

PROTECTING SENIORS THROUGH IMMUNIZATION ACT OF 2021 (H.R. 1978)

Sponsored by:

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Despite the well-documented benefits of vaccines, more than 50,000 adults die from vaccine-preventable diseases each year while millions more suffer the health effects of those diseases, causing them to miss work and leaving them unable to care for those who depend on them.

- A fully vaccinated public is an investment in our future health, wellbeing and economic success of our nation.
- Adults seeking access to and coverage for vaccines encounter a confusing health care system that presents multiple barriers, including lack of adequate information about recommended vaccines and financial and provider hurdles.
- Vaccines are particularly important for older adults because our immune systems weaken with time. This is why adults age 50 and over account for a disproportionate number of vaccine-preventable deaths and illnesses. With the aging of the U.S. population, the public health impact of vaccine-preventable diseases is likely to worsen unless we quickly and substantially improve access to and utilization of adult vaccines, especially among Medicare beneficiaries.
- Inequities in coverage of vaccines across public and private programs have hindered our nation's disease prevention efforts. We must improve education around adult immunization, including the risks and consequences of vaccine-preventable disease, and ensure older adults know which vaccines are right for them.
- Financial barriers to all ACIP recommended vaccines must be eliminated for individuals covered by Medicare to improve the underlying health of the communities most at risk for COVID-19 and aid the elimination of racial disparities in health care.
- Vaccines in the commercial market and Medicaid expansion states already provide first dollar coverage.

The Protecting Seniors Through Immunization Act eliminates out-of-pocket costs for vaccines covered under Medicare Part D and improves vaccine awareness and education for beneficiaries. Specifically, the legislation:

- Aligns Part D coverage of vaccines with Medicare Part B vaccine coverage in terms of deductible, coinsurance, coverage limits and annual out-of-pocket spending thresholds.
- Update vaccine information in the Medicare and You Handbook, including Medicare Part B and Part D coverage of vaccines approved for use by adult populations and in accordance with Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations.
- Authorizes a study to determine ways to increase adult vaccine rates by reducing racial and socio-economic disparities, administrative burdens faced by providers, close gaps in adult immunization performance measurement and strengthen immunization information systems.

Cost Sharing and Vaccines



Among insured populations, only Medicare Part D beneficiaries face high out-of-pocket costs for their vaccines.



MARKET	VACCINES	OUT-OF-POCKET
Commercial	All CDC-Recommended	\$0
Medicaid Expansion	All CDC-Recommended	\$0
Traditional Medicaid	Determined by state	\$.50–\$3.40
Medicare Part B	Pneumococcal, influenza, hepatitis B	\$0
Medicare Part D	All other CDC recommended vaccines, shingles, Tdap, future vaccines	\$0–\$160

Source: Alexandra Stewart, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2013.11.050>
Mannatt, <https://www.manatt.com/insights/White-Paper/2018/Medicare-Part-D-Cost-Sharing-Trends-for-Adult-Vacc>

Organizations Supporting the Bill

- Alliance for Aging Research
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN)
- American College of Preventive Medicine (ACPM)
- American Immunization Registry Association (AIRA)
- American Lung Association
- American Pharmacists Association (APhA)
- American Public Health Association (APHA)
- Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum (APIAHF)
- Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
- Association of Immunization Managers (AIM)
- Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC)
- Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO)
- Dynavax
- Families Fighting Flu
- GSK
- Hep B United
- Hepatitis B Foundation
- Immunization Action Coalition (IAC)
- Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA)
- Kimberly Coffey Foundation
- Medicago
- Merck
- National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS)
- National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)
- National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
- National Consumers League
- National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians (NCAPIP)
- National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID)
- National Hispanic Medical Association (NHMA)
- National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR)
- Moderna
- Novavax
- Pfizer
- Sanofi
- Scientific Technologies Corporation (STC)
- The AIDS Institute
- The Gerontological Society of America (GSA)
- Trust for America's Health
- Vaccinate Your Family
- WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease