

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 Dec 30, 2014)

Reporting period: Dec 21 – 27, 2014 (Week 52)

- The latest surveillance data showed that the overall influenza activity has increased, indicating the arrival of the winter influenza season.
- From January 2, 2015 onwards, the Centre for Health Protection will collaborate with public hospitals under the Hospital Authority and private hospitals to reactivate the enhanced surveillance for severe seasonal influenza, that is cases of influenza-associated admissions to the intensive care unit or deaths aged 18 or above, during the winter influenza season to further monitor the severity of illness as in previous influenza seasons.
- 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 6, 2014.

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

In week 52, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) was 5.4 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 1).

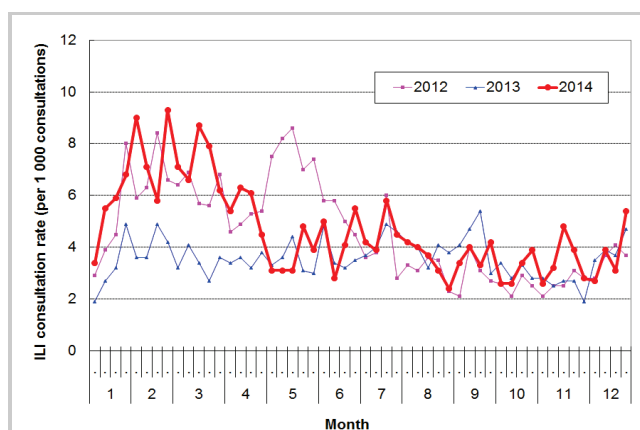


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPC, 2012-14

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

In week 52, the average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 32.6 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 2).

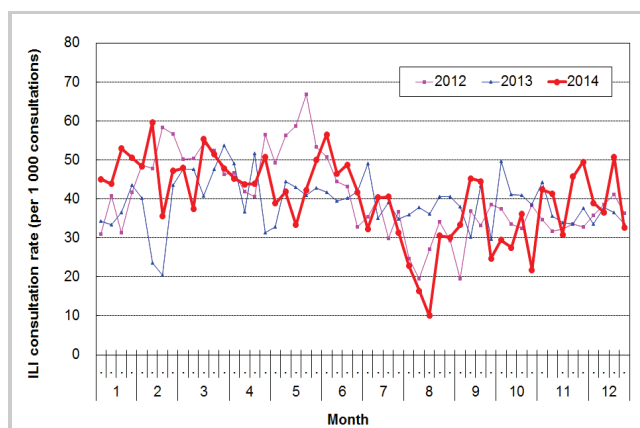


Figure 2 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GP, 2012-14

Influenza virus detections (Laboratory surveillance), 2013-14

Among the respiratory specimens received in week 52, 209 (8.37%) were tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses, including 13 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 185 influenza A(H3), 6 influenza B and 5 influenza C (Figure 3).

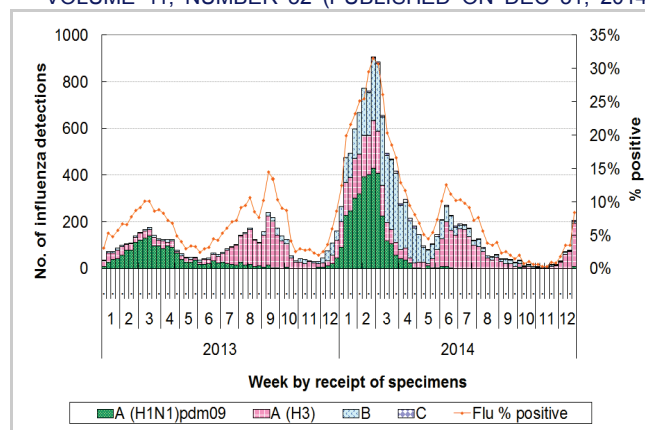


Figure 3 Influenza virus detections, 2013-14

Percentage positive for influenza viruses, 2013-14

Among the respiratory specimens received in week 52, 0.52% was influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 7.41% influenza A(H3), 0.24% influenza B and 0.20% influenza C (Figure 4).

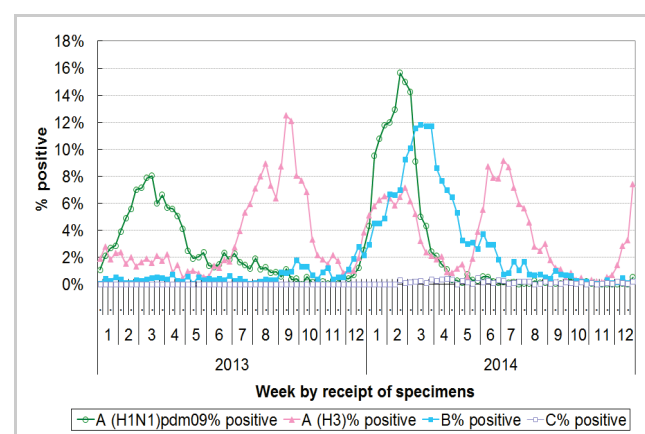


Figure 4 Percentage positive for influenza viruses, 2013-14

Influenza-like illness outbreak monitoring, 2013-14

In week 52, 4 ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/institutions were recorded. In the first 3 days of week 1, 2015 (Dec 28 to 30, 2014), 6 ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/institutions were recorded (Figure 5).

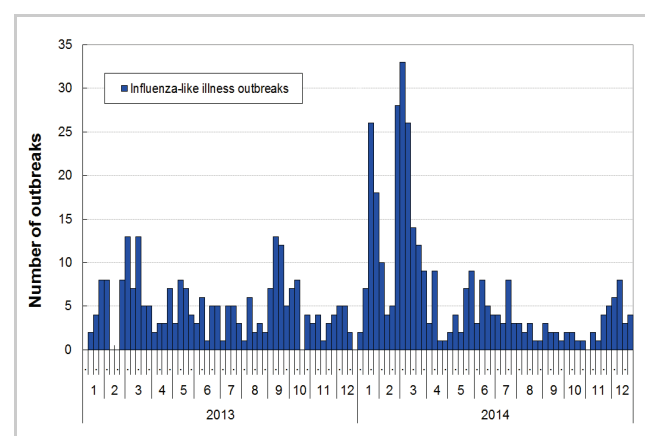


Figure 5 ILI outbreaks, 2013-14

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

In week 52, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 184.3 (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.

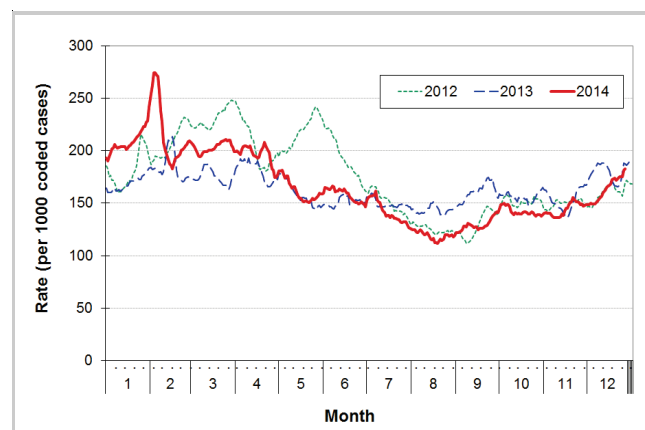


Figure 6 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2012-14

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

In week 52, hospital admission rates with principal diagnosis of influenza for persons aged 0-4 years, 5-64 years and 65 years or above were 0.82, 0.04 and 0.46 cases (per 10,000 people in the age group) respectively (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.

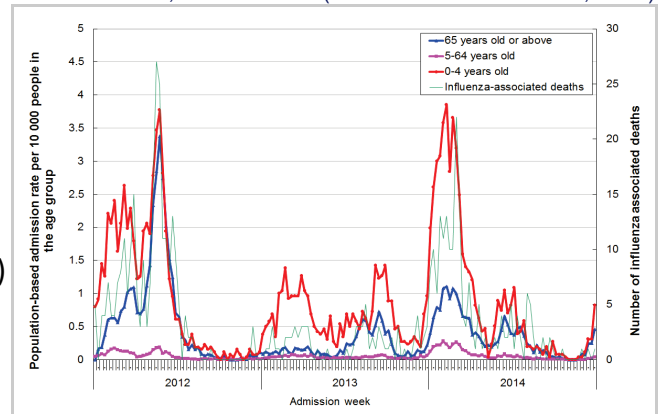


Figure 7 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2012-14

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

In week 51, 0.67% of children in the sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (Figure 8). The surveillance in week 52 was suspended due to Christmas holiday.

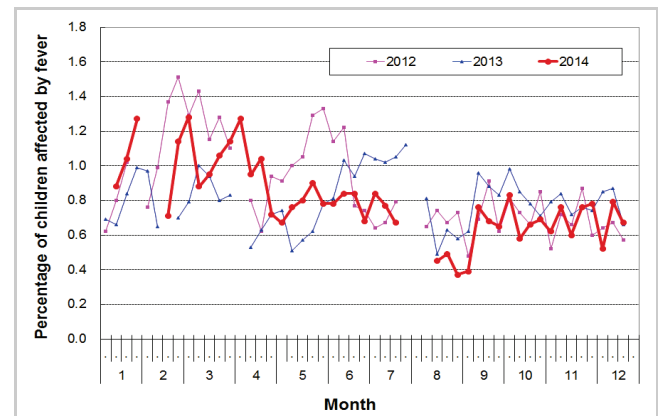


Figure 8 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2012-14

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

In week 52, 0.09% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) had fever (Figure 9).

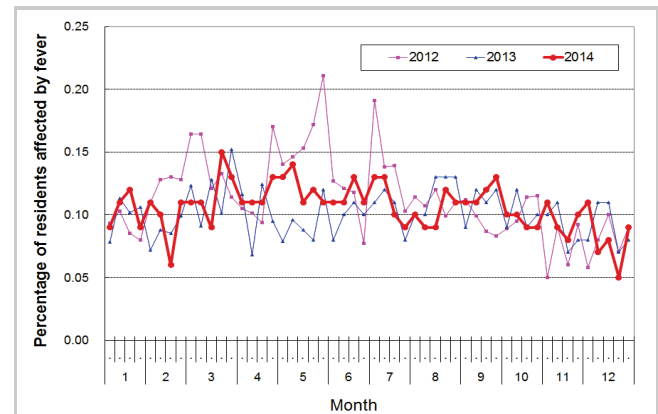


Figure 9 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2012-14

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

In week 52, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 1.69 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations (Figure 10).

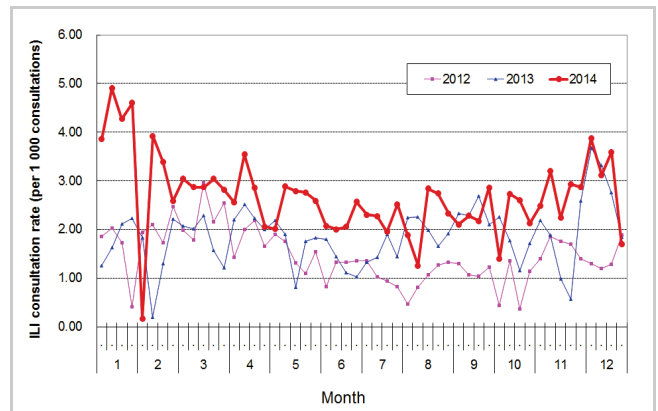


Figure 10 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2012-14

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

- In week 52 and the first 3 days of week 1, 2015 (Dec 28 to 30, 2014), there were no new cases of severe paediatric influenza-associated complication/death.

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

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

- In week 52 and the first 3 days of week 1, 2015 (Dec 28 to 30, 2014), there were no new reports of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus infection. There are totally 47 reports of oseltamivir resistant influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus detected in Hong Kong since 2009.

Global Situation of Influenza Activity

- In the United States (week ending Dec 20, 2014), the influenza activity continued to increase, with influenza A(H3N2) being the most predominating virus.
- In Canada (week ending Dec 13, 2014), laboratory detection of influenza sharply increased in past four weeks. Influenza A(H3N2) continues to be the most common type of viruses.
- In the United Kingdom (week ending Dec 21, 2014), the weekly influenza consultation rates increased in England and Wales, but remained low in Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- In Europe (week ending Dec 21, 2014), influenza activity remained low but continued to increase in comparison with previous weeks.
- In Singapore (week ending Dec 27, 2014), the number of consultations for acute respiratory infections remained low.

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](#), [Public Health England](#), [Joint European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention-World Health Organization/Flu News Europe](#) and [Singapore Ministry of Health](#).