

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 27, 2013)

Reporting period: Feb 17 – 23, 2013 (Week 8)

- The latest surveillance data showed that the local influenza activity remained elevated.
- 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 18, 2013. As of Feb 27, there were 21 cases of influenza associated ICU admission or death, in which 8 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 between the age of six months and less than 6 years old as well as elderly people aged 65 years and above are eligible to receive subsidised vaccination from enrolled private doctors participating in the Government's vaccination subsidy schemes starting from Sep 24, 2012.

Influenza-like-illness surveillance among sentinel general outpatient clinics, 2011-13

In week 8, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) was 4.2 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 1).

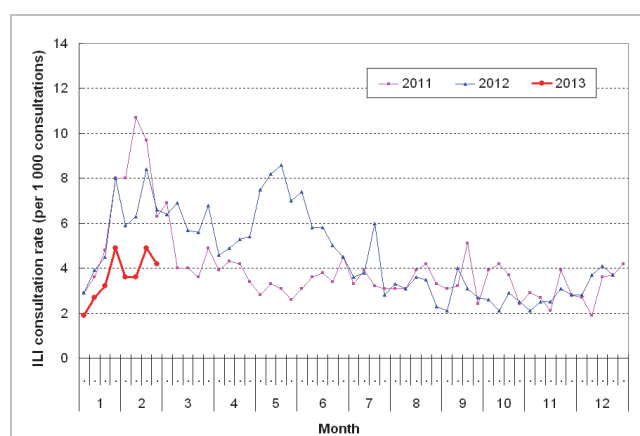


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPC, 2011-13

Influenza-like illness surveillance among sentinel private doctors, 2011-13

In week 8, the average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 43.6 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 2).

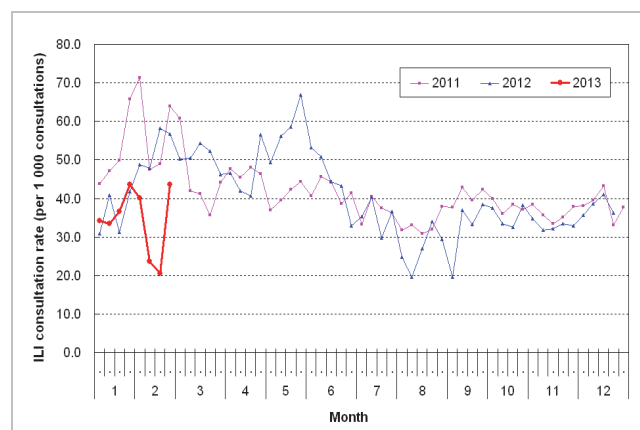


Figure 2 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GP, 2011-13

Influenza virus detections (Laboratory surveillance), 2012-13

In week 8, the number of influenza viruses detected in the Public Health Laboratory Centre was 168, including 120 influenza A (H1N1)2009 viruses, 45 influenza A (H3) viruses and 3 influenza B virus (Figure 3).

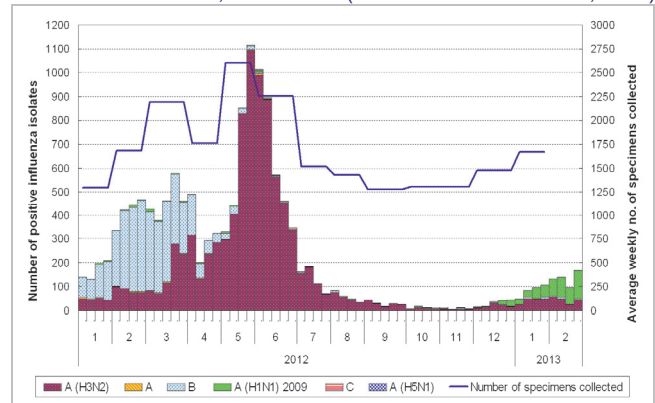


Figure 3 Influenza virus detections, 2012-13

Influenza-like illness outbreak monitoring, 2012-13

In week 8, 8 ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/institutions were recorded (Figure 4). In the first 4 days of week 9 (Feb 24 to 27, 2013), 8 ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/institutions were recorded.

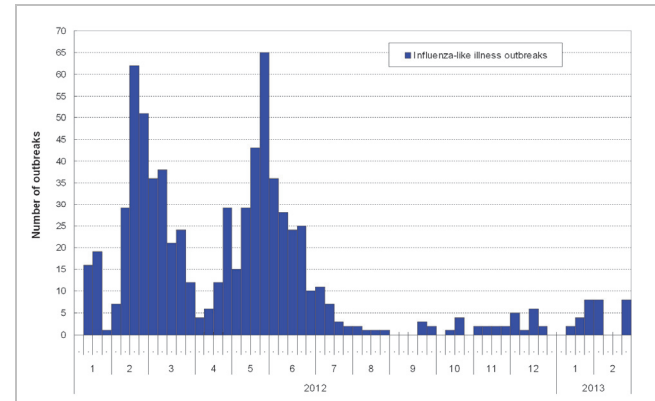


Figure 4 ILI outbreaks, 2012-13

Rate of influenza-like illness syndrome group in accident and emergency departments, 2011-13[#]

In week 8, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 170.7 (per 1,000 coded cases) (Figure 5).

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

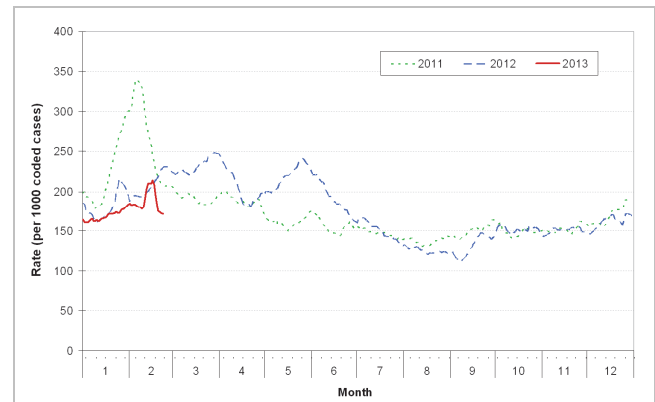


Figure 5 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2011-13

Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths based on discharge coding, 2011-13

In week 8, hospital admission rates with principal diagnosis of influenza for persons aged 0-4 years, 5-64 years and 65 years or above were 1.00, 0.05 and 0.14 cases respectively (per 10,000 people in the age group) (Figure 6). Weekly number of deaths with any diagnosis of influenza in public hospitals is also shown in the figure on the right hand side.

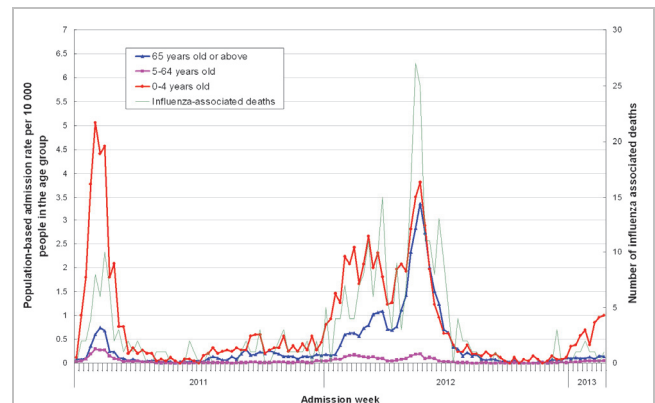


Figure 6 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2011-13

Fever surveillance at sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens, 2011-13

In week 8, 0.70% of children in the sentinel child care centres / kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (Figure 7).

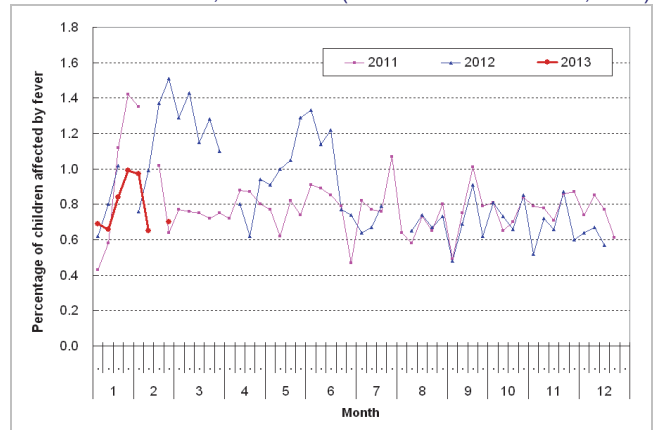


Figure 7 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2011-13

Fever surveillance at sentinel residential care homes for the elderly, 2011-13

In week 8, 0.10% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) had fever (Figure 8).

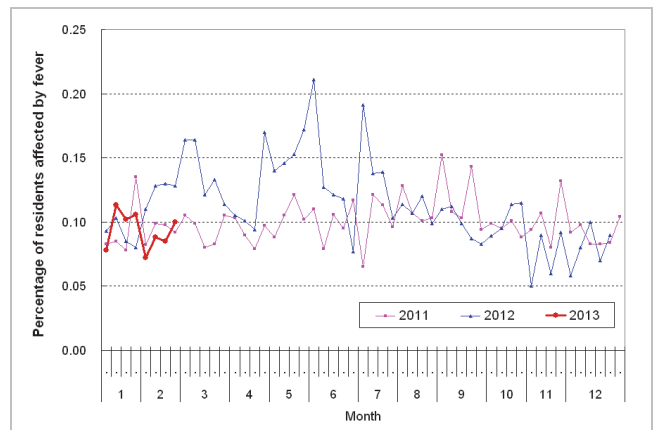


Figure 8 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2011-13

Influenza-like illness surveillance among sentinel Chinese medicine practitioners, 2011-13

In week 8, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 2.21 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 9).

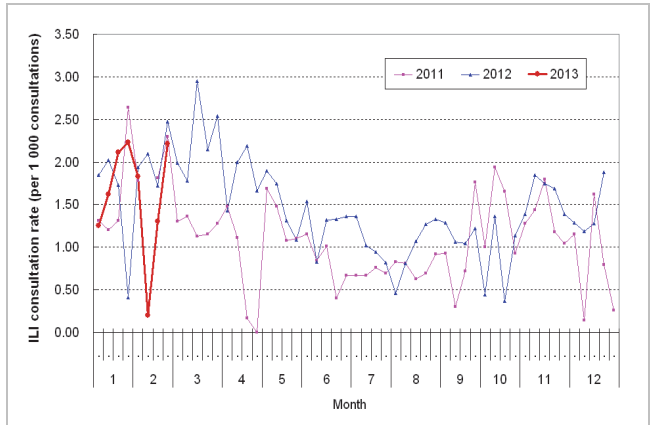


Figure 9 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2011-13

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

- From Feb 20, 2013, 12:00 noon to Feb 27, 2013, 12:00 noon, 3 cases of influenza associated ICU admission or death were recorded, in which 2 of them was fatal.

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 8, three cases of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication, involving a 5-month-old boy, a 15-year-old boy and a 14-year-old boy were reported. Both the 5-month-old boy, who had developed acute bronchiolitis, and the 15-year-old boy, who had developed encephalopathy, had been discharged. The 14-year-old boy who was involved in an influenza outbreak at the Developmental and Disabilities Unit of Caritas Medical Centre had developed aspiration pneumonia and respiratory failure and is now in stable condition. Nasopharyngeal aspirate specimens for all 3 cases were tested positive for influenza A. In the first 4 days of week 9 (Feb 24 to 27, 2013), there were no new reports of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death.

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

Surveillance of Tamiflu resistant influenza A(H1N1)2009 virus infection

- In week 8, one case of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) resistant influenza A(H1N1)2009 virus infection involving a 62-year-old male was reported. He is now in stable condition. The virus strain detected was sensitive to zanamivir (Relenza). In the first 4 days of week 9 (Feb 24 to 27, 2013), there were no new reports of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) resistant influenza A(H1N1)2009 virus infection. There are totally 24 reports of Tamiflu resistant influenza A(H1N1)2009 virus detected in Hong Kong since 2009.

Global Situation of Influenza Activity

- In the United States (week ending Feb 16, 2013), the influenza activity remained elevated but decreased in most areas.
- In Canada (week ending Feb 16, 2013), the ILI consultation rate increased slightly but is within the expected range for this time of year.
- In the United Kingdom (week ending Feb 17, 2013), the weekly influenza consultation rate increased slightly in England, decreased slightly in Northern Ireland, and remained stable in Wales and Scotland.
- In Europe (week ending Feb 17, 2013), the ILI consultation rate have continued to increase in the eastern part of the Region, but have started to decrease in some northern and western countries.
- In Singapore (week ending Feb 23, 2013), the number of consultations for acute respiratory infections was below the warning level.

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](#) .