

2011-2012 Influenza Surveillance Update of Current Status and Issues

January 6, 2012

Influenza activity in Middlesex-London:

Since the last report, two cases of influenza A have been reported to the Middlesex-London Health Unit. One of the samples has been typed as human influenza A (H3). Both cases were hospitalized. To date, there have been five Influenza A cases identified in Middlesex London for the 2011-2012 Influenza surveillance season. Four of these samples have been typed as human influenza A (H3). No outbreaks of influenza have been declared in long-term care homes or in acute care facilities. The proportion of patients presenting to emergency departments and urgent care with febrile illness is higher compared to the previous week. Information about school absenteeism is unavailable because schools are out for winter break. Based on the available information, influenza activity in Middlesex London remains low, but there is some evidence that it may be beginning to increase.

Provincial and National Influenza Activity:

Influenza activity across the province continues to be seen at low levels. Compared to the same time period last year there have been fewer cases and fewer influenza outbreaks reported this season. Nationally, influenza activity has remained similar to previous weeks.

To date, strain characterization of influenza isolates in Ontario and Canada has demonstrated a generally good match with this season's influenza vaccine. Since the start of the season, the National Microbiology Lab has characterized 38 samples from across Canada with the following results: 19 Influenza A (H3N2)/Perth/16/2009-like and six Influenza A/California/07/2009, both of which are components of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine; six influenza B strains are antigenically related to the vaccine strain B/Brisbane/60/2008, which also is a component of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine; and the other seven influenza B viruses are antigenically related to B/Wisconsin/01/2010-like, which belongs to a different lineage than the influenza strain B that is in this year's vaccine.

Influenza vaccination opportunities:

Influenza vaccination is available at some health care providers' offices and at the Health Unit's walk-in Immunization clinics. Clinics are scheduled at 50 King Street in London on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.. Clinics also take place at the Kenwick Mall in Strathroy from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month.

Appendix A
Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators
January 6, 2012

Influenza activity in Middlesex-London is low, but there is some evidence that it may be beginning to increase.

Indicator	Recent trends / data	Comments
Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness	Increasing	From December 25 to 31, an average of 8.3% 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 value is higher than 6.3% from the previous week. The proportion was highest at the paediatric emergency department, where 20.2% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This value is higher than 15.4% from the previous week.
Absence reports from schools (i.e., absenteeism > 10%)	Data not available	
Laboratory-confirmed cases	Low	Two new case of influenza A have been reported to the Health Unit since the last report. Since the beginning of the influenza surveillance season, a total of 5 community influenza A cases (4 human influenza A (H3)) have been reported in Middlesex-London.
Hospitalizations	Low	Since the last report, two new laboratory-confirmed influenza cases were hospitalized. To date, four people with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been hospitalized since the start of the influenza surveillance season.
Deaths	None reported	
Long-term care facility outbreaks	None reported	Since the beginning of the influenza surveillance season, no institutional outbreaks of influenza have been reported to the Health Unit.
Sentinel X-ray provider reports regarding newly identified bronchopneumonia cases	Increasing	From December 28 to 30, 6.9% of chest x-rays performed by the sentinel x-ray provider were newly diagnosed bronchopneumonia cases. This proportion represents an increase compared to 5.4% from the previous week.
Calls to Telehealth Ontario related to respiratory and influenza-like illness	None reported	
Percentage of influenza tests performed by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory that are positive from across the province	Similar to previous report	Based on provincial testing done by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory from December 11 to 17, two of the 285 specimens tested positive for influenza A and one tested positive for influenza B. This equates to 0.7% positivity for influenza A and 0.4% positivity for influenza B.

