Gratiot County Herald
Thursday, April 9, 2015

Pneumococcal vaccine covered by Medicare

If you are 65 years of age or older and have not had the pneumococcal vaccine, there's no time like the present, especially now that it is covered by Medicare.

Medicare recently announced that the PCV13 and PPSV23 pneumococcal vaccines will now be covered for those 65 and older, as long as the two are given at least 11 months apart.

Pneumococcal infections can be mild, but they can also lead to more severe problems like pneumonia and meningitis. These illnesses can be life threatening, especially for those over 65, people with chronic health conditions, and people who are immunocompromised.

Pneumococcal bacteria spread from person-to-person by direct contact with saliva or mucus and can be spread without the person feeling sick.

If you aren't sure whether or not you need these vaccines, be sure to ask your doctor. They may be available at your doctor's office or pharmacy. They are also available at the Mid-Michigan District Health Department. For more information or to schedule an appointment, you may call the Health Department at:

- Gratiot County: 989-875-3681
- Clinton County: 989-224-2195
- Montcalm County: 989-831-5237