to herein as "the Health Plan."