

**2012-2013 Influenza Surveillance  
Update of Current Status and Issues  
February 14, 2013**

The report provides an update since our last report on January 30, 2013. Between January 29 and the end of day on February 4, 2013, a total of 16 new laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases were reported to the Middlesex-London Health Unit. From February 5-11, no laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza were reported to the Health Unit; however, 3 deaths were reported in people with laboratory-confirmed influenza who were previously reported in past weeks. One case of influenza A that was reported two weeks ago was typed as human influenza A (H3). No influenza B cases were reported this week. There were 13 hospitalizations and one death reported among the newly-reported cases. No influenza outbreaks were declared between January 29<sup>th</sup> and February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

In previous reports, reporting of hospitalizations and deaths may have been incomplete due to the large volume of cases to follow up. After a review of all cases, as of Tuesday February 12, 2013, a total of 422 laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases and three influenza B cases have been reported in Middlesex-London for the current surveillance season. There have been 264 hospitalizations and 23 deaths reported among these laboratory-confirmed cases. Seventy-one of the reported influenza A cases have been subtyped as human influenza A(H3) and two have been subtyped as influenza A(H1N1)pdm09. To date, a total of 35 influenza A outbreaks have been reported, 30 in long-term care/retirement homes/assisted living facilities and five in acute care hospitals.

Influenza immunization status is known for 337 of the 425 reported cases. Of these 337, 158 people were 64 years of age and under, and 178 were 65 years of age and older. Of the 158 cases among those 64 years of age and under, 30 (19%) received their influenza immunization this influenza season and 128 (81%) did not. Of the 178 cases who were 65 years of age and older, 123 (69%) received their influenza immunization this season and 56 (31%) did not. The [National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#) (NACI) states that “In the elderly, vaccine effectiveness is about half of that of healthy adults and varies depending on the outcome and the study population. Systematic reviews have also demonstrated that influenza vaccine decreases the incidence of pneumonia, hospital admissions and deaths in the elderly...”

Public Health Ontario has reported that influenza activity appears to be declining in Ontario. From January 27 to February 2, the proportion of respiratory samples testing positive for influenza remains elevated, but has declined for the fifth consecutive week.

In Canada, since the beginning of September, 425 influenza viruses have been antigenically characterized. A total of 297 influenza A(H3N2) viruses were similar to A/Victoria/361/2011 and 56 A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses were similar to A/California/07/09. Fifty-eight B viruses were similar to B/Wisconsin/01/2010 and 14 were similar to B/Brisbane/60/2008. The components of the 2012/2013 influenza vaccine are A/California/7/2009-like virus (an H1N1pdm09-like virus), A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2)-like virus, and B/Wisconsin/1/2010-like virus.

It remains important to continue to promote the influenza vaccine for your patients, residents and staff. Influenza vaccinations will continue to be available at the Health Unit's Walk-in Immunization Clinics, which take place as follows:

50 King Street, London

- Monday, Wednesday and Friday – 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- First and third Wednesday of each month – 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Kenwick Mall, Strathroy

- First Tuesday of each month – 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Influenza vaccinations are also available at some health care providers' offices and at some pharmacies. Additional information about where influenza vaccinations are offered can be found on the Health Unit website at <http://www.healthunit.com/article.aspx?ID=10920>.

Precautions to prevent the spread of influenza are provided on page 4 of this report.

**Appendix A**  
**Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators**  
**February 14, 2013**

Influenza activity in Middlesex-London is decreasing.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Recent trends / data</b>	<b>Comments for most recent week</b>
<b>Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness</b>	<b>All sites</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 27 – Feb 2: 8.9%</li> <li>• Feb 3 – 9: 8.4%</li> </ul>	<p>From February 3 – 9, an average of 8.4% of patients at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) emergency departments and the St. Joseph's Health Care (SJHC) urgent care centre presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This is slightly decreased compared to 8.9% from the previous week.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the paediatric emergency department, where 25.4% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This is decreased compared to 28.2% from the previous week.</p>
	<b>Paediatric Emergency Department</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jan 27 – Feb 2: 28.2%</li> <li>• Feb 3 – 9: 25.4%</li> </ul>	
	<b>Summary</b> Generally decreasing, but high at the paediatric emergency department.	
<b>Absence reports from elementary schools (i.e., absenteeism &gt; 10%)</b>	Decreasing	From February 4 – 7, seven elementary schools in the two main English public school boards reported a 4-day average absenteeism exceeding 10%. This number is lower than the previous week, when 18 elementary schools reported a 5-day average absenteeism exceeding 10%.
<b>Laboratory-confirmed cases</b>	<b>Jan 29 – Feb 4:</b> 16 <b>Feb 5 – 11:</b> 0	<p>From January 29 – February 4, 16 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases of influenza A were reported, and no influenza B cases. This number is higher than the previous week, when 13 cases were reported. From February 5-11, no cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza were reported.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the surveillance season on September 1, 2012 a total of 425 laboratory-confirmed influenza (422 Influenza A and three influenza B) cases have been reported to the Health Unit.</p>
	<b>Summary</b> Decreased	
<b>Hospitalizations</b>	<b>Jan 29 – Feb 4:</b> 13 <b>Feb 5 – 11:</b> 0	<p>From January 29 – February 4, 13 people with laboratory-confirmed influenza were reported to be hospitalized. This is higher than the previous week, when five hospitalizations were reported among laboratory-confirmed cases.</p> <p>To date, 264 people with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been hospitalized.</p>
	<b>Summary</b> Decreasing	
<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Jan 29 – Feb 4:</b> 1 <b>Feb 5 – 11:</b> 3	<p>Since the previous report, four deaths were reported for laboratory-confirmed influenza cases, three of which were in previously reported cases.</p> <p>To date, 23 deaths have been reported among cases with laboratory-confirmed influenza. However, it should be noted that the reporting of deaths may be incomplete.</p>

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Recent trends / data</b>	<b>Comments for most recent week</b>
<b>Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/retirement homes/acute care</b>	Jan 29-Feb4: 0 Feb 5-11: 0	From January 29 –Feb 4 and Feb 5-11, no outbreaks of influenza were declared in any facilities.
	<b>Summary</b> Decreased	To date, 35 influenza A outbreaks have been reported, 30 in long-term care/retirement homes/assisted living facilities and five in acute care hospitals.
<b>Sentinel X-ray provider reports regarding newly identified bronchopneumonia cases</b>	<b>Jan 28 – Feb 2:</b> 5.6% <b>Feb 4 – 9:</b> 4.2%	From February 4 – 9, 4.2% of chest x-rays performed by the sentinel x-ray provider were newly diagnosed bronchopneumonia cases. This is decreased compared to 5.6% from the previous week.
	<b>Summary</b> Decreased	
<b>Percentage of Ontario laboratory samples that are positive for influenza</b>	Decreased for influenza A Increased for influenza B	According to the Ontario Respiratory Virus Bulletin issued for the week of January 27 – February 2, in Ontario, 353 of 2,084 tests were positive for influenza A (16.94% positivity) and 24 of 2,084 tests were positive for influenza B (1.15% positivity). The percent positivity for influenza A is lower compared to the previous week, when the percent positivity for influenza A was 19.95%. The percent positivity for influenza B is higher than 0.50% reported from the previous week.  Influenza A had the highest percent positivity among all circulating respiratory viruses, followed by Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) (11.93% positivity) and coronavirus (10.44% positivity).

The Middlesex-London Health Unit gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following community partners who provide data for this report:

London District Catholic School Board  
London Health Sciences Centre  
London X-Ray Associates  
St. Joseph's Health Care London  
Thames Valley District School Board

## **Measures to Prevent the Spread of Influenza and other Seasonal Viruses, Including Norovirus**

- Get vaccinated against influenza – it is not too late to get your flu shot.
- Stay home if you are sick. Individuals who work as food handlers, health care providers or child care workers who have diarrhea and/or vomiting should stay at home until at least 48 hours have passed from their last episode of diarrhea or vomiting.
- Clean hands frequently using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers should contain 70-90% alcohol. Hands should be cleaned after using the washroom, after changing diapers, after shaking hands and before preparing and eating food.
- If you have diarrhea or vomiting, do not prepare food for others for at least 48 hours after the last episode.
- Clean frequently-touched surfaces often. When cleaning up vomit or diarrhea, thoroughly clean the area with detergent and water, removing all debris, then disinfect with a 1:50 bleach solution if the object being cleaned will tolerate it. Discard or wash all clean-up materials then wash hands thoroughly.