

# Medicaid Patients Deserve Equal Access to Flu Care

Every flu season, **thousands of Americans rely on timely care to prevent complications and hospitalizations.** But for millions of people enrolled in Medicaid—especially Black and Hispanic communities—that care is often harder to access.



**Opella.**

As the U.S. begins to emerge from its worst flu season in 15 years, a new analysis by the National Minority Quality Forum, in collaboration with Opella, revealed stark disparities in flu-related healthcare patterns between Medicaid and privately insured populations.

**Such disparities may reflect broader challenges in accessing timely outpatient or primary care and essential medications—contributing to poorer health outcomes and deepening existing inequities among Medicaid patients.**

## What the Data Show

### Outpatient Visits

The rate of outpatient flu visits among people on Medicaid is nearly three times lower than that of people with private insurance. This difference highlights broader inequities in access to primary care services, which are essential for managing flu symptoms early.

Outpatient flu visits  
among people on  
**Medicaid**

**3x**

Outpatient flu visits  
among people on  
**Private Insurance**

### More Emergency Room Visits

The flu ER rate among people on Medicaid is more than twice that of people with private insurance. Delays in accessing early care can lead to worsening symptoms, greater use of emergency services, and increased healthcare spending.

**>2x**

ER rate among  
people on  
**Medicaid**

ER rate among  
people on  
**Private Insurance**

## Gaps in Antiviral Treatment

Nearly half of Medicaid patients (49.8%) do not receive the medicine (influenza antivirals) they need after a flu diagnosis, compared to 37% of people with private insurance.

**Black patients were the most affected in both insurance groups, not receiving any influenza antiviral prescriptions.**

**54.3%**

of those on Medicaid

**40.3%**

of those with Private Insurance



## Why This Matters

These disparities are not just statistics—they represent real people navigating access difficulties within our healthcare system.

Limited access to primary care leads to worse health outcomes, higher healthcare costs, and deeper inequities for our most vulnerable communities.

## What You Can Do

We all can be part of the solution. By speaking up and taking action, we can help make sure everyone—no matter their insurance—gets the flu care they need.



### Raise Your Voice

Urge policymakers to invest in better, expanded access to outpatient care and flu treatments for Medicaid recipients.



### Contact Your Legislators

Demand funding and policies that close the care gap—because no one should be denied care based on the type of insurance they have.



### Partner with Community Leaders

Together, we can educate, empower, and advocate for equitable health care for all.

Health equity cannot wait.

**It's time to act—because every life deserves equal protection from preventable illness.**