

2011-2012 Influenza Surveillance Update of Current Status and Issues

January 30, 2012

Influenza activity in Middlesex-London:

No cases of influenza were reported to the Middlesex-London Health Unit since the last report. To date, there have been seven influenza A cases and one influenza B case identified in Middlesex London for the 2011-2012 influenza surveillance season. Five of the influenza A samples have been typed as human influenza A (H3). There continues to be no outbreaks of influenza in long-term care homes or in acute care facilities. The overall proportion of patients presenting to emergency departments and urgent care with febrile illness is comparable to the previous week, and school absenteeism is low. Based on the available information, influenza activity in Middlesex London continues to remain low.

Provincial and National Influenza Activity:

Influenza: To date, influenza activity across the province is similar to the previous week and remains low. According to the latest Ontario Influenza Bulletin, there were 38 cases reported between January 15 and 21, 2012. A total of 150 influenza cases have been reported to the province for the 2011-2012 surveillance season. The majority of influenza cases reported to date were subtyped as influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 (formerly known as influenza A pH1N1) (35 cases) or influenza B (61 cases), which together account for 64.0% (96/150) of cases reported to date. Provincially, three institutional influenza outbreaks have been reported to date this season including an influenza B outbreak that was reported between January 15 and 21. Nationally, influenza activity is increasing in many regions, but remains low in the Territories and the Atlantic region.

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 107 samples from across Canada with the following results: 40 Influenza A (H3N2)/Perth/16/2009-like and 24 Influenza A/California/07/2009, both of which are components of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine; 25 influenza B strains are antigenically related to the strain B/Brisbane/60/2008, which also is a component of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine; and the other 18 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.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus: Provincially and nationally, the main virus being identified is Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). In Ontario, there were 33 positive results of 94 samples tested by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory, for a positivity rate of 35%. Nationally, the percent positivity for RSV is 18%, making it the most prevalent among the other respiratory viruses being detected in the country.

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

Influenza activity in Middlesex London continues to remain low.

Indicator	Recent trends / data	Comments
Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness	Low	<p>From January 22 to 28, an average of 6.2% 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 comparable to 6.7% from the previous week, and slightly increased relative to 4.8% from two weeks ago.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the paediatric emergency department, where 18.6% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This value is greater than 17.3% from the previous week and 13.5% from two weeks ago.</p>
Absence reports from schools (i.e., absenteeism > 10%)	Low	From January 16 to 19, none of the elementary schools in either of the two main English public school boards reported a 5-day average absenteeism exceeding 10%.
Laboratory-confirmed cases	None reported	<p>No cases of influenza have been reported to the Health Unit this week.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the influenza surveillance season, seven influenza As and one influenza B have been reported in Middlesex-London. Five of the influenza A strains have been characterized as H3.</p>
Hospitalizations	None reported	<p>No hospitalizations of cases with lab confirmed influenza were reported this week.</p> <p>To date, five people with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been hospitalized since the start of the influenza surveillance season.</p>
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	Low	From January 23 to 28, 4.3% of chest x-rays performed by the sentinel x-ray provider were newly diagnosed bronchopneumonia cases. This proportion is lower than 5.2% 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	Lower	Based on provincial testing done by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory from January 15 to 21, 5 of 341 samples tested positive for influenza A for a positivity rate of 1.5% and 6 of 341 samples tested positive for influenza B for a positivity rate of 1.8%.