

## 2017-2018 Community Influenza Surveillance Report Update of Current Status February 21, 2018

### Overall assessment

The level of influenza activity continues to be high in the Middlesex-London region.

### Analysis and Action

The level of influenza activity continues to be high in both the Middlesex-London area and across Canada. However, the number of influenza B cases reported in Middlesex-London has been declining gradually since the beginning of 2018, while the number of influenza A cases being reported locally has fluctuated week-to-week, and last week was comparable to the number reported at the beginning of 2018.

The Health Unit continues to recommend quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (QIV) for all unimmunized individuals. In addition to getting immunized, local residents can also take a number of other steps to prevent becoming sick. Handwashing is an effective way to prevent many illnesses, including influenza. Local residents should stay home when they feel sick, cover coughs and sneezes, and clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently.

### Details of Current Local Activity

Between February 11<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, there were 33 laboratory confirmed cases of influenza A, 21 cases of influenza B, and one case infected with both influenza A and B, reported to the Health Unit. There were also 27 hospitalizations and four deaths reported. Please note that due to the retrospective nature of reporting, the week in which hospitalizations and deaths are reported to the Health Unit may not be the same as the week in which they occurred.

Since September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017, there have been 242 laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases, 369 cases of influenza B, and four cases infected with both influenza A and B, reported to the Health Unit. Among these cases there have been 302 hospitalizations and 27 deaths; all deaths to date have been among cases 50 years of age and over. During this same time period, there have been 17 influenza A outbreaks, 27 influenza B outbreaks, and five outbreaks with both influenza A and B declared in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and retirement homes.

Appendix A provides more detail about laboratory-based influenza activity indicators, as well as other local indicators of respiratory illness. A graph showing all 615 laboratory-confirmed cases by week of illness onset is provided at the end of this report in Appendix B.

### 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**  
**February 11<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**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
<b>Laboratory-confirmed cases<sup>1, 4</sup></b>	Feb. 11-17 (week 7) <sup>2</sup>	Influenza A – 33 cases Influenza B – 21 cases Influenza A&B – 1 case	Influenza A – 242 cases Influenza B – 369 cases Influenza A & B – 4 cases	Influenza A: <b>Lower</b> than the previous week (Feb. 4-10) when 37 cases were reported.  Influenza B: <b>Lower</b> than the previous week (Feb. 4-10) when 25 cases were reported.
<b>Influenza sub-types<sup>1</sup></b>	Feb. 11-17	Influenza A(H3) – 2 cases Influenza A not subtyped – 31 cases  Influenza B not subtyped – 21 cases	Influenza A – (H3) – 52 cases (H1N1)pdm09 – 2 case Not subtyped – 188 cases  Influenza B – Phuket/3073/13-like – 1 case Not subtyped – 368 cases	
<b>Hospitalizations<sup>1, 5</sup></b>	Feb. 11-17	27	302	<b>Lower</b> than the previous week (Feb. 4-10) when 30 hospitalizations were reported.
<b>Deaths<sup>1, 5</sup></b>	Feb. 11-17	4	27	<b>Higher</b> than the previous week (Feb. 4-10) when no deaths were reported.
<b>Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/retirement homes/acute care</b>	Feb. 11-17	Influenza A – 1 outbreak Influenza B – 0 outbreaks Influenza A&B – 1 outbreak	Influenza A – 17 outbreaks Influenza B – 27 outbreaks Influenza A&B – 5 outbreaks	Influenza A: <b>Same</b> as the previous week (Feb. 4-10) when one outbreak was reported.  Influenza B: <b>Lower</b> than the previous week (Feb. 4-10) when four outbreaks were reported.
<b>Percentage of samples that are positive for influenza (Ontario)<sup>3</sup></b>	Feb. 4-10 (week 6) <sup>2</sup>	Influenza A – 16.5% positivity Influenza B – 14.0% positivity	N/A	Influenza A: <b>Higher</b> than 14.6% positivity reported in the previous reporting period (Jan. 28-Feb. 3).  Influenza B: <b>Similar</b> to 14.2% positivity reported in the previous reporting period (Jan. 28-Feb. 3).

**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

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, 2017-2018 influenza surveillance season**

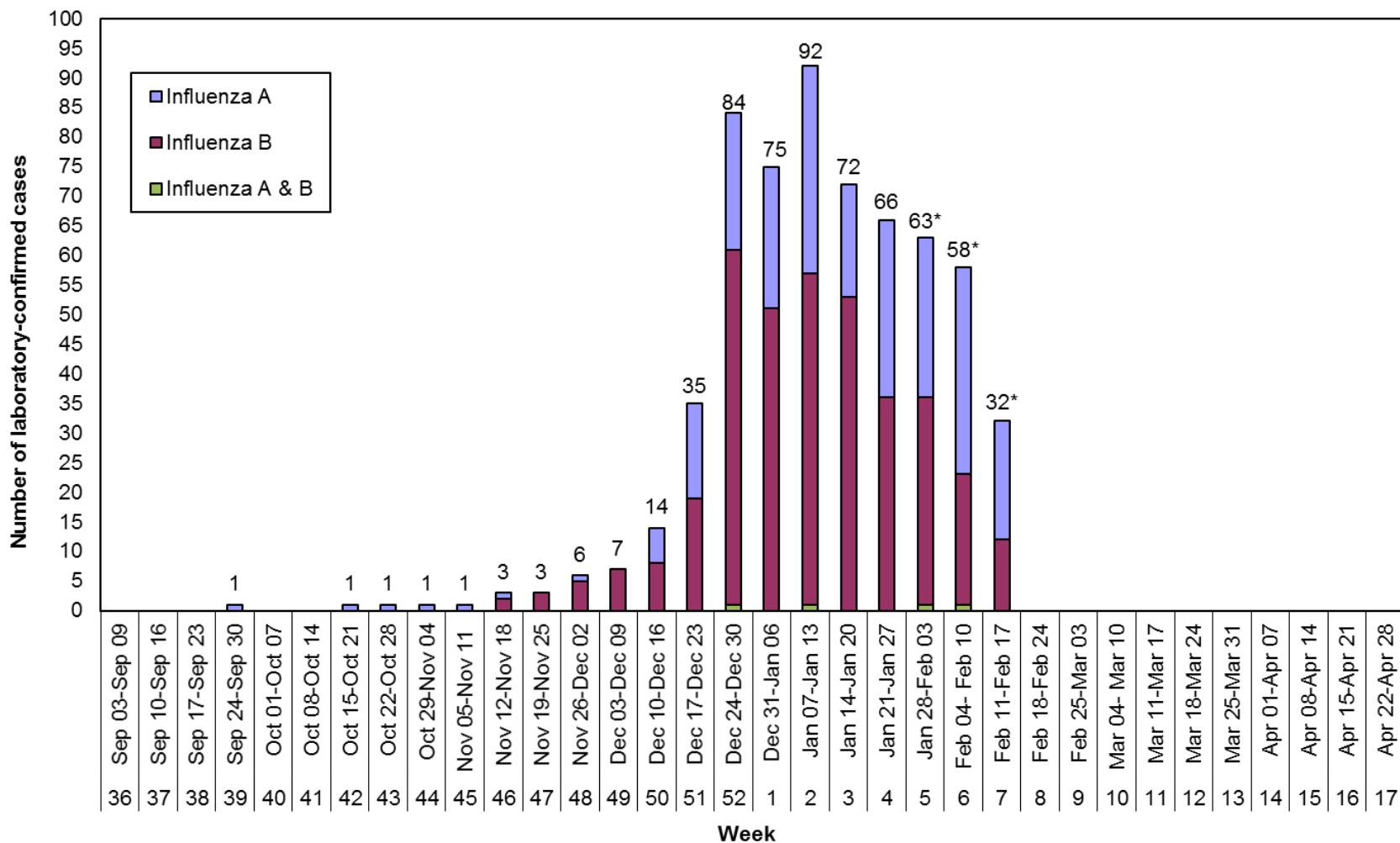
Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: <i>Current Reporting Period</i>	Recent Trends
<b>Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness</b>	Feb. 11-17	<p>An average of 10.3% of patients presented with fever and respiratory symptoms.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the pediatric emergency department, where 30.7% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms.</p>	<p><b>Lower</b> than 11.7% reported the previous week (Feb. 4-10).</p> <p><b>Higher</b> than 28.8% reported the previous week (Feb. 4-10).</p>
<b>Absence reports from elementary schools (i.e., absenteeism &gt; 10%)</b>	Feb. 12-16	Twenty-six elementary schools from one school board reported average absenteeism (due to all causes) exceeding 10%	

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

## Appendix B

### Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases, by influenza date† Middlesex-London 2017-2018 influenza season (N=615)



Data source: Middlesex-London Health Unit internal influenza tracking database, extracted February 20, 2018.

† 'Influenza date' is the earliest of: symptom onset date, specimen collection date, and reported date. As a result, the weekly counts shown in this section differ from those provided in other sections of this report.

\* Counts may be incomplete and are subject to change due to the retrospective nature of reporting.