

2012-2013 Influenza Surveillance Update of Current Status and Issues

December 12, 2012

Between December 4 and the end of day on Monday December 10, a total of 30 new laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza (29 influenza A and one influenza B) have been reported to the Middlesex-London Health Unit. Sixteen hospitalizations and one death were reported among these cases. Two new influenza A outbreaks were declared in long-term care homes, bringing the total number of influenza outbreaks in facilities to four; three in long-term care homes and one in an acute care hospital. Three of the 30 newly reported cases are associated with influenza outbreaks.

As of Monday December 10, 2012, a total of 70 laboratory-confirmed influenza A cases and one influenza B case were reported in Middlesex-London. Twenty-six of the reported influenza A cases have been subtyped as human influenza A(H3) and one has been subtyped as influenza A(H1N1)pdm09. Influenza immunization status is known for 45 of the 71 reported cases. Of these, 34 (76%) have not received influenza immunization for the 2012/2013 season, and 11 (24%) have been immunized.

Public Health Ontario reported that in Ontario, influenza activity continued to increase for the week of November 25 to December 1, 2012, and was highest in the South West region of the province. This was driven by influenza A activity; the percent positivity for influenza B remained low. The dominant circulating subtype of influenza A seen to date this season is H3N2.

In Canada, since the beginning of September, 49 influenza viruses have been antigenically characterized. Thirty-three influenza A(H3N2) viruses were similar to A/Victoria/361/2011 and six A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses were similar to A/California/07/09. Seven B viruses were similar to B/Wisconsin/01/2010 and three were similar to B/Brisbane/60/2008. The components of the 2012/2013 influenza vaccine are A/California/7/2009-like virus (an H1N1pdm09-like virus), A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2)-like virus, and B/Wisconsin/1/2010-like virus.

It is very important to continue to promote the influenza vaccine for your patients, residents and staff. Influenza vaccinations will continue to be available at the Health Unit's Walk-in Immunization Clinics, which take place as follows:

50 King Street, London

- Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays – 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- First and third Wednesdays of each month – 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Kenwick Mall, Strathroy

- First Tuesday of each month – 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm

Influenza vaccinations are also available at some health care providers' offices and at some pharmacies.

Additional information about where influenza vaccinations are offered can be found on the Health Unit website at <http://www.healthunit.com/article.aspx?ID=10920>.

Appendix A
Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators
December 12, 2012

There is significant influenza activity in Middlesex-London, which continues to increase from previous weeks.

Indicator	Recent trends / data	Comments
Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness	Increased	<p>From December 2 – 8, an average of 12.2% 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 is an increase compared to 9.8% from the previous week.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the paediatric emergency department, where 32.7% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This is an increase compared to 25.2% from the previous week.</p>
Absence reports from elementary schools (i.e., absenteeism > 10%)	Increased and high	<p>From December 3 – 7, 19 elementary schools in the two main English public school boards reported a 5-day average absenteeism exceeding 10%. This number is greater than the previous week, when six elementary schools reported a 5-day average absenteeism exceeding 10%.</p> <p>Several schools continue to report absenteeism due to influenza-like illness, as well as Norovirus-like illness, which causes diarrhea and vomiting.</p>
Laboratory-confirmed cases	Increased and high	<p>From December 4 – 10, 30 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported (29 influenza A and one influenza B), including three cases associated with influenza outbreaks in two long-term care homes.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the surveillance season on September 1, a total of 71 laboratory confirmed influenza (70 Influenza A and 1 influenza B) cases have been reported to the Health Unit.</p>
Hospitalizations	Increased and high	<p>Since the previous report, 16 people with laboratory-confirmed influenza were reported to be hospitalized. To date, 39 people with laboratory-confirmed influenza were hospitalized.</p>
Deaths		<p>One death has been reported among cases with laboratory confirmed influenza.</p> <p>To date, three deaths have been reported among cases with laboratory-confirmed influenza.</p>
Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/acute care	Increased	<p>Since the previous report, two new influenza A outbreaks were declared in long-term care homes.</p> <p>To date, four influenza A outbreaks have been reported, three in long-term care homes and one in an acute care hospital.</p>
Sentinel X-ray provider reports regarding newly identified bronchopneumonia cases	Decreased	<p>From December 3 – 8, 4.0% of chest x-rays performed by the sentinel x-ray provider were newly diagnosed bronchopneumonia cases. This is decreased compared to 4.5% from the previous week.</p>
Percentage of Ontario laboratory samples that are positive for influenza	High for influenza A	<p>In Ontario, from November 25 – December 1, 149 of 1,236 tests were positive for influenza A (12.06% positivity) and 2 of 1,236 tests were positive for influenza B (0.16% positivity). Compared to the previous week, this represents a slight increase in percent positivity (0.72% increase) for influenza A. For the first time this season, influenza A had the highest percent positivity among all circulating respiratory viruses, exceeding entero/rhinovirus, which had 8.12% positivity.</p>