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**Alabama Medicaid continues
preferred status for swine flu drugs**

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MONTGOMERY – The Alabama Medicaid Agency has taken steps to ensure that Medicaid-eligible recipients can quickly access two anti-viral medications used to combat swine flu by extending the preferred status of Tamiflu® and Relenza® until further notice.

Preferred status allows physicians to prescribe either of the two brand-name medications without obtaining prior approval. Both drugs have been on preferred status during the flu season which normally ends on April 30.

“In light of the recent declaration of a National Public Health Emergency related to the swine influenza outbreak, we want to ensure that children and adults who need either of these medications can access them beyond the typical flu season,” said Medicaid Medical Director Robert H. Moon, M.D.

More than 700,000 people, primarily children, are eligible for coverage of the flu medications by Alabama Medicaid.

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