

## 2021-2022 Community Influenza Surveillance Report

### Update of Current Status

### June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022

#### Overall Assessment

Influenza continues to circulate in London and Middlesex County. Although the level of activity remains low, it is above what has come to be expected during a typical influenza season at this time of year. Just over half (56%) of Ontario public health units continue to report localized or sporadic influenza activity. So far this season, there have been 1,595 confirmed cases of influenza reported in Ontario (1,583 influenza A, 12 influenza B).

#### Analysis and Action

Regardless of the level of local influenza activity, there are a number of easy-to-follow steps residents can take to avoid becoming sick throughout the year. Washing your hands frequently with soap and warm water for 15-20 seconds or using a waterless hand sanitizer (with at least 70 percent alcohol content), remains an effective way to prevent many illnesses, including influenza. Local residents are also advised to continue following these prevention practices to further reduce the potential for viruses to spread:

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow,
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth,
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, handrails, countertops, etc. frequently, and
- Stay home when feeling sick.

#### Details of Current Local Activity

Between June 12<sup>th</sup> and June 18<sup>th</sup>, there was one laboratory-confirmed case of influenza A and no cases of influenza B reported to the Health Unit. This brings the total number of influenza A cases reported since surveillance began on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to 49.

Appendix A provides more detail about laboratory-based influenza activity indicators for the current reporting week, as well as other local indicators of respiratory illness.

#### Provincial and National Comparison

In this week's *Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin*, Public Health Ontario reports that influenza activity in health units across the province was lower than the previous week. In the most recent week, 84 confirmed cases of influenza A and one confirmed case of influenza B were reported in Ontario. This is lower than the 135 cases of influenza A reported across Ontario in the previous week.

In this week's *FluWatch* and *Respiratory Virus Report*, the Public Health Agency of Canada noted that influenza A activity continues to decline but remains above typical seasonal thresholds with influenza activity being reported in most regions of Canada. So far this season influenza season, where detailed age information is available, it has been found that nearly half of all cases (49%) have occurred in children and teenagers (ages zero to 19). This finding may be related to provincial testing priorities rather than the susceptibility of this age group.

- The latest *Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin*, issued by Public Health Ontario (PHO), is available at <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/commonly-used-products/respiratory-pathogens-weekly>
- The latest *FluWatch* report, issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), is available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance/weekly-influenza-reports.html>
- The latest *Respiratory Virus Report* issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), is available at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/surveillance/respiratory-virus-detections-canada.html>

## Appendix A

### Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators for Middlesex-London June 12<sup>th</sup> to June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022

**Table 1: Summary of laboratory-based influenza activity indicators, Middlesex-London and Ontario, 2021-2022 influenza surveillance season**

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Number Reported: <i>Year to Date</i> <i>(from August 29, 2021)</i>	Recent Trends
Laboratory-confirmed cases <sup>1,4</sup>	June 12-June 18 (week 24) <sup>2</sup>	Influenza A – 1 case Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A – 49 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A: <b>Lower</b> than the previous week (June 5-11) when three cases were reported.  Influenza B: <b>Same</b> as the previous week (June 5 – 11) when no cases were reported.
Influenza sub-types <sup>1</sup>	June 12-June 18	Influenza A (H3) – 0 case Influenza A not yet subtyped – 1 case	Influenza A (H3) – 10 cases Influenza A not yet subtyped – 39 cases	N/A
Hospitalizations <sup>1,5</sup>	June 12-June 18	1	19	<b>Lower</b> than the previous week (June 5 – 11) when two hospitalizations were reported.
Deaths <sup>1,5</sup>	June 12-June 18	0	0	<b>Same</b> as the previous week (June 5 – 11) when no deaths were reported.
Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/retirement homes/acute care	June 12-June 18	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 0 outbreaks	Influenza A – 1 outbreak Influenza B – 0 outbreaks	<b>Same</b> as the previous week (June 5 – 11) when no outbreaks were reported.
Percentage of samples that are positive for influenza (Ontario) <sup>3</sup>	June 5-June 11 (week 23) <sup>2</sup>	Influenza A – 3.5% positivity Influenza B – 0.1% positivity	N/A	Influenza A: <b>Lower</b> than 4.5% positivity reported the previous week (May 29-June 4).  Influenza B: <b>Similar</b> to as 0% positivity reported the previous week (May 29-June 4).

**Notes:**

1 Numbers are subject to change week by week due to the retrospective nature of reporting.

2 Weekly influenza monitoring often uses numbered weeks from 1 to 52 weeks per year. A reference week calendar can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance/fluwatch-weeks-calendar.html>

3 Public Health Ontario, [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#) 2021-2022. Numbers reported represent results submitted to CIRID from 17 participating labs in Ontario and does not include all testing laboratories, [ORPB Interactive Website Data Caveats and Glossary](#)

4 The week cases are reported to the Health Unit may not be the same as week of illness onset.

5 The week hospitalizations and deaths are reported to the Health Unit may not be the same as the week in which they occurred, or the same as the week of illness onset.

**Table 2: Summary of community-based respiratory illness indicators, Middlesex-London, 2021-2022 influenza surveillance season**

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Recent Trends
<b>Middlesex-London hospital emergency department visits - percentage of patients with respiratory or fever symptoms<sup>1</sup></b>	June 12-June 18	An average of 11.5% of patients presented with respiratory symptoms.  An average of 3.5% of patients presented with influenza-like illness (fever) symptoms.	<b>Similar</b> to 11.9% reported the previous week (June 5-June 11).  <b>Slightly lower</b> than 4.1% reported the previous week (May 29-June 4).
<b>Real-time Viral Respiratory Surveillance<sup>2</sup> - Middlesex-London</b>	June 12-June 18	Activity/Risk Level: Moderate or <b>Yellow</b> (Increased visit volumes to Emergency Departments and absenteeism may be noted).	<b>Same</b> as level (Moderate or <b>Yellow</b> ) reported the previous week (June 5-June 11).

<sup>1</sup> [Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance](#) (ACES) Application is a real-time syndromic surveillance system. This source will be influenced by COVID-19 activity.

<sup>2</sup> [Viral Respiratory Mapper](#) uses data from ACES (above). Activity/Risk Levels range from Green, Yellow, Orange and Red.

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