



# INFLUENZA WATCH

Week 6  
Ending 2/10/2018

The purpose of the weekly *Influenza Watch* is to summarize current influenza surveillance in San Diego County. **Please note that reported weekly data are preliminary and may change due to delayed submissions and additional laboratory results.**

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**Current Week****Current Week 6 (ending 2/10/2018)**

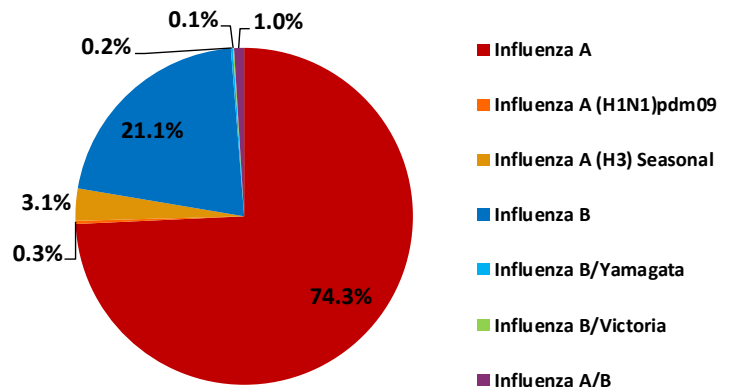
- 941 new influenza detections reported: *Elevated level*
- 5% influenza-like-illness (ILI) among emergency department visits: *Expected level*
- 20 new influenza-related deaths reported this week
- 7 new ICU cases reported this week
- 11% of deaths registered with pneumonia and/or influenza: *Elevated level*

**Current Season Summary****16,078**

Total Cases

**243**

ICU Cases

**251**Deaths<sup>†</sup>**111**Outbreaks<sup>\*</sup>**Virus Characteristics**

<sup>†</sup> Including 33 deaths less than 65 years of age, reportable to CDPH.

<sup>\*</sup> At least one case of laboratory-confirmed influenza in a setting experiencing  $\geq 2$  cases of influenza like illness (ILI) within a 72-hour period.

**Table 1. Influenza Surveillance Indicators**

Indicator	FY 2017-18 <sup>*</sup>			FY 2016-17		Prior 3-Year Average <sup>**</sup>	
	Week 6	Week 5	FYTD <sup>#</sup>	Week 6	FYTD <sup>#</sup>	Week 6	FYTD <sup>#</sup>
All influenza detections reported (rapid or PCR)	941	846	16,078	591	3,368	610	3,547
Percent of emergency department visits for ILI	5%	6%		6%		6%	
Percent of deaths registered with pneumonia and/or influenza	11%	11%		7%		8%	
Number of influenza-related deaths reported <sup>^</sup>	20	25	251	5	44	6	35

<sup>#</sup> FYTD=Fiscal Year To Date (FY is July 1- June 30, Weeks 27-26). Total deaths reported in prior years: 87 in 2016-17, 68 in 2015-16, and 97 in 2014-15.

<sup>\*</sup> Previous weeks case counts or percentages may change due to delayed processing or reporting.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Includes FYs 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17.

<sup>^</sup> Current FY deaths are shown by week of report; by week of death for prior FYs.

# Influenza Watch

## Older Hospitalized Adults Are Infrequently Tested for Influenza

The highest rates of hospitalization and death associated with influenza infections are experienced by older adults. A multi-year study published last month indicates that adults ages 65 years and older who are hospitalized with fever or respiratory symptoms during influenza season are less likely to have a provider-ordered influenza test than younger patients.

To determine whether doctors are adequately testing older adults for influenza when they present with symptoms, a research team at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine conducted a study that included 1,422 adults hospitalized with symptoms of acute respiratory illness or non-localizing fever at four Tennessee hospitals over six influenza seasons.

Overall, the researchers found that 28% of study participants underwent provider-ordered influenza testing. Patients who were tested were younger than those not tested (an average age of 58 years versus 66 years) and more likely to have influenza-like illness (ILI) (71% versus 49%). ILI decreased with increasing age: 63% for those aged 18–49, 60% for those aged 50–64, and 48% for those aged 65 or older. Among all patients, younger age and the presence of ILI were independent predictors of provider-ordered testing.

The study investigators conducted reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) lab tests of influenza for all patients, regardless of whether their providers ordered testing. Among the 399 patients with RT-PCR-confirmed influenza, ILI was the only significant predictor of provider-ordered testing. Nearly half of patients with confirmed influenza did not have testing ordered by their providers.

Adults 65 years and older hospitalized with fever or respiratory symptoms during influenza season are less likely to have a provider-ordered influenza test than younger adults. Some, but not all, of this disparity is due to a lower likelihood of ILI presentation. Although these results may not be generalizable to all practice environments, clinicians should be aware that those over 65 with influenza are less likely to present with ILI, and testing should be increased in this vulnerable group.

The study can be found in the *Journal of the American Geriatric Society* here: [Underdiagnosis of influenza virus infection in hospitalized older adults](#).

**Table 2. Influenza Detections Reported, FY 2017-18\***

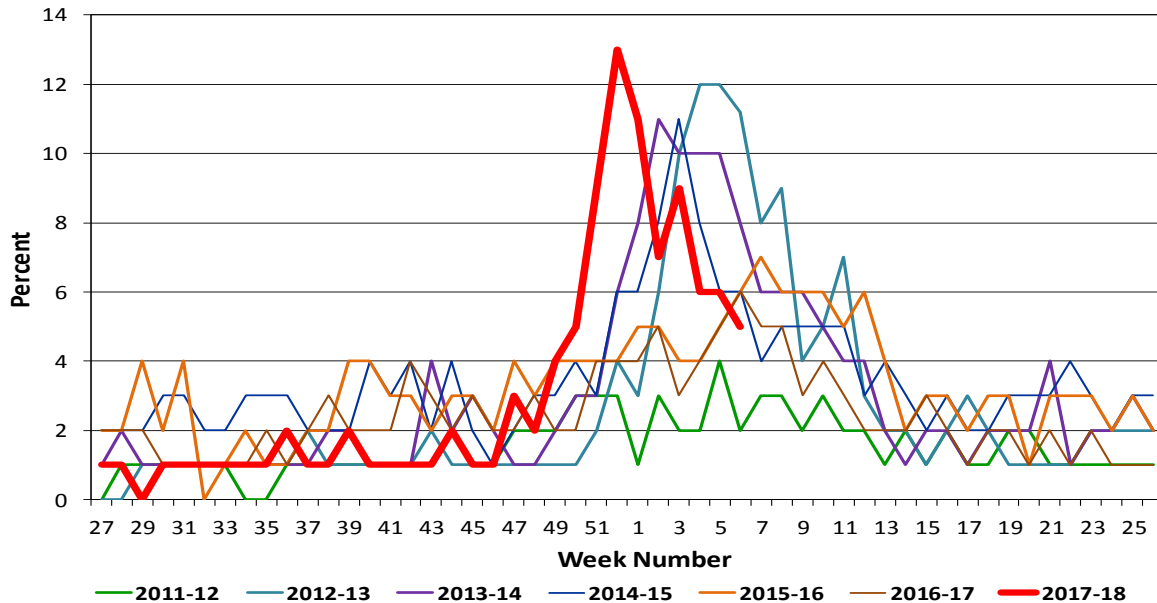
Positive Test Type/Subtype	Week 6	Total FY-To-Date
Influenza A†	443	11,941
Influenza A(H1N1) Pandemic 2009	2	49
Influenza A (H3) Seasonal	34	496
Influenza B†	448	3,389
Influenza B/Victoria	0	17
Influenza B/Yamagata	0	32
Influenza A/B†	14	154
<b>Total</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>16,078</b>

\* FY is July 1- June 30.

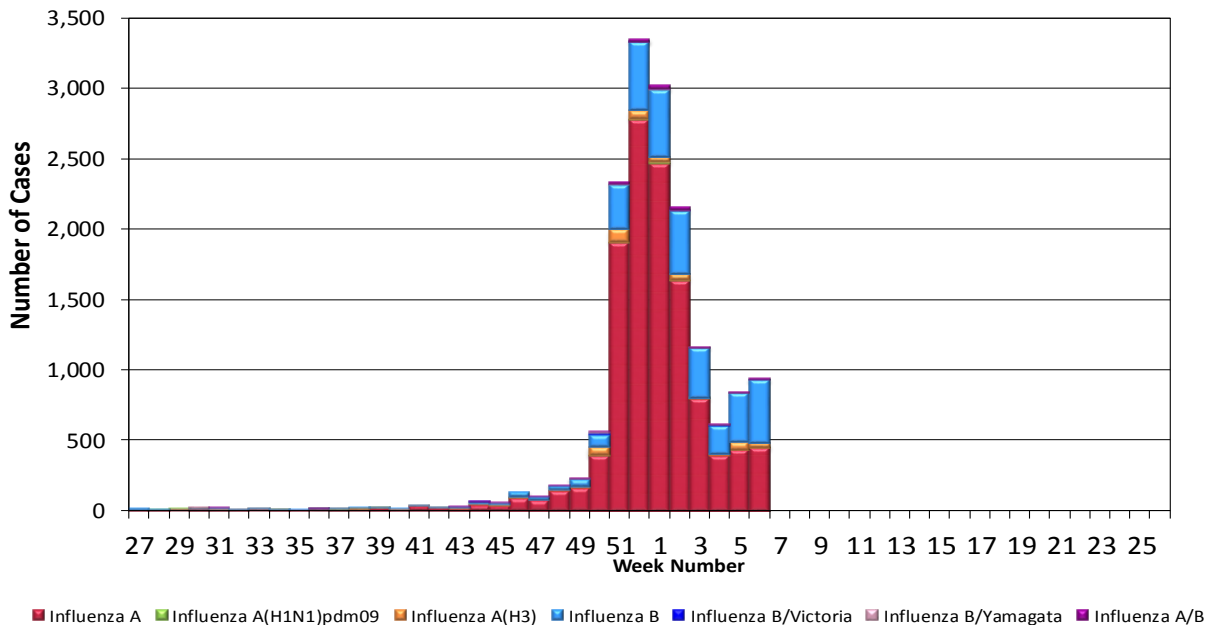
† No further characterization performed, or results were not yet available at time of publication.

Note: Totals may change due to further laboratory findings.

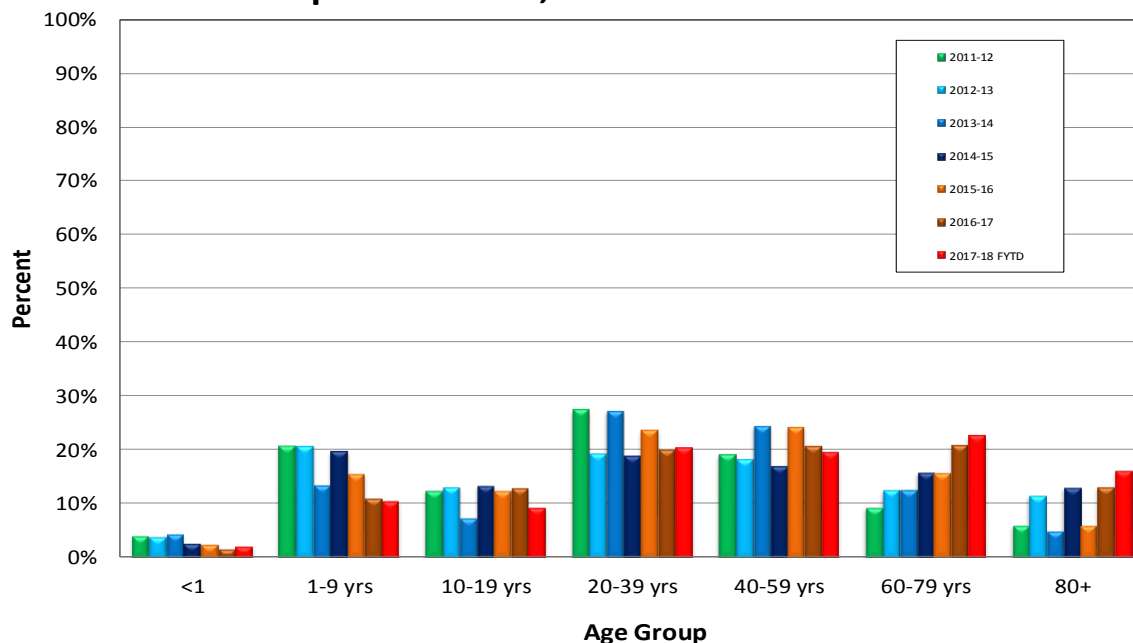
**Figure 1. Percent of Emergency Department Visits for Influenza-like Illness by Week and FY**



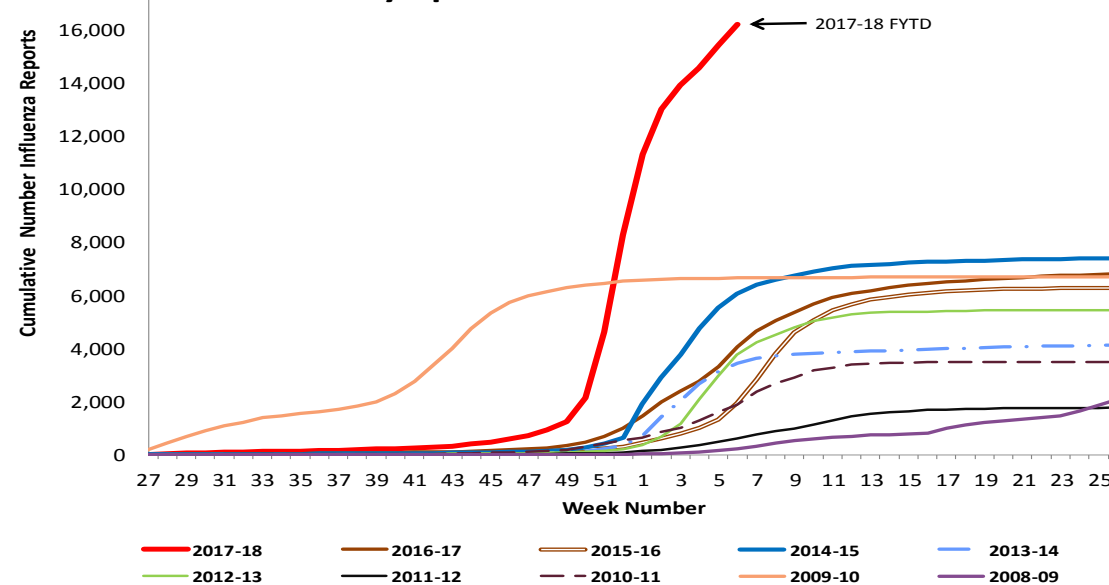
**Figure 2. San Diego County Influenza Detections by Type and Week of Report, 2017-18 FYTD (N=16,078)**



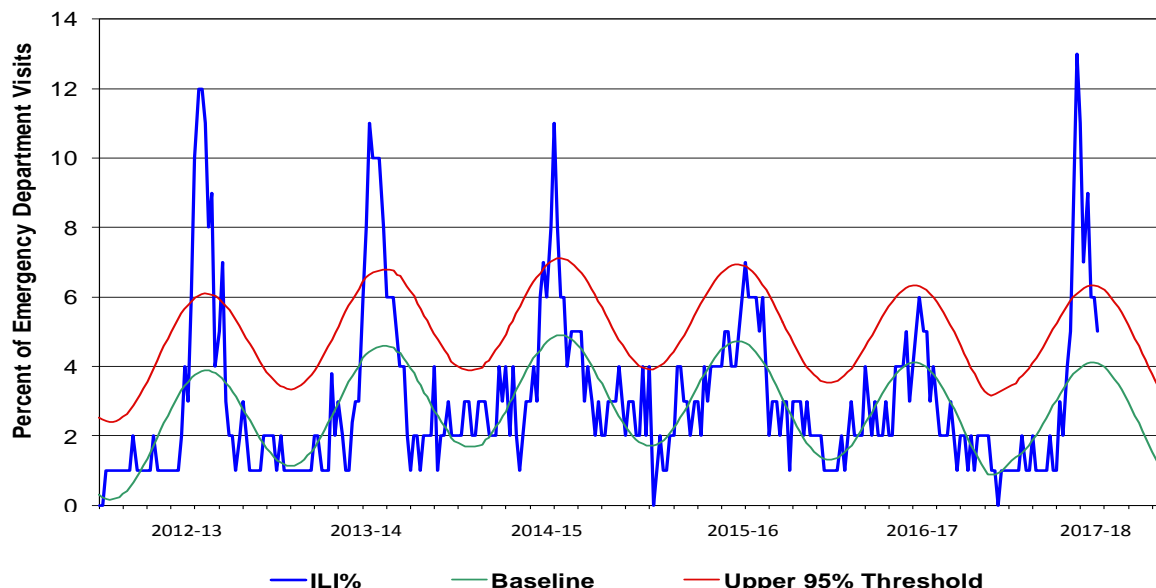
**Figure 3. Percent of Reported Influenza Cases by Age Group and Season, 2011-12 to 2017-18 FYTD**



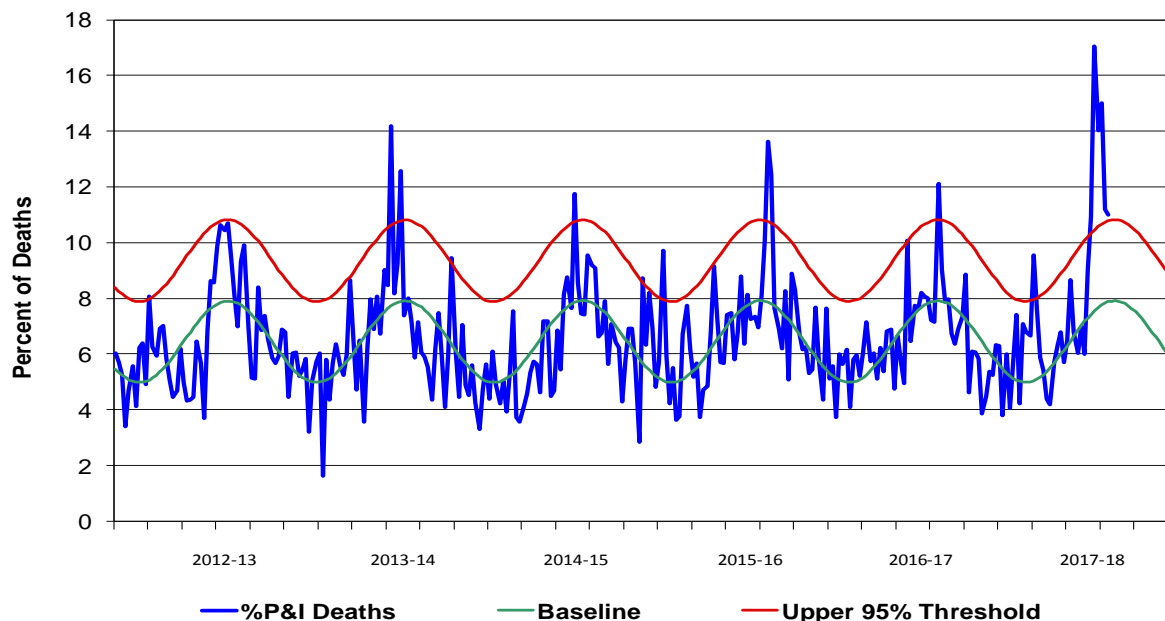
**Figure 4. Cumulative Influenza Case Reports by Episode Week & Season**



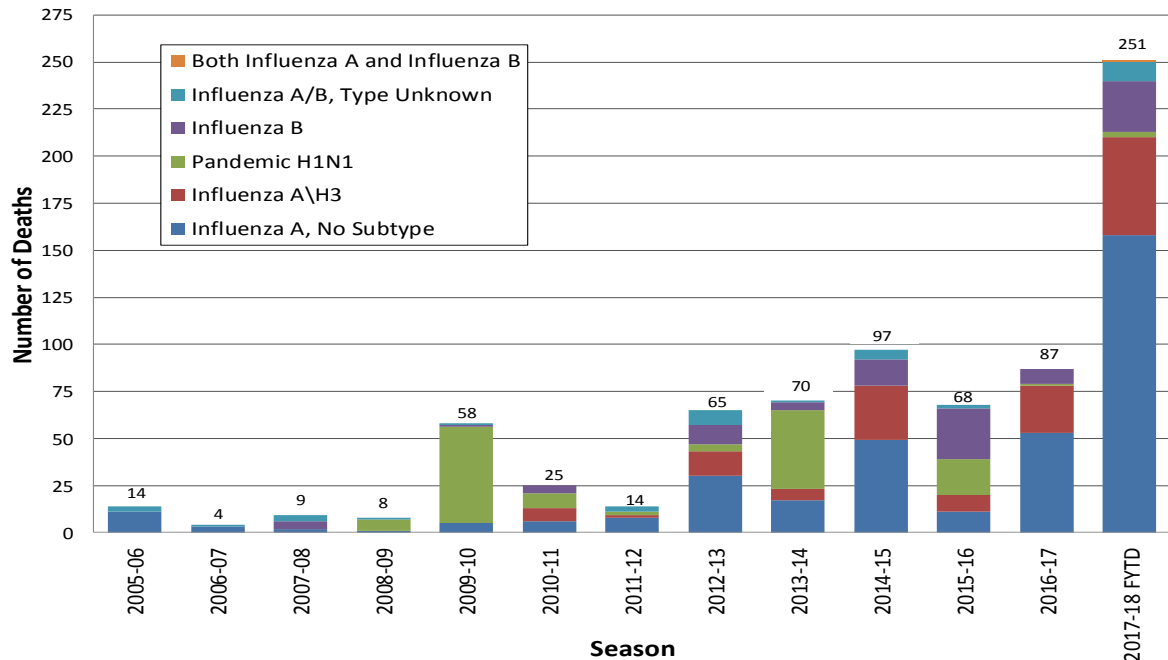
**Figure 5. Percent of San Diego County Emergency Department Visits for Influenza-like Illness by Week and FY Compared to 5-Year Baseline & Upper 95% Threshold Values (Serfling Method)**



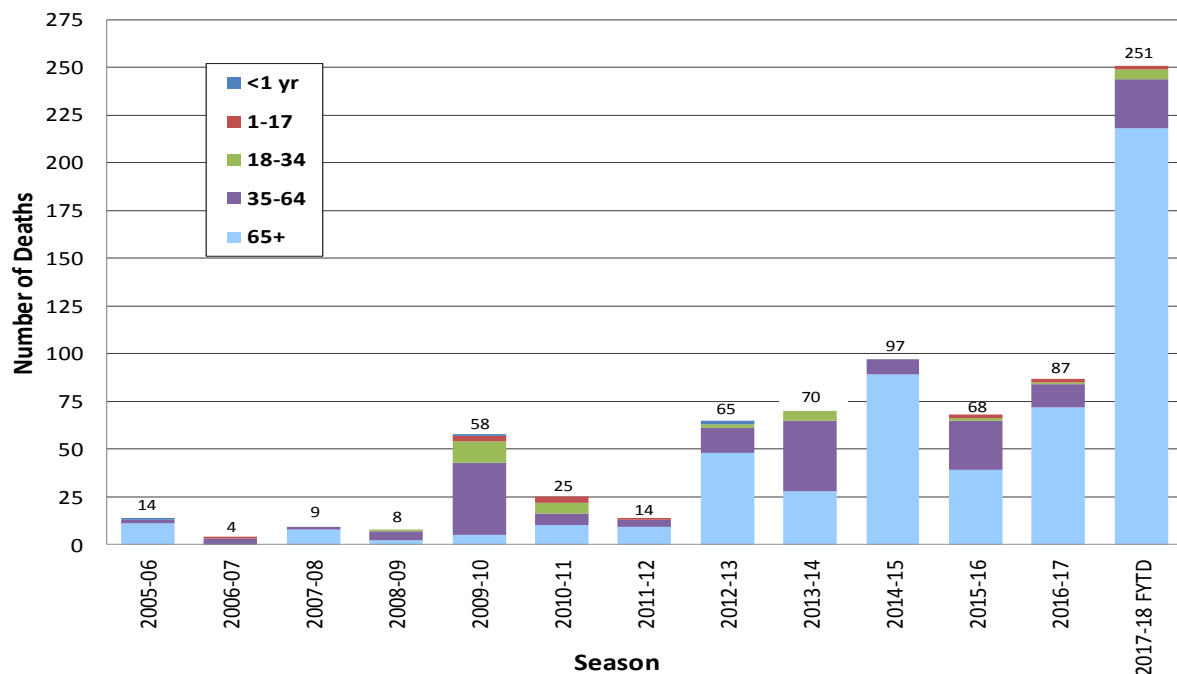
**Figure 6. Percent of San Diego County Deaths Registered with Pneumonia and/or Influenza by Week and FY Compared to Prior 5-Year Baseline & Upper 95% Threshold Values (Serfling Method)**



**Figure 7. Influenza Deaths by Type and Season**

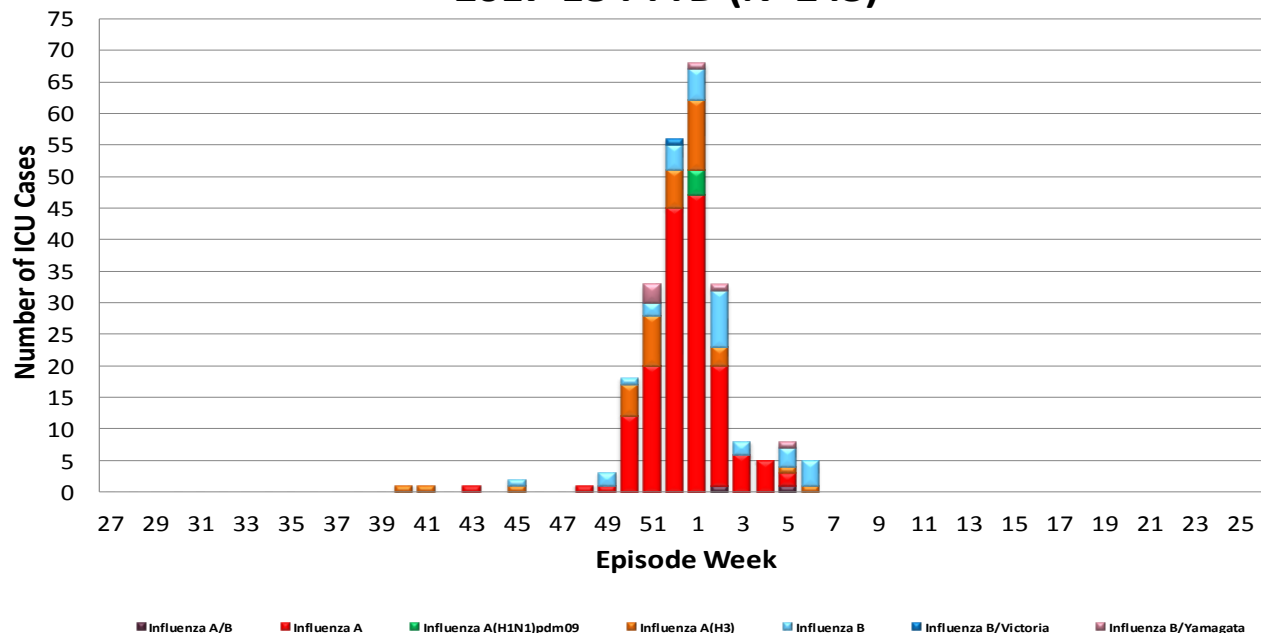


**Figure 8. Influenza Deaths by Age and Season**



# Influenza Watch

**Figure 9. Number of Influenza Cases Requiring ICU Care by Episode Week and Type of Influenza, 2017-18 FYTD (N=243)**



Episode week is the week of symptom onset, or earliest available date in which the case is identified.

## Influenza Reporting in San Diego County

Local providers are encouraged to report laboratory positive influenza detections to the County Epidemiology Program by **FAX (858) 715-6458**. Please fax a [Case Report](#) Form and/or a printed laboratory result, and indicate if the patient was admitted to ICU or died, and/or is a resident of a congregate living facility.

For questions regarding sending specimens to Public Health Laboratory (PHL), call (619) 692-8500. Click here for the updated PHL [PCR Test Request Form](#). Contact the Epidemiology Program with any questions at **(619) 692-8499** or by email to: [EpiDiv.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:EpiDiv.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov).

### Resources

San Diego County Influenza Surveillance Weekly [Slide Deck](#) - presentation version of this report

County of San Diego Immunization Program [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org)

California Department of Public Health [Influenza](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Influenza Surveillance [Weekly Report](#)