

## Policy Statement on Influenza Vaccination of Health Care Personnel

### **Background:**

Influenza causes potentially serious infections in older adults. People living in group settings, which includes older adults living in post-acute and long-term care facilities, are particularly vulnerable to outbreaks of influenza in their place of residence. Since influenza outbreaks occur frequently in these settings and can be prevented by appropriate vaccination, annual influenza vaccinations are important to ensure the health and safety of vulnerable residents. In addition to vaccinating residents, vaccinating health care personnel (HCP) protects both workers and the residents who are cared for by those individuals. The term HCP refers to any person with direct or indirect contact with residents, and includes both staff and volunteers in post-acute and long-term care settings. There are currently multiple influenza vaccines licensed and readily available in the United States.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends annual influenza vaccination of HCP, including those who work in post-acute and long-term care settings. These recommendations are based on strong evidence showing a reduction in morbidity and mortality among residents when HCP are appropriately vaccinated against influenza.

### **Guidance:**

AMDA - The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine (the Society) supports mandatory annual influenza vaccination for all post-acute and long-term care HCP unless there is a medical contraindication. All HCP should be included in mandatory influenza vaccination programs, as all HCP, even those with indirect contact, have the potential to be in close proximity with residents, which can allow for transmission of infection.

The Society supports education for HCP on the efficacy and safety of influenza vaccination in general and as an important measure to enhance resident safety. It further recommends that medical directors and other practitioners encourage professional HCP and family caregivers to obtain an annual vaccination.

In addition, the Society recommends that HCP who do not receive an influenza vaccination must wear personal-protective masks when in direct resident contact during influenza season (October through April). The Society also recommends targeted education to any HCP who do not receive an influenza vaccination.

Finally, following ACIP recommendations, the Society recommends that annual influenza vaccinations be made available and offered at no cost to all HCP working or volunteering in post-acute and long-term care settings.

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