

Improving Access to Affordable Antiviral Treatments for THOSE WHO NEED THEM MOST

The Respiratory Antiviral Alliance (RAA) is a multi-stakeholder effort focused on expanding awareness of and access to antiviral treatments for respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, influenza (flu), and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

RAA brings together patient advocacy organizations, clinicians, public health leaders, and community partners to address one of the most pressing challenges in respiratory care today: ensuring that high-risk individuals can access timely, affordable treatment without unnecessary barriers.

The Challenge

Antiviral treatments are uniquely **time-sensitive therapies**, requiring initiation within days after the first symptoms appear. However, many existing patient pathways are not designed to support rapid, affordable access.

Cost and coverage challenges are a primary driver of this gap:

- **Cost-sharing requirements in Medicare.** Unlike many preventive services, antiviral treatments may be subject to cost-sharing requirements, leaving some older adults with unexpected out-of-pocket costs at the pharmacy counter.
- **High deductibles and co-pays can delay treatment decisions.** For patients in high-deductible health plans or with limited financial resources, even short delays can mean missing the critical treatment window.
- **Fragmented coverage pathways.** Patients and providers may be unclear about what is covered, under which benefit, and at what cost – creating confusion at the point of care.
- **Lack of preventive care flexibility.** Antivirals are not consistently recognized as essential, early interventions for high-risk populations.
- **Disproportionate impact on high-risk populations.** Older adults and individuals with chronic conditions are the most likely to benefit from antiviral treatment, but also most likely to encounter affordability and access challenges.

What We're Working To Do

RAA is working to address cost and access barriers through coordinated efforts across three key areas:

- 1 Improving Affordability and Coverage**
 - Advocate for policies that reduce or eliminate cost-sharing for antiviral treatments
 - Promote clearer, more consistent coverage pathways across Medicare and commercial insurance
 - Advance solutions that treat antivirals as essential, time-sensitive therapies
- 2 Reducing Complexity at the Point of Care**
 - Address confusion around eligibility, prescribing, and reimbursement
 - Support streamlined test-to-treat pathways that enable rapid access
- 3 Raising Awareness Among Patients and Providers**
 - Encourage proactive conversations between patients and healthcare professionals about antiviral options

For more information, visit the Respiratory Antiviral Alliance at respantiviral.org