

NYC Health Plan/Provider COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach and Counseling Program*

Help your patients get vaccinated for COVID-19 and earn additional reimbursement.



Program Description

New Yorkers who remain unvaccinated frequently say that they would like to speak to a health care provider before getting the vaccine. This conversation takes time and effort, so, as a result, the New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) and EmblemHealth are partnering to compensate providers to 1) proactively outreach eligible unvaccinated patients in their panel, 2) counsel them to obtain a COVID-19 vaccine, 3) arrange for vaccination either at their practice or by assisting them in securing an appointment for vaccination, and 4) make the appropriate documentation in the member’s medical record. When these four steps occur together, the interaction qualifies as a “complete counseling session.” If the outreach is conducted, either telephonically or face-to-face, it must be solely dedicated to COVID counseling, unrelated to a sick or wellness visit.

The city will provide EmblemHealth with a list of qualifying, unvaccinated individuals assigned to our plan according to the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR). EmblemHealth will then distribute these lists to the appropriate PCP.

Time frame Sept 1-Oct. 31, 2021

Qualifying Members

EmblemHealth members residing in the five boroughs of New York City who are enrolled in Medicaid (including HARP), CHP, and Medicare Advantage (including D-SNP) lines of business and are eligible for vaccines as of Sept. 1, 2021 (i.e., members aged 12 and up). These members must also appear on your list of unvaccinated members, as produced by the City and EmblemHealth.

Coding and Reimbursement

Provider Type	CPT Code	Modifier	ICD-10	Reimbursement
Clinicians (e.g., MD, DO, APRN, PA, RN, LPN, and pharmacist)	99429 – Other Preventive Medicine Services	n/a	Z71.89 – Other Specified Counseling	\$50
Non-clinicians (e.g., Medical Assistants, Front Desk Staff, Patient Coordinators) using an approved script and under supervision of provider	99429 – Other Preventive Medicine Services	CR –Catastrophe/ Disaster Related	Z71.89 – Other Specified Counseling	\$25

Telephonic outreach requires the use of place of service (POS) 02 with the specific codes noted above to ensure proper payment. NYC Requires name of person actually performing the outreach. If the person does not have an NPI, as documented by rendering provider on the claim, please add the name to local use -box 19- on the CMS-1500 form.

Billing Requirements

To bill for the service, health care providers must meet the following requirements specified by the DOHMH, in addition to any other requirements specified by EmblemHealth.

Prior to initiating a billable complete counseling session, the provider should confirm eligibility by:

- Reviewing the unvaccinated list provided to them by EmblemHealth.
- Reaching out to eligible patients on the EmblemHealth-provided unvaccinated list.
- If the patient has a disability that prevents verbal conversation and communication proceeds in another form as an accommodation, such conversation is also acceptable.
- Confirming with the patient that they remain unvaccinated (has not received any dose of the vaccine) at the time of contact before proceeding to do the complete counseling session.

If the patient confirms being unvaccinated, providers can proceed to deliver a complete counseling session about COVID-19 vaccination. Each patient is eligible for only one paid complete counseling session.

A complete counseling session is a minimum three-minute live conversation with the unvaccinated patient where the provider or designee must:

- Make a strong recommendation for an FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible, unless medically contraindicated, and
- Counsel the patient on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine in accordance with DOHMH guidance and respond to questions they may have about it (see [COVID-19: Vaccine Communication Resources for Providers - NYC Health](#)), and
- Inform the patient that the NYC Health Department is also recommending that every New Yorker aged 12 years and older gets vaccinated (see [COVID-19: Vaccine - NYC Health](#)), and
 - Arrange for vaccination
 - ▶ If the patient agrees to vaccination, assist the patient in booking a vaccine appointment in the office, at home ([\[NYC\] COVID-19 Vaccination - Homebound Residents \(cityofnewyork.us\)](#)), or at a different location (e.g., at [NYC COVID-19 Vaccine Finder](#)).
 - or
 - ▶ If the patient does not agree to vaccination, offer information on how they can obtain a vaccine later (e.g., closest vaccine walk-in site to patient's home in [vaccinefinder.nyc.gov](#)).

Documentation Requirements

For each complete counseling session, document the following in the patient's medical record:

- Name of practice staff doing the complete counseling session, and attestation that provider and patient have a pre-existing doctor-patient relationship.
- Method used to have the minimum three-minute counseling session with the patient (e.g., phone, videocall).
- Content of the counseling that shows that the conversation included information on vaccine safety and efficacy (e.g., if non-clinical counseling, attest that vaccine safety and efficacy was included in the script used, and indicate the version of script that was used (the script should be stored in the practice and be available for review); for clinical counseling, attest that the conversation included vaccine safety and efficacy).
- Content of the counseling that shows that the patient was provided with information on ways to get vaccinated, including assistance to obtain the vaccine (e.g., indicate what option for vaccination was offered to the client and if call concluded with an appointment made or a home visit form submitted).

*Providers billing for the service are subject to medical record review to confirm the documentation is complete for all cases for whom a bill was submitted. To the extent EmblemHealth makes overpayments to any provider due to repeated failure by such provider to fully comply with all requirements herein, such overpayments may be subject to recoupment and/or offset pursuant to EmblemHealth's policy, which can be accessed at: [emblemhealth.com/providers/claims-corner/policies-procedures/look-back-periods-to-reconcile-overpayments](#).

This program is intended to fill gaps in Medicaid/Medicare pre-vaccination outreach and counseling services; therefore, this service is not reimbursable by the program if the counseling session would have been otherwise reimbursable or covered under the member's Medicaid or Medicare plan, or if the service is otherwise required by a federal or State agency to be furnished by the provider. It is also not reimbursable if it is provided concurrent with other billable services.

This program notice does not alter the terms of any agreement you have with any health plan. This program notice is intended for informational purposes only, and does not grant you any legal, contractual, or other rights. This Program is effective to the extent of the monies appropriated and made available to NYC for such purpose and may be canceled by NYC and/or EmblemHealth at any time.

All activities related to the program are subject to audit.

