BUREAU DE SANTÉ DE MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

2021-2022 Community Influenza Surveillance Report
Update of Current Status
January 5th, 2022

First report of 2022
This is the first Community Influenza Surveillance Report of 2022 and covers the two-week period that includes December 19th to 25th, 2021 and December 26th, 2021 to January 1st, 2022.

Overall Assessment
The current level of influenza activity in London and Middlesex County continues to be low. Other regions of Ontario continue to report sporadic influenza activity, with both influenza A and influenza B cases being reported. To date, there has been a total of 39 confirmed influenza cases reported in Ontario (35 influenza A, four influenza B).

Analysis and Action
The influenza season has begun in Ontario. Local residents are encouraged to get their seasonal influenza vaccine as soon as possible.

Regardless of the level of local influenza activity, there are a number of easy-to-follow steps local residents can take to avoid becoming sick throughout the year. Washing your hands frequently with soap and warm water for 15-20 seconds or using a waterless hand sanitizer (with at least 70 percent alcohol content) remains an effective way to prevent many illnesses, including influenza. Local residents should also continue to follow these recommended COVID-19 prevention practices:

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow,
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth,
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, frequently,
- Stay home when feeling sick,
- Maintain a physical distance of at least two metres from anyone you do not live with, and
- Wear a mask in enclosed places, or where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Details of Current Local Activity
As this report covers two weeks of influenza surveillance, the details of local activity for each week are as follows:

- Between December 19th to 25th, 2021 there were two laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza A reported in the Middlesex-London region. A total of six influenza A cases have been reported since the beginning of the influenza surveillance season on August 29th, 2021. No laboratory-confirmed influenza B cases have been reported to date since the start of the surveillance season.
- Between December 26th, 2021 to January 1st, 2022, there were no laboratory-confirmed influenza cases reported in the region.

Appendix A provides more detail about laboratory-based influenza activity indicators for the current reporting week, as well as other local indicators of respiratory illness.

Provincial and National Comparison
In this week's *Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin*, Public Health Ontario reports that influenza activity in health units across the province is low and activity is similar to what was observed the previous weeks. In the most recent week, one confirmed influenza case was reported (influenza A) in Ontario.

In this week's *FluWatch,* the Public Health Agency of Canada reports sporadic influenza activity across Canada with no evidence of community circulation of influenza.

- The latest *Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin*, issued by Public Health Ontario (PHO), is available at https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/commonly-used-products/respiratory-pathogens-weekly
- The latest *FluWatch* report, issued by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), is available at https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance/weekly-influenza-reports.html

Appendix A
Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators for Middlesex-London
December 19th, 2021 and January 1st, 2022

Table 1: Summary of laboratory-based influenza activity indicators, Middlesex-London and Ontario, 2021-2022 influenza surveillance season

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: *Current Reporting Period*	Number Reported: *Year to Date (from August 29, 2021)*	Recent Trends
Laboratory-confirmed cases[1, 4]	Dec. 19-25 (week 51)[2]	Influenza A – 2 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A – 6 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A: **Same** as the previous week (Dec. 12-18) when 2 cases were reported. Influenza B: **Same** as the previous week (Dec. 12-18) when no cases were reported.
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (week 52)[2]	Influenza A – 0 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A – 6 cases Influenza B – 0 cases	Influenza A: **Lower** than the previous week (Dec. 19-25) when 2 cases were reported. Influenza B: **Same** as the previous week (Dec. 19-25) when no cases were reported.
Influenza sub-types[1]	Dec. 19-25 (week 51)[2]	Influenza A (H3) – 1 case Influenza A not yet subtyped – 1 case	Influenza A (H3) – 3 cases Influenza A not yet subtyped – 3 cases	N/A
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (week 52)[2]	0	Influenza A (H3) – 3 cases Influenza A not yet subtyped – 3 cases	
Hospitalizations[1, 5]	Dec. 19-25 (week 51)[2]	0	0	**Same** as previous week (Dec. 12-18) when no hospitalizations were reported.
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (week 52)[2]	0	0	**Same** as the previous week (Dec. 19-25) when no hospitalizations were reported.
Deaths[1, 5]	Dec. 19-25 (week 51)[2]	0	0	**Same** as the previous week (Dec. 12-18) when no deaths were reported.
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (week 52)[2]	0	0	**Same** as the previous week (Dec. 19-25) when no deaths were reported.
Influenza outbreaks in long-term care homes/retirement homes/acute care	Dec. 19-25 (week 51)[2]	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 0 outbreaks	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 0 outbreaks	No local institutional influenza outbreaks declared to date.
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1 (week 52)[2]	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 0 outbreaks	Influenza A – 0 outbreaks Influenza B – 0 outbreaks	
Percentage of samples that are positive for influenza (Ontario)[3]	Dec. 12-18 (week 50)[2]	Influenza A – 0.4% positivity Influenza B – 0% positivity	N/A	Influenza A: **Similar to** 0.2% positivity reported the previous week (Dec. 5- 11). Influenza B: **Same** as 0% positivity reported the previous week (Dec. 5- 11).

Notes:
1 Numbers are subject to change week by week due to the retrospective nature of reporting.
2 Weekly influenza monitoring often uses numbered weeks from 1 to 52 weeks per year. A reference week calendar can be found at https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/flu-influenza/influenza-surveillance/fluwatch-weeks-calendar.html
3 Public Health Ontario, Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin 2021-2022. Numbers reported represent results submitted to CIRID from 17 participating labs in Ontario and does not include all testing laboratories, ORPB Interactive Website Data Caveats and Glossary
4 The week cases are reported to the Health Unit may not be the same as week of illness onset.
5 The week hospitalizations and deaths are reported to the Health Unit may not be the same as the week in which they occurred, or the same as the week of illness onset.

Table 2: Summary of community-based respiratory illness indicators, Middlesex-London, 2021-2022 influenza surveillance season

Indicator	Reporting Period	Number Reported: *Current Reporting Period*	Recent Trends
Middlesex-London hospital emergency department visits - percentage of patients with respiratory or fever symptoms[1]	Dec. 19-25	An average of 12.3% of patients presented with respiratory symptoms.	**Higher** than 11.4% reported the previous week (Dec. 12-18).
		An average of 3.9% of patients presented with influenza-like illness (fever) symptoms.	**Similar to** 3.4% reported the previous week (Dec. 12-18).
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1	An average of 12.4% of patients presented with respiratory symptoms.	**Similar to** 12.3% reported the previous week (Dec. 19-25).
		An average of 3.7% of patients presented with influenza-like illness (fever) symptoms.	**Similar to** 3.9% reported the previous week (Dec. 19-25).
Real-time Viral Respiratory Surveillance[2] - Middlesex-London	Dec. 19-25	Activity/Risk Level: Elevated or **Orange** (Impacts are likely being felt across many sectors of the health system).	**Higher than** (Moderate or **Yellow**) from the previous week (Dec. 12-18).
	Dec. 26-Jan. 1	Activity/Risk Level: Elevated or **Orange** (Impacts are likely being felt across many sectors of the health system).	**Same** as (Elevated or **Orange**) from the previous week (Dec. 19-25)

1 Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance (ACES) Application is a real-time syndromic surveillance system. This source will be influenced by COVID-19 activity.
2 Viral Respiratory Mapper uses data from ACES (above). Activity/Risk Levels range from Green, Yellow, Orange and Red.

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