



Annual Flu Vaccine

Quick Reference Guide

2026

Table of Contents

1. MEASURE SNAPSHOT	3
How The Years Line Up	4
In One Sentence	4
CMS Cut Points	4
2026 Industry Performance (2025 → 2026 Trend)	5
2. WHAT THE MEASURE IS ASKING	5
In Plain Language	5
Why it Exists	5
What A Care Team Actually Controls	6
3. MEASURE SPECIFICATION	7
CAHPS Survey-Based Measure	7
Commonly Misunderstood	8
4. HOW PERFORMANCE IS MEASURED	8
Patient Survey	8
Official Star-Scoring Pathway	9
Internal Performance Is Not the Official Star Result	9
Adjustment and Comparability	10
5. HIGH-YIELD INTERVENTIONS	10
Risk Stratification — Who to Reach First	11
6. COMMON PITFALLS AND PRACTICAL FIXES	13
CAHPS Survey Integrity — What CMS Prohibits	14
7. BARRIERS AND EVIDENCE-BASED SOLUTIONS	15
Patient-side	15
System and Workflow	16
Equitable Access and Differences in Vaccination Coverage	17
8. CLINICAL CONTEXTS AND APPLICATIONS	18
Clinical Contexts	18
Patient Journey	19
Companion Guides – Making Connections	20
9. DOCUMENTATION THAT SUPPORTS CARE	20
Documentation that Reflects the Care	20
What Belongs in the Record	21
One Status, Clearly Stated	21
Clinical Documentation Optimization - SOAP Example	22
Documentation Examples	23
KEY TAKEAWAYS	23
Changes to Monitor	25
REFERENCES	26

1 MEASURE SNAPSHOT

CMS Definition: Percentage of sampled Medicare Advantage enrollees who report receiving an influenza vaccination since July 1 of the prior year. For the 2026 Star Ratings, the MA CAHPS survey asked, “**Have you had a flu shot since July 1, 2024?**” Measure performance is based on survey responses, not claims or medical-record documentation.^{1,2}

FIELD	
CMS measure name	Annual Flu Vaccine, FLU
Medicare plan finder name	"Yearly Flu Vaccine"
Domain	Staying Healthy: Screenings, Tests and Vaccines
CMS weighting category	Process Measure
Weight	1 — standard-weighted
Primary data source	MA CAHPS survey — patient-reported
Unit of measurement	CMS contract-level measure — Individual clinicians and practices do not receive a C03 Star Rating
Trend direction	↑ Higher is better
Case-mix adjusted	No
Measurement period	March–June 2025, MA CAHPS administration
Recall window	July 1 of the year before the survey — not the calendar year and not the last six months ¹
Star measure credit	Patient answers “ Yes ” on the MA CAHPS survey. Claims, EHR documentation, pharmacy data, and immunization registries do not independently create numerator credit
Statistical method	Relative Distribution and Significance Testing. Cut points alone do not assign the star — CMS also applies significance testing ¹
Not reported for	Prescription Drug Plans
Documentation codes (internal tracking, does not contribute to measure)	Vaccine Product Code + Vaccine administration (Medicare Part B beneficiaries HCPCS G0008 or CPT 90471/90460 for commercial/Medicaid plans for), ICD-10-CM Z23 where applicable ³

ABBREVIATIONS: CAHPS = Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems; CAI = Categorical Adjustment Index; CMS = Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services; I-SNP = Institutional Special Needs Plan; PDP = Prescription Drug Plan

AAVBC Knowledge Hub Premium Content Access

Continue reading your guide
with an AAVBC subscription

[Subscribe Now](#)

Already a subscriber? [Sign in](#)

Limited offer

Basic Membership Free

Includes access to downloadable Quick Reference Guides, mailing list for industry updates/medical information, research toolkits, AAVBC events and so much more!

Cancel at any time