
2017-2018 Community Influenza Surveillance Report Update of Current Status December 6, 2017

Overall assessment

The current level of influenza activity in Middlesex-London is increasing, with all local indicators higher when compared to the previous reporting week.

Analysis and Action

The influenza season is underway with virus activity continuing to increase. If they haven't done so already, local residents are encouraged to get their seasonal influenza vaccine as soon as possible, before the arrival of the peak in influenza activity.

Details of Current Local Activity

Between November 26th and December 2nd, the first two influenza outbreaks of the season were reported, one in a hospital and one in a long-term care home. During this time period, one laboratory-confirmed case of influenza A and five laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza B were reported to the Health Unit; three of these cases were hospitalized.

Since September 1, 2017, there have been seven laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases and nine influenza B cases reported. Two influenza A samples have been subtyped as influenza A (H3) while the remaining five samples have not been subtyped.

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

Useful Websites

- The latest Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, issued by Public Health Ontario (PHO), is available at <http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/ServicesAndTools/SurveillanceServices/Pages/Ontario-Respiratory-Virus-Bulletin.aspx>
- The latest FluWatch report, issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), is available at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>.
- To find a free flu shot clinic near you, visit the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care's "Get the flu shot" web page at <http://www.ontario.ca/page/get-flu-shot/>.

Appendix A

Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators for Middlesex-London November 26th to December 2nd, 2017

Table 1: Summary of laboratory-based influenza activity indicators, Middlesex-London and Ontario, 2017-2018 influenza surveillance season

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Number Reported: <i>Year to Date (from September 1, 2017)</i>	Recent Trends
Laboratory-confirmed cases¹	Nov. 26-Dec. 2 (week 48) ²	Influenza A – 1 case Influenza B – 5 cases	Influenza A – 7 cases Influenza B – 9 cases	Influenza A: Higher than the previous week (Nov. 19-25) when no cases were reported. Influenza B: Higher than the previous week (Nov. 19-25) when three cases were reported.
Influenza sub-types¹	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	Influenza A(H3) – 0 cases Influenza A not subtyped – 1 case	Influenza A(H3) – 2 cases Influenza A not subtyped – 5 cases	
Hospitalizations¹	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	3	9	Higher than the previous week (Nov. 19-25) when two hospitalizations were reported.
Deaths¹	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	0	0	
Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/retirement homes/acute care	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 2 outbreaks	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 2 outbreaks	Higher than the previous week (Nov. 19-25) when no outbreaks were reported.
Percentage of samples that are positive for influenza (Ontario)³	Nov. 19-25 (week 47) ²	Influenza A – 2.2% positivity Influenza B – 0.9% positivity	N/A	Influenza A: Lower than 3.0% positivity reported in the previous reporting period (Nov. 12-18). Influenza B: Similar to 0.6% positivity reported in the previous reporting period (Nov. 12-18).

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 2017-2018

Table 2: Summary of community-based respiratory illness indicators, Middlesex-London, 2017-2018 influenza surveillance season

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Recent Trends
Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness	Nov. 26-Dec. 2	<p>An average of 8.5% of patients presented with fever and respiratory symptoms.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the pediatric emergency department, where 23.3% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms.</p>	<p>Higher than 7.8% reported the previous week (Nov. 19-25).</p> <p>Higher than 21.4% reported the previous week (Nov. 19-25).</p>
Absence reports from elementary schools (i.e., absenteeism > 10%)	Nov. 27-Dec. 1	Seventeen elementary schools from one school board reported average absenteeism (due to all causes) exceeding 10%.	Higher than the previous week (Nov. 20-24), when 16 schools reported increased absenteeism.

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

London Health Sciences Centre
 St. Joseph's Health Care London
 Thames Valley District School Board