

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 May 20, 2015)

Reporting period: May 10 – May 16, 2015 (Week 20)

- The overall influenza activity in the past week remained at a low level.
- Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Except for those with contraindications, influenza vaccination is suitable for all persons aged 6 months or above.
- 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 subsidized for seasonal influenza vaccination from enrolled private doctors participating in the Government's vaccination subsidy schemes starting from Oct 6, 2014.
- The Centre for Health Protection has launched the 2015 Southern Hemisphere Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programme for residents of residential care homes for the elderly and other elders. Programme detail can be found at the following website:

http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/provision_table_2015_shsivp_eng.pdf

Influenza-like-illness surveillance among sentinel general outpatient clinics and sentinel private doctors, 2011-15

In week 20, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) increased to 4.7 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations from 4.1 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, left). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 43.1 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was similar to 43.3 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, right).

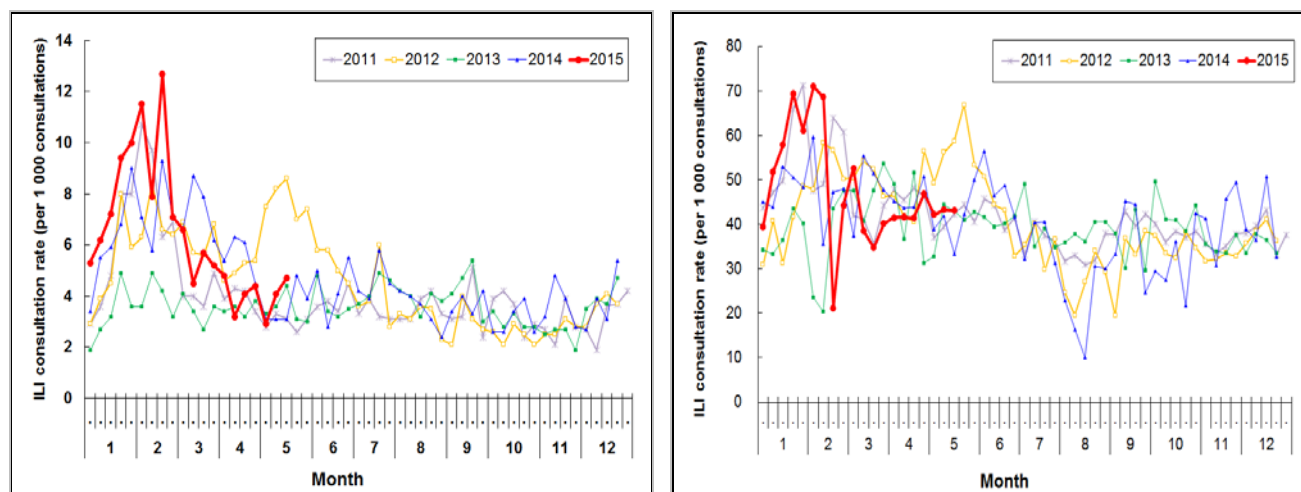


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPCs (left) and private doctors (right), 2011-15

Laboratory surveillance, 2011-15

Among the respiratory specimens received in week 20, 193 (6.71%) were tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses, including 9 (0.31%) influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 104 (3.62%) influenza A(H3), 77 (2.68%) influenza B and 3 (0.10%) influenza C. The percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses last week was 6.71%, which was similar to 6.33% recorded in the previous week (Figure 2). Among influenza virus detections, the proportion of A(H3N2) increased from 48.1% to 53.9% in the last two weeks while that of B decreased from 42.8% to 39.9%. That of A(H1) and C remained low.

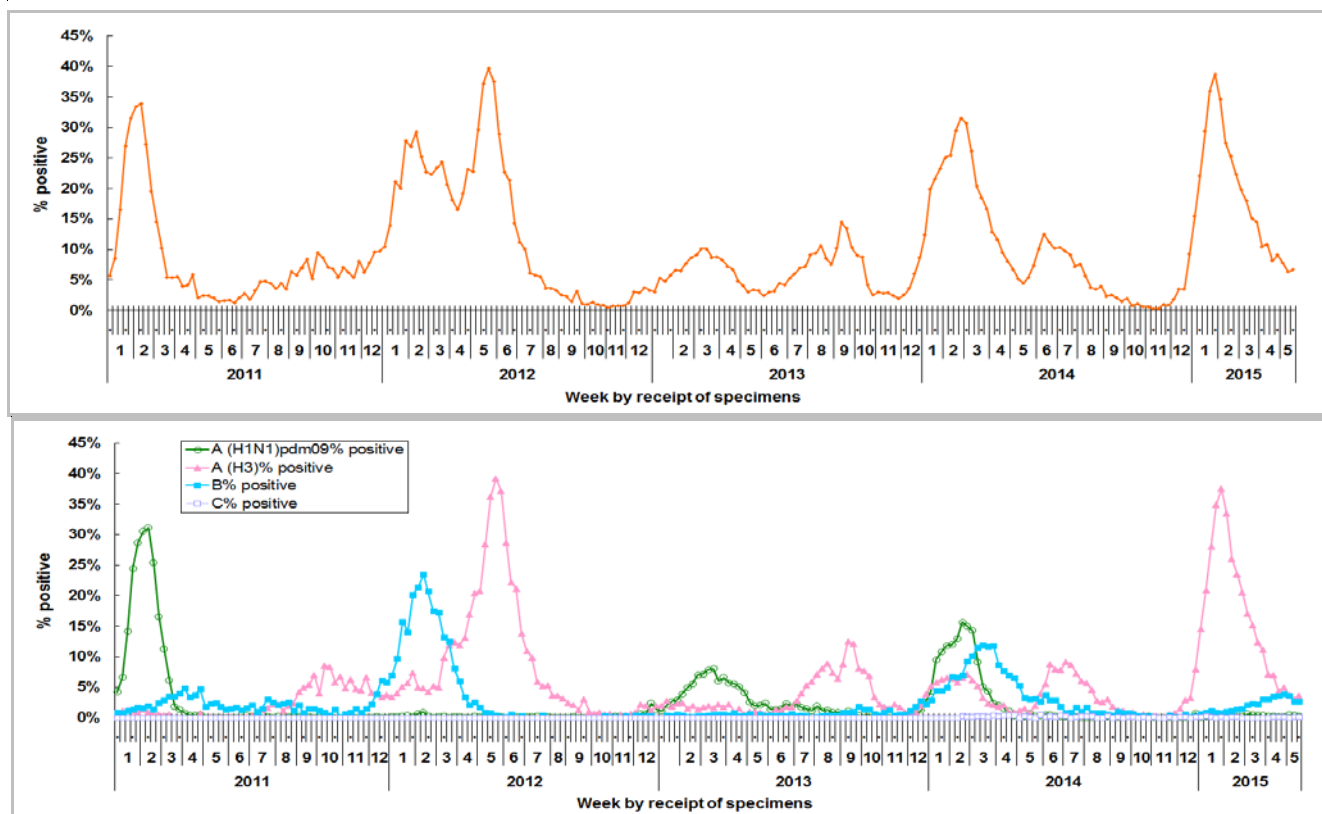


Figure 2 Percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for influenza viruses, 2011-15 (upper: overall positive percentage, lower: positive percentage by subtypes)

Influenza-like illness outbreak surveillance, 2011-15

In week 20, the number of ILI outbreaks occurring in schools/ institutions recorded was 3, which was the same as that recorded in the previous week (Figure 3). In the first 4 days of week 21 (May 17 to 20, 2015), 5 institutional ILI outbreaks were recorded. Majority of the outbreaks in the past four weeks occurred in schools (47.4%) and residential care homes for the elderly (42.1%).

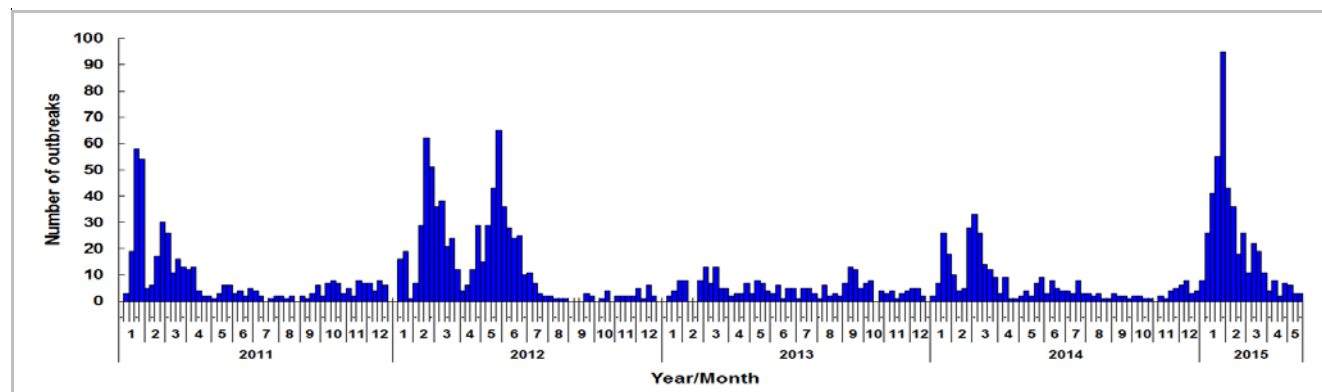


Figure 3 ILI outbreaks in schools/institutions, 2011-15

Rate of influenza-like illness syndrome group in accident and emergency departments, 2011-15[#]

In week 20, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 151.5 (per 1,000 coded cases), which was higher than the rate of 149.8 in the previous week (Figure 4).

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

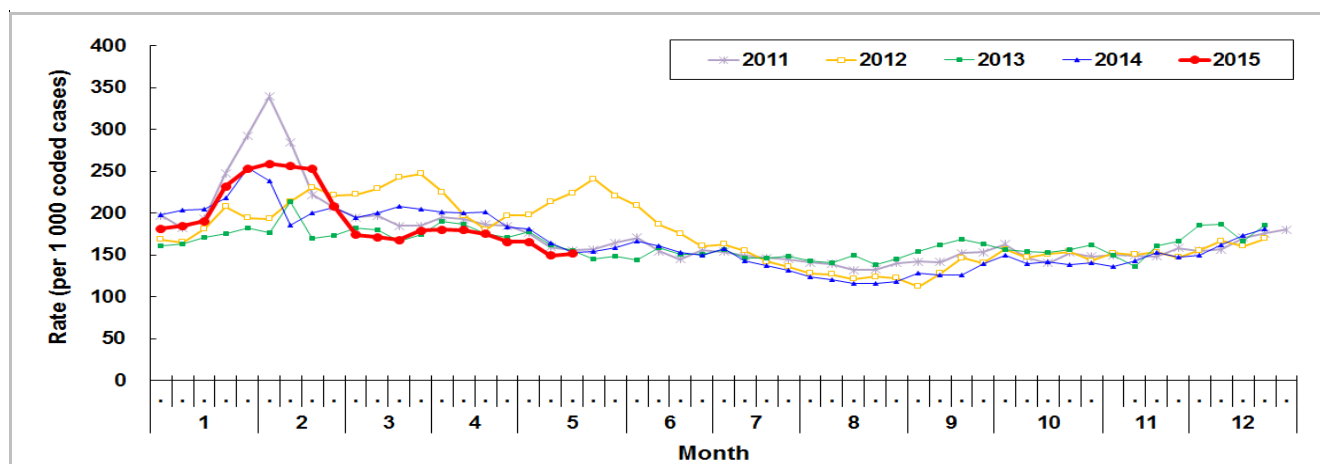


Figure 4 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2011-15

Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths in public hospitals based on discharge coding, 2011-15

In week 20, the admission rates in public hospitals with principal diagnosis of influenza for persons aged 0-4 years, 5-64 years and 65 years or above were 0.46, 0.03 and 0.38 cases (per 10,000 people in the age group) respectively, as compared to 0.46, 0.03 and 0.32 cases in the previous week (Figure 5). Weekly number of deaths with any diagnosis of influenza is also shown in Figure 5.

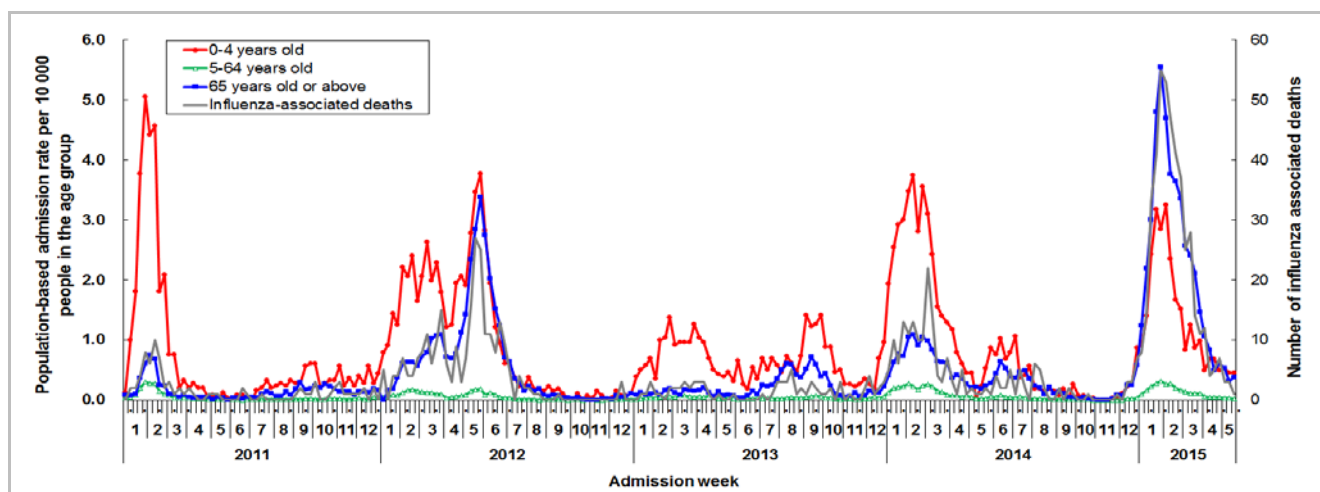


Figure 5 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2011-15

Fever surveillance at sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens, 2011-15

In week 20, 0.81% of children in the sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (38°C or above) as compared to 0.63% in the previous week (Figure 6).

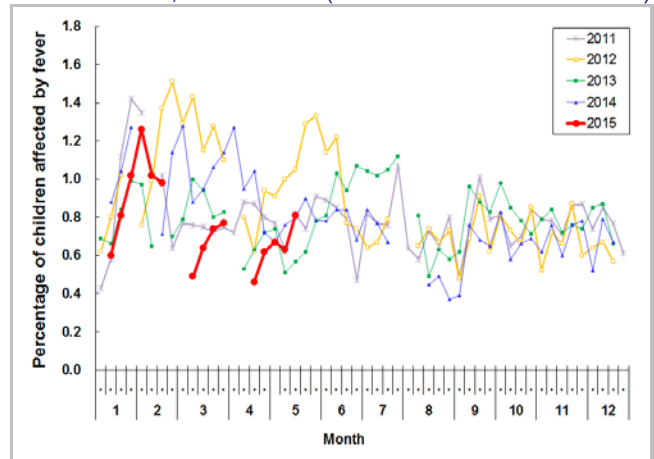


Figure 6 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2011-15

Fever surveillance at sentinel residential care homes for the elderly, 2011-15

In week 20, 0.09% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHEs) had fever (38°C or above), as compared to 0.09% in the previous week (Figure 7).

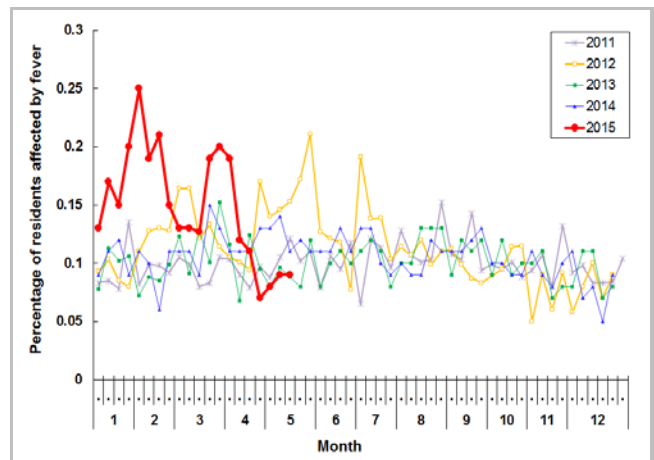


Figure 7 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2011-15

Influenza-like illness surveillance among sentinel Chinese medicine practitioners, 2011-15

In week 20, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 2.76 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations as compared to 3.12 in the previous week (Figure 8).

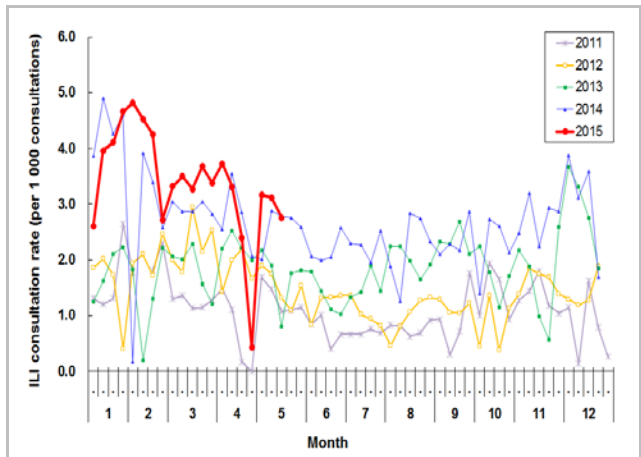


Figure 8 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2011-15

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

- In week 20 and the first 4 days of week 21 (May 17 to 20, 2015), 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 20 and the first 4 days of week 21, 2015 (May 17 to 20, 2015), 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 May 9, 2015), the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness is below the national baseline. The percentage that tested positive for influenza viruses has peaked at 31.79% in the last week of 2014 and decreased to 4.9% in the week ending May 9. Influenza B viruses accounted for more than 93% of all influenza viruses reported in this reporting period.
- In Canada (week ending May 9, 2015), overall influenza activity continues to decline. Influenza B remained the predominant virus in the week ending May 9, representing 89% of influenza detections.
- In the United Kingdom (week ending May 10, 2015), influenza activity remained at baseline levels. The percentage that tested positive for influenza viruses in England reached a peak of 31.7% in the first week of 2015 and decreased to 5.8% in the week ending May 10.
- In Europe (week ending May 10, 2015), influenza activity continued to decrease. The positivity rate decreased to 9% in the week ending May 3, which is below the threshold of 10%. Influenza B viruses accounted for 67% of detections in this reporting period.
- In Taiwan (week ending May 16, 2015), the percentage tested positive for influenza viruses was 22.2 % in the week ending May 9, which is similar to 21.2% recording in the preceding week. Influenza A viruses accounted for 66.7% of all influenza viruses reported in this reporting period.

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 [Taiwan Centers for Disease Control](#).