British Columbia Influenza Surveillance Bulletin

Influenza Season 2018-19, Number 8, Week 2 January 6 to January 12, 2019

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Peak of A(H1N1)pdm09 epidemic likely passed in BC but activity remains elevated

During week 2, all surveillance indicators suggest that BC has likely passed the epidemic peak of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 this season. However, influenza activity is likely to remain elevated for several more weeks, as expected following the epidemic peak and at this time of year more generally.

Among influenza viruses typed at the BCCDC PHL since week 40, virtually all have been influenza A and, among those subtyped, more than 90% this season so far have been A(H1N1)pdm09.

Children less than 10 years of age and non-elderly adults comprise 75% of all A(H1N1)pdm09 detections to date with children in particular disproportionately affected. Conversely, elderly adults are over-represented among A(H3N2) detections in BC, accounting for 67% of A(H3N2) detections thus far.

Since our last bulletin, 3 laboratory-confirmed influenza A outbreaks in long term care facilities (LTCF), have been reported. A total of 14 lab-confirmed LTCF outbreaks have been reported since the beginning of the season (week 40). In contrast, between weeks 40 and 2 of the A(H3N2) dominant 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, 120 and 79 lab-confirmed LTCF outbreaks, respectively, had been reported. The lower number to date this season is consistent with fewer LTCF outbreaks expected during seasons of dominant A(H1N1)pdm09 compared to dominant A(H3N2) circulation.

Prepared by BCCDC Influenza & Emerging Respiratory Pathogens Team

Report Disseminated: January 17, 2019





British Columbia

Sentinel Physicians

In week 2, influenza-like illness (ILI) rates among patients presenting to sentinel sites decreased slightly in comparison to week 1 and remains within expected levels for this time of the year (Figure 1). Nine (33%) sentinel sites reported data for week 2. Rates are subject to change as reporting becomes more complete.

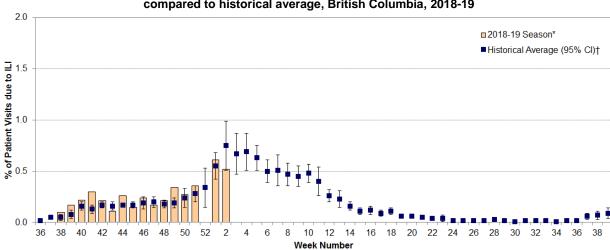


Figure 1: Percent of patient visits to sentinel physicians due to influenza-like illness (ILI) compared to historical average, British Columbia, 2018-19

^{*} Data are subject to change as reporting becomes more complete.
† 10-year historical average for 2018-19 season based on 2005-06 to 2017-2018 seasons, excluding 2008-09 and 2009-10 due to atypical seasonality; CI=confidence interval.

BC Centre for Disease Control An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

BC Children's Hospital Emergency Room

The proportion of visits to BC Children's Hospital Emergency Room (ER) attributed to ILI has declined since week 52. Rates remain within expected levels for this time of the year (**Figure 2**).

Adv

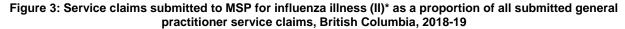
Figure 2: Percent of patients presenting to BC Children's Hospital ER attributed to influenza-like illness (ILI), British Columbia, 2018-19

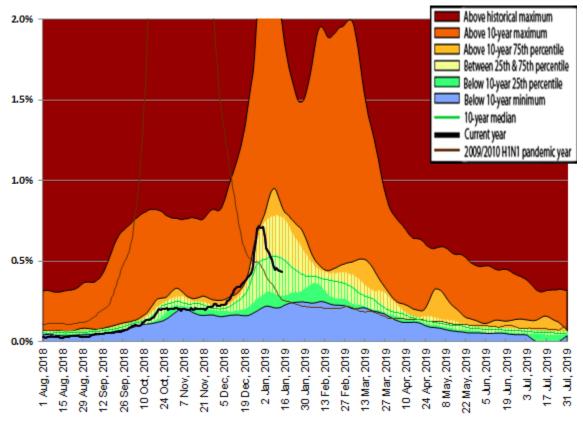
Source: BCCH Admitting, Discharge, Transfer database (ADT). Data includes records with a triage chief complaint of "flu" or "influenza" or "fever/cough." * 5-year historical average for 2018-19 season based on 2012-13 to 2017-18 seasons; CI=confidence interval.

BC Centre for Disease Control An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

Medical Services Plan

In week 2, BC Medical Services Plan (MSP) general practitioner claims for influenza illness (II), as a proportion of all submitted MSP claims, continued to decline following a likely peak over the holiday period (**Figure 3**).Rates for the province overall and by region were within expected levels for this time of the year (**Figure 4**).





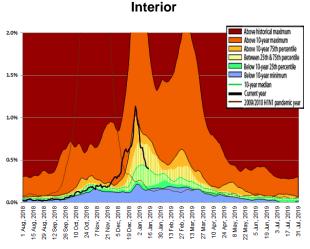
^{*} Influenza illness is tracked as the percentage of all submitted MSP general practitioner claims with ICD-9 code 487 (influenza).

Data for the period August 1, 2009 to July 31, 2010 have been excluded from the 10-year median calculation due to atypical seasonality during the 2009/2010 H1N1 pandemic year. MSP data beginning August 1, 2018 corresponds to sentinel ILI week 31; data are current to January 14, 2019.

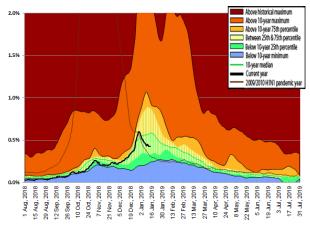
Data provided by Population Health Surveillance and Epidemiology, BC Ministry of Health Services.

BC Centre for Disease Control An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

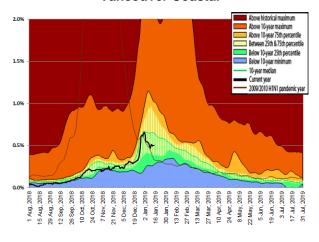
Figure 4



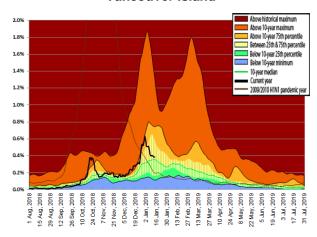
Fraser



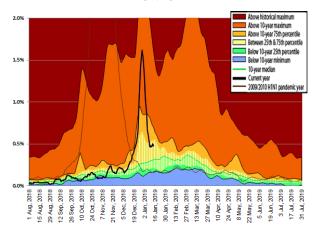
Vancouver Coastal



Vancouver Island



Northern



British Columbia Laboratory Reports

In recognition of expanded influenza testing by additional laboratories across British Columbia, this section of the bulletin now includes respiratory specimens tested at sites beyond the BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHL) in deriving the test-positivity indicator. This change was implemented in the bulletin issued week 48 and represents a change from earlier bulletins of this and previous seasons. Type and subtype distribution will continue to be derived from the BCCDC PHL.

Cumulatively, during the 2018-19 season (since week 40, starting October 1, 2018), 2635/11137 (24%) specimens tested positive for influenza at participating laboratories across British Columbia (BC) (as submitted to FluWatch). In week 2, 701/1872 (37%) specimens tested positive for influenza at these laboratories, continuing the downward trend observed since week 52 (**Figure 5**).

Cumulatively, during the 2018-19 season (since week 40, starting October 1, 2018), 1854 patients tested positive for influenza at the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) Public Health Laboratory (PHL), of which 1847 (99.6%) were typed as influenza A [94 (5%) A(H3N2), 1545 (84%) A(H1N1)pdm09, 208 (11%) subtype unknown] and 7 (0.4%) as influenza B. Among influenza A viruses subtyped, 1545/1639 (94%) were A(H1N1)pdm09. Of 293 typed influenza viruses in week 2, 290 (99%) were typed as influenza A and 3 (1%) were typed as influenza B. Among the influenza A viruses, 15 (5%) were identified as A(H3N2), 219 (76%) as A(H1N1)pdm09, and for 56 (19%) subtype was unknown. In week 2, therefore, 219/234 (94%) influenza A viruses subtyped were A(H1N1)pdm09 (**Figure 6**).

Since week 40, approximately half (51%) of A(H1N1)pdm09 detections were among adults 20-64 years of age. Twenty-four percent and 21% of detections were observed among children \leq 9 years and elderly adults \geq 65 years of age, respectively. Children aged 10-19 years had a lesser involvement at 4% (**Figure 8**). Children under 10 years of age, who comprise about 10% of the BC population overall, are disproportionately represented among A(H1N1)pdm09 detections in BC. Conversely, the majority (67%) of A(H3N2) detections have been among elderly adults \geq 65 years of age, who comprise about 18% of the population in BC¹.

Respiratory syncytial viruses (n=46) were the most commonly detected other respiratory virus (excluding influenza) at the BCCDC in week 2 (**Figure 6**).

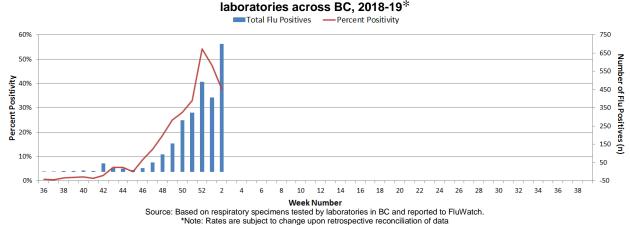


Figure 5: Flu positivity derived from influenza specimens submitted to participating

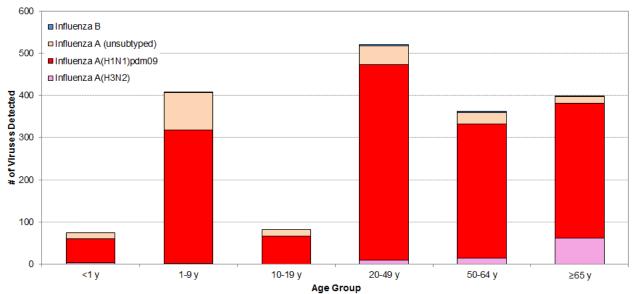
1 Government of British Columbia, BC Stats. Population Estimates 2017. URL: https://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/apps/PopulationEstimates.aspx. Date accessed: December 13, 2018.

BCCDC Public Health Laboratory, 2018-19 600 ■ Other Respiratory Viruses ■ Entero/rhinoviruses 500 ■ Respiratory Syncytial Viruses (RSV) ■Influenza B # of Niruses Detected 300 □Influenza A (unsubtyped) ■Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 ■Influenza A(H3N2) 100 40 42 44 46 48 50 52 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 32 34 36 38 Week Number

Figure 6: Influenza and other virus detections among respiratory specimens submitted to

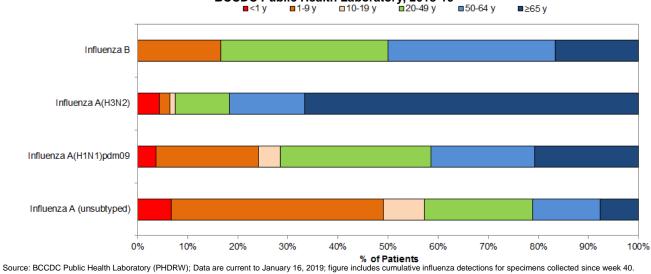
Figure 7: Cumulative number (since week 40) of influenza detections by type, subtype, and age group, **BCCDC Public Health Laboratory, 2018-19**

Source: BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHDRW); Data are current to January 16, 2019.



Source: BCCDC Public Health Laboratory (PHDRW); Data are current to January 16, 2019; figure includes cumulative influenza detections for specimens collected since week 40.

Figure 8: Age distribution of influenza detections (cumulative since week 40), BCCDC Public Health Laboratory, 2018-19



BC Children's and Women's Health Centre Laboratory

In week 2, 134 tests for influenza and 128 tests for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) were conducted at the BC Children's and Women's Health Centre laboratory. Of these, 23 (17%) were positive for influenza A (not subtyped), none were positive for influenza B, and 26 (20%) were positive for RSV. Compared to the prior week 1, both influenza A and RSV test positivity decreased in week 2 (**Figure 9**).

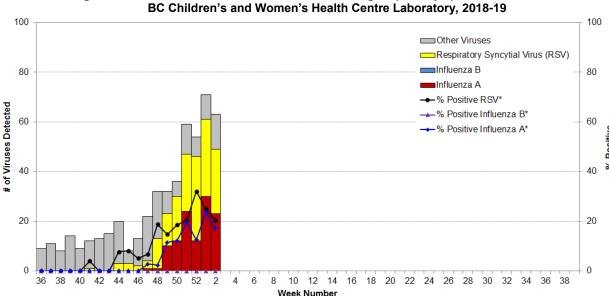


Figure 9: Influenza and other virus detections among respiratory specimens submitted to BC Children's and Women's Health Centre Laboratory, 2018-19

^{*} Positive rates were calculated using aggregate data. The denominators for each rate represent the total number of tests; multiple tests may be performed for a single specimen and/or patient.

Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Outbreaks

In week 2, three laboratory-confirmed outbreaks of influenza A were reported in long-term care facility (LTCF) settings.

Since week 40, a total of 14 LTCF outbreaks (3 A(H3N2), 4 A(H1N1)pdm09, and 7 subtype unknown), 4 acute care facility outbreaks, and 28 school outbreaks have been reported (Figures 10 and 11).

By way of comparison, between weeks 40 and 2 of the 2016-17 and 2017-18 seasons, 120 and 79 labconfirmed LTCF outbreaks, respectively, were reported.

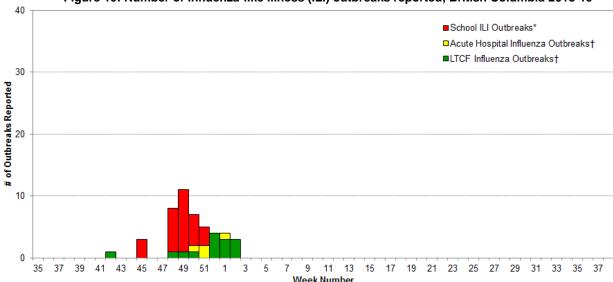


Figure 10: Number of influenza-like illness (ILI) outbreaks reported, British Columbia 2018-19

^{*} School-based ILI outbreak defined as >10% absenteeism on any day, most likely due to ILI. Onset † Facility-based influenza outbreaks defined as 2 or more ILI cases within 7-day period, with at least one laboratory-confirmed case of influenza.

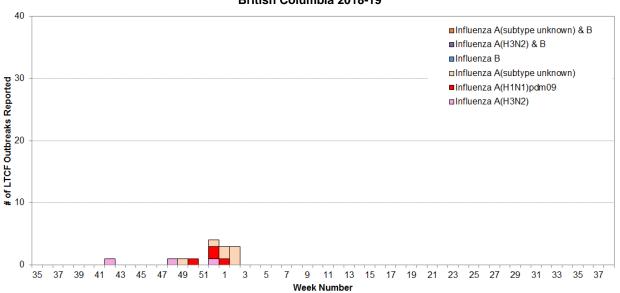


Figure 11: Number of influenza outbreaks by type/subtype in long-term care facilities (LTCF), British Columbia 2018-19[†]

[†] Facility-based influenza outbreaks defined as 2 or more ILI cases within 7-day period, with at least one laboratory-confirmed case of influenza.

Emerging Respiratory Viruses

Cases of acute flaccid myelitis (AFM) - possibly associated with enterovirus D68 (EV-D68)

Since September, the US CDC has reported an increase in paediatric cases of acute flaccid myelitis (AFM), a subset of acute flaccid paralysis (AFP) (often referred to as "polio-like illness" in the media).

As of January 11th 2019, the CDC has confirmed 196 cases of AFM across 39 states – predominantly affecting children under 5 years of age. A further 161 reports are currently under investigation. Patients have presented with neurological features, specifically single or multi-limb weakness, with most requiring hospitalization. More than 90% of AFM cases reported a mild respiratory or febrile illness - consistent with a viral infection - in the weeks preceding symptom onset. AFM has a variety of possible causes, including non-polio enterovirus infection. Among 71 confirmed cases tested in 2018, just over half (54%) tested positive for enterovirus or rhinovirus at the time of AFM diagnosis (37% for enterovirus D68 (EV-D68), 29% for enterovirus A71 (EV-A71)).

In the US, the number of confirmed cases has surpassed that of their previous high in 2016 (when 149 confirmed cases were detected), and continues to increase. These reports indicate that 2018 represents another biennial peak, similar to that observed during EV-D68 epidemics in 2014 and 2016. The latter EV-D68 epidemics were noteworthy for including cases with severe respiratory manifestations (less prominently noted in 2018); however, neurological complications were also identified. Accordingly, the US CDC has escalated its response by establishing an AFM task force to aid investigation efforts.

An increase in reported cases of AFP has also been detected outside of North America. Public Health England is currently investigating an apparent increase in reports of AFP in England (28 cases in 2018 as of December 19th, compared to an annual expected number of less than 10). The majority of these cases have been children and have arisen since September 2018. EV-D68 has been implicated in 8 (29%) of these cases.

In Canada, a possible uptick in reports of AFP was also noted in 2018; as of December 31st, 47 confirmed cases have been documented with a further 29 cases under investigation. The annual expected number of cases reported to the Public Health Agency of Canada ranges between 27-51 cases.

While EV-D68 has been detected at low levels in BC this 2018-19 autumn-winter period, we are aware of a single report of laboratory-confirmed EV-D68 infection associated with neurological features. This AFM report (a young child) presented in December 2018 with acute flaccid paralysis of an upper limb following a mild respiratory illness.

General information related to AFP/AFM and EV-D68 is available from the following sources:

US CDC AFM webpage: https://www.cdc.gov/acute-flaccid-myelitis/index.html

US CDC factsheet on EV-D68: https://www.cdc.gov/non-polio-enterovirus/about/ev-d68.html

PHAC information sheet on AFM in Canada: https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/acute-flaccid-myelitis.html

A summary of the 2014 experience in BC was published in Euro Surveillance, available from: https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2015.20.43.30047

National

FluWatch (week 1, December 30, 2018 to January 5, 2019)

In week 1, although influenza activity remained high, laboratory detections declined from the prior week (26% versus 29%), suggesting that nationally the influenza season may have peaked in the last week of December. Influenza A is the most common influenza virus circulating in Canada; the vast majority of these viruses continue to be A(H1N1)pdm09 (94% of subtyped influenza A viruses). The majority (68%) of lab-confirmed A(H1N1)pdm09 detections have been reported among individuals under the age of 45, with the highest estimated rate of hospitalization reported among children under 5 years of age. Details are available at: https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance/weekly-influenza-reports.html.

National Microbiology Laboratory (NML): Strain Characterization

From September 1, 2018 to January 17, 2019, the National Microbiology Laboratory (NML) has characterized 571 influenza viruses [49 A(H3N2), 506 A(H1N1)pdm09 and 16 B (14 Yamagata lineage and 2 Victoria lineage)] received from Canadian laboratories.

Influenza A(H3N2): Seventeen influenza A(H3N2) viruses were considered antigenically similar to A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016, the WHO-recommended A(H3N2) component of the 2018-19 northern hemisphere influenza vaccine. Of these, 13 belonged to genetic group 3C.2a1, 2 belonged to genetic group 3C.2a and 2 belonged to 3C.3a.

Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09: 495 A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses antigenically characterized were found to be similar to the A/Michigan/45/2015 virus: the WHO-recommended influenza A(H1N1) component of the 2018-19 northern hemisphere influenza vaccine. However, 11 viruses showed reduced titer with ferret antisera raised against cell culture-propagated A/Michigan/45/2015.

Influenza B: 14 influenza B viruses antigenically characterized were considered similar to the B/Phuket/3073/2013 virus, which belongs to the B Yamagata lineage: the WHO-recommended influenza B component of the 2018-19 northern hemisphere *quadrivalent* influenza vaccine. The WHO-recommended influenza B component of the *trivalent* vaccine is a B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus of the B Victoria lineage. Two influenza B viruses characterized were antigenically similar to B/Colorado/06/2017.

National Microbiology Laboratory (NML): Antiviral Resistance

From September 1, 2018 to January 17, 2019, the NML received influenza viruses from Canadian laboratories for drug susceptibility testing.

<u>Amantadine:</u> Of the 290 influenza viruses [41 A(H3N2) and 249 A(H1N1)pdm09] tested against amantadine, all were resistant.

Oseltamivir: Of the 467 influenza viruses [47 A(H3N2), 404 A(H1N1)pdm09, and 16 B] tested against oseltamivir, all were sensitive.

Zanamivir: Of the 466 influenza viruses [47 A(H3N2), 403 A(H1N1)pdm09, and 16 B] tested against zanamivir, all were sensitive.

International

USA (week 1, December 30, 2018 to January 5, 2019)

Influenza activity remains elevated in the United States (US), with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, influenza A(H3N2), and influenza B viruses continuing to co-circulate. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses have predominated in most areas of the country; however, influenza A(H3N2) viruses have predominated in southeastern US. In week 1, the proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza was below the system-specific epidemic threshold. Three influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported during week 1. The proportion of outpatient visits for ILI decreased from 4% to 3.5% but remains above the national baseline of 2.2%. The US CDC has posted a summary of influenza activity in the United States and elsewhere for week 1, available at: https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm

WHO (January 7, 2019, based on data up to December 23, 2018)

There have been no new WHO influenza updates since our last bulletin. Previous updates are available at: https://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance monitoring/updates/en/

WHO Recommendations for Influenza Vaccines

WHO Recommendations for 2018-19 Northern Hemisphere Influenza Vaccine

On February 22, 2018, the WHO announced the recommended strain components for the 2018-19 northern hemisphere trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV)*:

- an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2)-like virus; †
- a B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage) ‡.

It is recommended that quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIV) containing two influenza B viruses contain the above three viruses and a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata/16/88 lineage).

- * Recommended strains represent a change for two of the three components used for the 2017-18 northern hemisphere TIV
- † Recommended strain represents a change from the 2017-18 season vaccine which contained an A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus
- ‡ Recommended strain represents a change from the 2017-18 season vaccine which contained a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus.

For further details: http://www.who.int/influenza/vaccines/virus/recommendations/2018_19_north/en/

WHO Recommendations for the 2019 Southern Hemisphere Influenza Vaccine

On September 27, 2018, the WHO announced recommended strain components for the 2019 southern hemisphere trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV):*

- an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Switzerland/8060/2017 (H3N2)-like virus;‡
- a B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage).§

It is recommended that quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIV) containing two influenza B viruses contain the above three viruses and a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata/16/88 lineage).

- * Recommended strains represent a change for two of the three components used for the 2018 southern hemisphere TIV.
- ‡ Recommended strain represents a change from the 2018 season vaccine which contained an A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2)-like virus
- § Recommended strain for the influenza B component represents a lineage-level change from a B(Yamagata)-lineage virus in the 2018 vaccine to a B(Victoria)-lineage virus in the 2019 vaccine.

For further details: http://www.who.int/influenza/vaccines/virus/recommendations/2019_south/en/

Additional Information

Explanatory Note:

The surveillance period for the 2018-19 influenza season is defined starting in week 40. Weeks 36-39 of the 2017-18 season are shown on graphs for comparison purposes.

List of Acronyms:

ACF: Acute Care Facility

AI: Avian influenza

MSP: BC Medical Services Plan

NHA: Northern Health Authority

FHA: Fraser Health Authority NML: National Microbiological Laboratory

HBoV: Human bocavirus **A(H1N1)pdm09**: Pandemic H1N1 influenza (2009)

HMPV: Human metapneumovirus **RSV**: Respiratory syncytial virus

HSDA: Health Service Delivery Area

VCHA: Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
VIHA: Vancouver Island Health Authority
VIHA: Vancouver Island Health Authority
WHO: World Health Organization

LTCF: Long-Term Care Facility

Current AMMI Canada Guidelines on the Use of Antiviral Drugs for Influenza:

www.ammi.ca/?ID=122&Language=ENG

Web Sites:

BCCDC Emerging Respiratory Pathogen Updates:

www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/emerging-respiratory-virus-updates

Influenza Web Sites

Canada – Influenza surveillance (FluWatch): https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza-surveillance.html

Washington State Flu Updates: http://www.doh.wa.gov/portals/1/documents/5100/420-100-fluupdate.pdf USA Weekly Surveillance Reports: www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/

Joint ECDC - WHO/Europe weekly influenza update (Flu News Europe): flunewseurope.org

WHO - Weekly Epidemiological Record: www.who.int/wer/en/

WHO Collaborating Centre for Reference and Research on Influenza (Australia): www.influenzacentre.org/ Australian Influenza Report:

www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/cda-surveil-ozflu-flucurr.htm

New Zealand Influenza Surveillance Reports: www.surv.esr.cri.nz/virology/influenza_weekly_update.php

Avian Influenza Web Sites

WHO – Influenza at the Human-Animal Interface: www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/ World Organization for Animal Health: www.oie.int/eng/en_index.htm

Contact Us:

Tel: (604) 707-2510 Fax: (604) 707-2516

Email: InfluenzaFieldEpi@bccdc.ca

Communicable Disease Prevention and Control Services (CDPACS)

BC Centre for Disease Control

655 West 12th Ave, Vancouver BC V5Z 4R4

Online: www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/data-reports/influenza-surveillance-reports

Link to fillable Facility Outbreak Report Form: http://www.bccdc.ca/resource-

gallery/Documents/Guidelines%20and%20Forms/Forms/Epid/Influenza%20and%20Respiratory/OutbreakRepor

tForm 2018.pdf

Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) Outbreak Summary Report Form

Please complete and email to ilioutbreak@bccdc.ca

Note: This form is for provincial surveillance purposes. Please notify your local health unit per local guidelines/requirements.

ILI: Acute onset of respiratory illness with fever and cough and with one or more of the following: sore throat, arthralgia, myalgia, or prostration which *could* be due to influenza virus. In children under 5, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present. In patients under 5 or 65 and older, fever may not be prominent. **Schools and work site outbreak:** greater than 10% absenteeism on any day, most likely due to ILI. **Residential institutions** (facilities) outbreak: two or more cases of ILI within a seven-day period.

Λ	Reporting Information				
A	Person Reporting:		Title:		
	Contact Phone:	Email:			
	Health Authority:	HSDA:			
	Full Facility Name:				
	Is this report:	First Notification (complete section B belo	w; section D if available)	
	Outbreak Over (complete section C and section D below)				
	Report Date (dd/mm/yyyy):				
7	First Notification	<u> </u>			
В	Type of facility*:	Long Term Care Fa	cilities, Nursing Homes	Acute Care Facility	
	,,	Other Setting:			
	If ward or wing, please specify name/number:				
	Date of onset of first case of ILI (dd/mm/yyyy):				
	Date outbreak declared (dd/mm/yyyy):				
	*Long Term Care Facilities, Nursing Homes: Facilities that provide living accommodation for people who require on-site delivery of 24 hour, 7 days a week supervised care, including professional health services, personal care and services such as meals, laundry and housekeeping or other residential care facilities where provincial/territorial public health is responsible for outbreak management under provincial legislation; Acute Care Facility: Publicly funded facilities providing medical and/or surgical treatment and acute nursing care for sick or injured people, through				
	management under provincial registation, Actube Care Pacinity: Public Vinded relations provining interesting under declination and mental facilities); Other Setting: Any locations not otherwise specified here in which outbreaks of influenza or ILI may occur (e.g. retirement homes, assisted living or hospice settings, private hospitals/clinics, correctional facilities, colleges/universities, adult education centres, shelters, group homes, and workplaces).				
		1.0			
C	Outbreak Declared Over Date of onset for last case of ILI (dd/mm/yyyy): Date outbreak declared over (dd/mm/yyyy):				
	Date outbreak declared over (dd/mm/yyyy):				
		Numbers to date	Residents		
		Total			
		With ILI		_	
		Hospitalized* Died*		_	
	ا	*suspected to be linked to case of ILI			
_	<u>Laboratory Information</u>				
U	Specimen(s) subm	tted?	ion:)	No 🗌 Don't know	
	If yes, organism ide	yes, organism identified? Yes No Don't know			
	Please specify organism/subtype: Influenza A (subtype:) Influenza B				
	Parainfluenza	Entero/rhinovi	rus Coronavirus	RSV	
	HMPV	Adenovirus	Other:		