

FLU EXPRESS



Flu Express is a weekly report produced by the Respiratory Disease Office of the Centre for Health Protection. It monitors and summarizes the latest local and global influenza activities.

Local Situation of Influenza Activity (as of Feb 5, 2014)

Reporting period: Jan 26 – Feb 1, 2014 (Week 5)

- The latest surveillance data showed that the local influenza activity continued to increase.
- The Centre for Health Protection has collaborated with the Hospital Authority and private hospitals to monitor influenza associated intensive care unit (ICU) admissions or deaths (aged 18 years or above) since Jan 3, 2014. As of Feb 5, there were 89 cases of influenza associated ICU admission or death, in which 30 of them were fatal.
- Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Except for those with contraindications, influenza vaccination is suitable for all members of the public.
- Children (aged between six months and less than 6 years, or attending a kindergarten or child care centre in Hong Kong) and elderly (aged 65 years or above), who are eligible, can be subsidised for seasonal influenza vaccination from enrolled private doctors participating in the Government's vaccination subsidy schemes starting from Oct 2, 2013.

Influenza-like-illness surveillance among sentinel general outpatient clinics, 2012-14

In week 5, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) was 9.0 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 1).

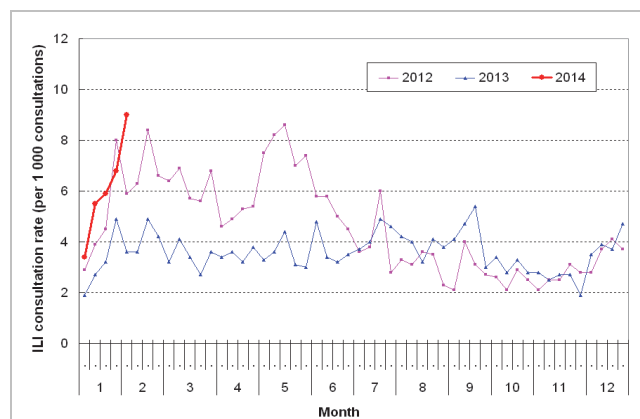


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPC, 2012-14

Influenza-like illness surveillance among sentinel private doctors, 2012-14

In week 5, the average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 48.3 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 2).

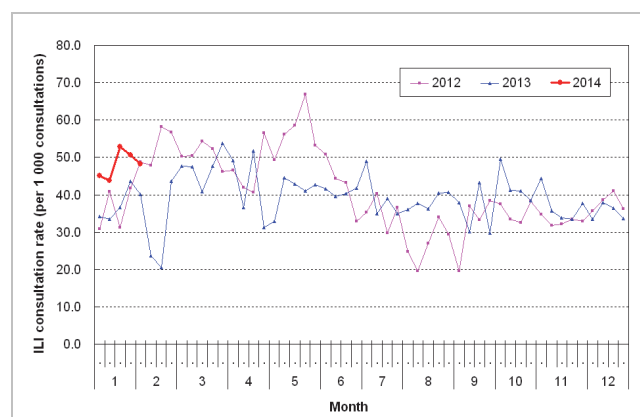


Figure 2 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GP, 2012-14

Influenza virus detections (Laboratory surveillance), 2013-14

In week 5 (Jan 26 to Feb 1, 2014), the number of influenza viruses detected in the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch was 873, including 452 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses, 238 influenza A(H3) viruses and 182 influenza B viruses (Figure 3)*.

*Note: During the same period, one detection of influenza A(H7) virus was recorded.

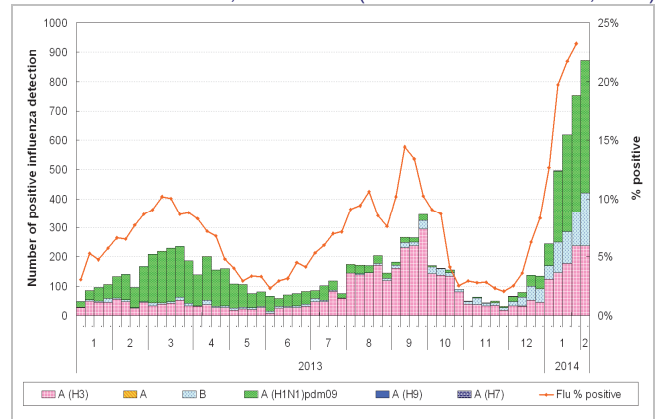


Figure 3 Influenza virus detections, 2013-14

Percent positive for influenza viruses, 2013-14

For the respiratory specimens received between Jan 20 to 26, 2014, 23.2% were tested positive for influenza viruses, including 11.6% influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 6.6% influenza A(H3) and 5.0% influenza B (Figure 4).

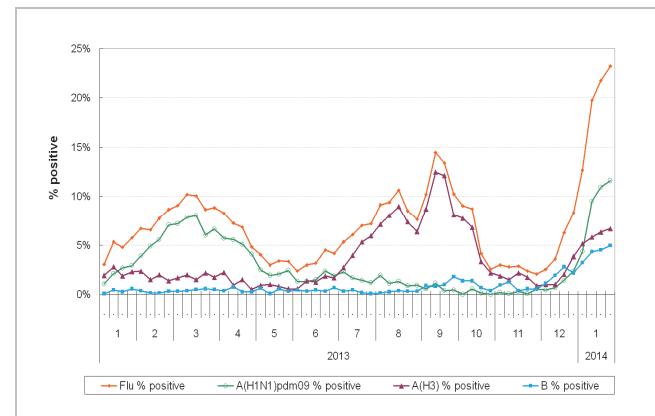


Figure 4 Percent positive for influenza viruses, 2013-14

Influenza-like illness outbreak monitoring, 2013-14

In week 5, 10 ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/institutions were recorded. In the first 4 days of week 6 (Feb 2 to 5, 2014), 3 ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/institutions were recorded (Figure 5).

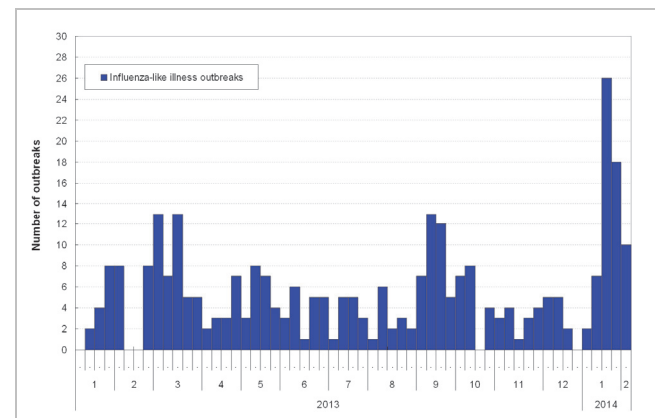


Figure 5 ILI outbreaks, 2013-14

Rate of influenza-like illness syndrome group in accident and emergency departments, 2012-14[#]

In week 5, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 247.2 (per 1,000 coded cases) (Figure 6).

[#]Note: The influenza-like illness syndrome group includes codes such as influenza, upper respiratory tract infection, fever, cough, throat pain, and pneumonia.

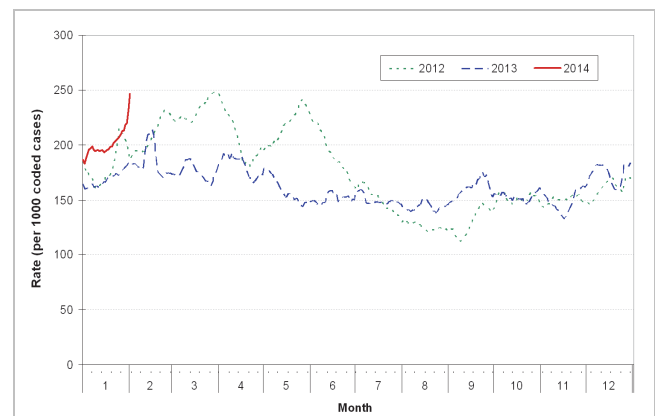


Figure 6 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2012-14

Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths based on discharge coding, 2012-14

In week 5, hospital admission rates with principal diagnosis of influenza for persons aged 0-4 years, 5-64 years and 65 years or above were 2.66, 0.22 and 0.82 cases respectively (per 10,000 people in the age group) (Figure 7). Weekly number of deaths with any diagnosis of influenza in public hospitals is also shown in the figure on the right hand side.

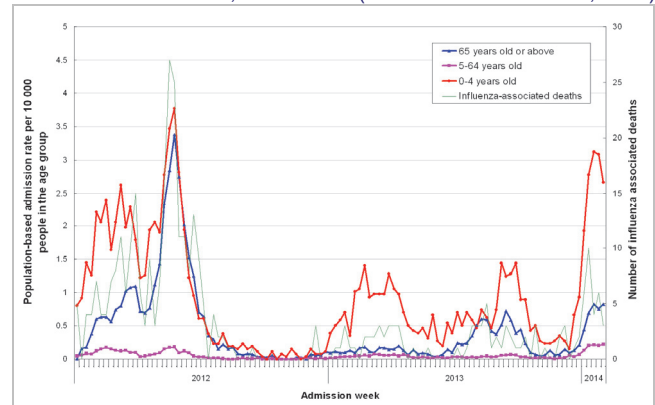


Figure 7 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2012-14

Fever surveillance at sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens, 2012-14

In week 4, 1.27% of children in the sentinel child care centres / kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (Figure 8). The surveillance in week 5 was suspended due to Chinese New Year holiday.

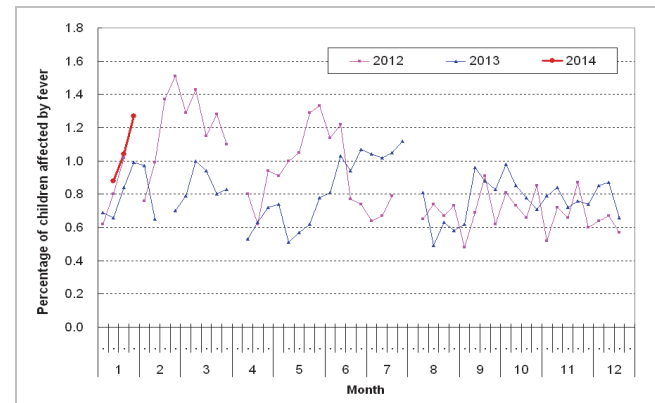


Figure 8 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2012-14

Fever surveillance at sentinel residential care homes for the elderly, 2012-14

In week 5, 0.11% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) had fever (Figure 9).

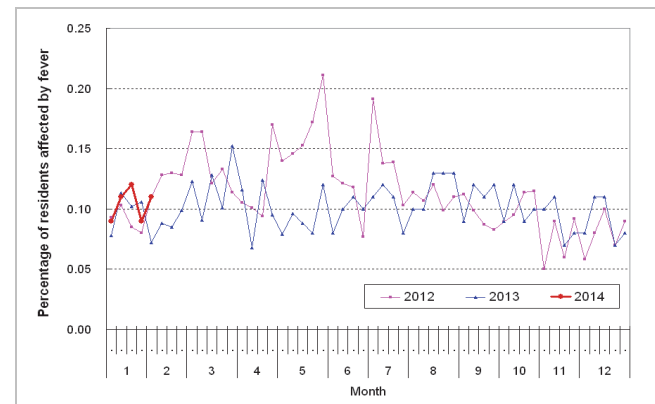


Figure 9 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2012-14

Influenza-like illness surveillance among sentinel Chinese medicine practitioners, 2012-14

In week 5, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 0.17 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 10).

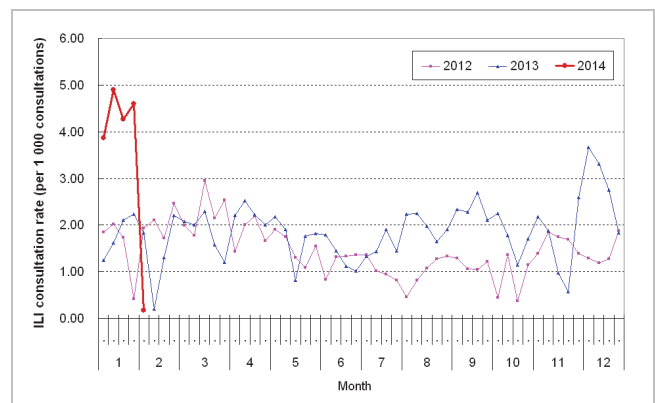


Figure 10 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2012-14

Enhanced Surveillance for Severe Seasonal Influenza (Aged 18 years or above)

- From Jan 29, 2014, 12:00 noon, to Feb 5, 2014, 12:00 noon, 29 cases of influenza associated ICU admission/death were recorded, in which 9 of them were fatal. In addition, 2 previously reported case who required ICU admission passed away during this reporting period.

Note: The data reported are provisional figures and subject to further revision.

Surveillance of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death (Aged above one month and below 18 years)

- In week 5, one case of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death involving a 2-year-old boy who had developed pneumonia was reported. He is now in stable condition. His nasopharyngeal aspirate was tested positive for influenza A(H1N1). In the first 4 days of week 6 (Feb 2 to 5, 2014), two cases of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death involving a 1-month-old boy and a 10-year-old boy were reported. They had developed encephalopathy and acute myocarditis respectively. The 1-month-old boy who had his nasopharyngeal aspirates tested positive for influenza A(H1N1) is now in critical condition, whereas the other case who was tested positive for influenza B is stable.

Note: The data reported are provisional figures and subject to further revision.

Surveillance of Tamiflu resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus infection

- In week 5, three new reports of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus infection involving three males were reported. Their ages ranged from 3 to 84 years. They had been discharged. The virus strains detected were sensitive to zanamivir (Relenza). In the first 4 days of week 6 (Feb 2 to 5, 2014), there were no new reports of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus infection. There are totally 44 reports of Tamiflu resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus detected in Hong Kong since 2009.

Global Situation of Influenza Activity

- In the United States (week ending Jan 25, 2014), influenza activity remained high with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 the predominating virus.
- In Canada (week ending Jan 25, 2014), overall influenza activity decreased, particularly in western Canada and Ontario which experienced an earlier start of influenza season. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus remains the most common virus circulating this season.
- In the United Kingdom (week ending Jan 26, 2014), the weekly influenza consultations remained low in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- In Europe (week ending Jan 26, 2014), influenza activity increased slowly but steadily over the past weeks, mainly in the southern countries in the Region.
- In Singapore (week ending Feb 1, 2014), the number of consultations for acute respiratory infections was on increasing trend in past few weeks.

Sources:

Information have been extracted from the following sources when updates are available: [United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), [Public Health Agency of Canada](#), [United Kingdom Health Protection Agency](#), [World Health Organization/Europe Euroflu](#) and [Singapore Ministry of Health](#).