

2011-2012 Influenza Surveillance Update of Current Status and Issues

January 13, 2012

Influenza activity in Middlesex-London:

Since the last report, one case of influenza A has been reported to the Middlesex-London Health Unit. To date, there have been six influenza A cases identified in Middlesex London for the 2011-2012 Influenza surveillance season. Four of these samples have been typed as human influenza A (H3). There continues to be no outbreaks of influenza in long-term care homes or in acute care facilities. The overall proportion of patients presenting to emergency departments and urgent care with febrile illness is comparable to the previous week. Based on the available information, influenza activity in Middlesex London continues to remain low.

Provincial and National Influenza Activity:

Influenza: Influenza activity across the province has been increasing recently but has been lower than previous years to date. As of December 31, 2011, a total of 47 influenza cases have been reported to the province for the 2011-2012 surveillance season. Most influenza A cases reported provincially later in 2011 have been identified as (H1N1)pdm09 (formerly known as Influenza A pH1N1). Most influenza A samples were identified as H3N2 earlier on in the season. Nationally, influenza activity is increasing in some regions (British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec) but remains low in most areas of the country.

To date, strain characterization of influenza isolates in Ontario and Canada has demonstrated a generally good match with this season's influenza vaccine. Since the start of the season, the National Microbiology Lab has characterized 47 samples from across Canada with the following results: 26 Influenza A (H3N2)/Perth/16/2009-like and six Influenza A/California/07/2009, both of which are components of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine; seven influenza B strains are antigenically related to the strain B/Brisbane/60/2008, which also is a component of the 2011-2012 influenza vaccine; and the other eight influenza B viruses are antigenically related to B/Wisconsin/01/2010-like, which belongs to a different lineage than the influenza strain B that is in this year's vaccine.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus: Provincially, the main virus being identified is Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) with 30 positive results of 108 samples tested by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory, for a positivity rate of 28%.

Influenza vaccination opportunities:

Influenza vaccination is available at some health care providers' offices and at the Health Unit's walk-in Immunization clinics. Clinics are scheduled at 50 King Street in London on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and on the first and third Wednesday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.. Clinics also take place at the Kenwick Mall in Strathroy from 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month.

Appendix A Summary of Community Influenza Surveillance Indicators

Influenza activity in Middlesex London continues to remain low.

| Indicator | Recent trends / data | Comments |
|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Hospital emergency room reports regarding the percentage of patients with fever and respiratory illness | Similar to previous week | <p>From January 1-7, an average of 8.3% of patients at London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) emergency departments and the St. Joseph's Health Care (SJHC) urgent care centre presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This value is the same as the previous week.</p> <p>The proportion was highest at the urgent care centre, where 26.5% of patients presented with a fever and respiratory symptoms. This value is higher than 13.4% from the previous week. At the paediatric emergency department, 19.8% of patients presented with fever and respiratory symptoms, which is comparable to the previous week.</p> |
| Absence reports from schools (i.e., absenteeism > 10%) | Not available | Not available since the holidays. |
| Laboratory-confirmed cases | Similar | <p>One new case of influenza A has been reported to the Health Unit since the last report.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the influenza surveillance season, a total of 6 community influenza A cases (4 human influenza A (H3)) have been reported in Middlesex-London.</p> |
| Hospitalizations | Similar | <p>Since the last report, one new laboratory-confirmed influenza case was hospitalized.</p> <p>To date, five people with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been hospitalized since the start of the influenza surveillance season.</p> |
| Deaths | None reported | |
| Long-term care facility outbreaks | None reported | Since the beginning of the influenza surveillance season, no institutional outbreaks of influenza have been reported to the Health Unit. |
| Sentinel X-ray provider reports regarding newly identified bronchopneumonia cases | Decreased | From January 2 to 7, 2.5% of chest x-rays performed by the sentinel x-ray provider were newly diagnosed bronchopneumonia cases. This proportion is lower compared to 6.9% from the previous week. |
| Calls to Telehealth Ontario related to respiratory and influenza-like illness | None reported | |
| Percentage of influenza tests performed by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory that are positive from across the province | Similar to previous report | Based on provincial testing done by the Ontario Public Health Laboratory from January 1 to 7, 2012, 4 of 347 samples testing positive for influenza A for a positivity rate of 1.2%, and 4 of 352 samples tested positive for influenza B for a positivity rate of 1.1%. |