

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 Sep 3, 2015)

Reporting period: Aug 23 – 29, 2015 (Week 35)

- 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. Given that seasonal influenza vaccines are safe and effective, all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications are recommended to receive influenza vaccine for personal protection.

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

In week 35, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) was 4.7 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than 5.2 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, left). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 44.2 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was higher than 30.1 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, right).

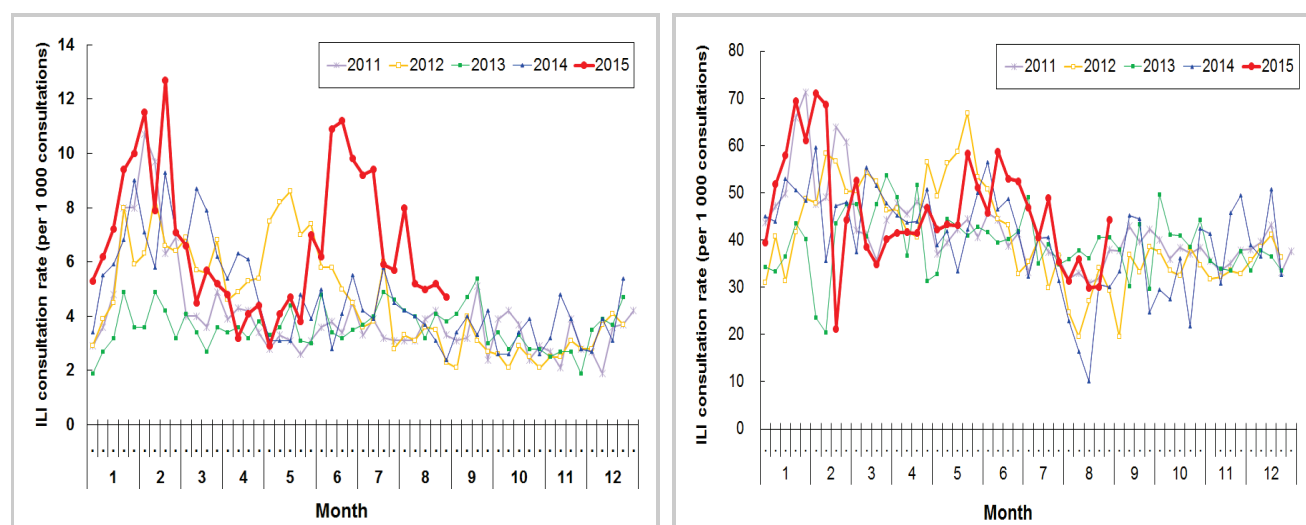


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPCs (left) and private doctors (right), 2011-15

Laboratory surveillance, 2011-15

Among the respiratory specimens received in week 35, 135 (4.89%) were tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses, including 2 (0.07%) influenza A(H1), 106 (3.84%) influenza A(H3), 24 (0.87%) influenza B and 3 (0.11%) influenza C. The percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses last week was 4.89%, which was lower than 5.54% recorded in the previous week (Figure 2). Among influenza virus detections, the proportions of A(H3N2) and B in last week were 78.5% and 17.8% respectively, as compared to 68.8% and 28.5% in previous week. Those of A(H1) and C remained low.

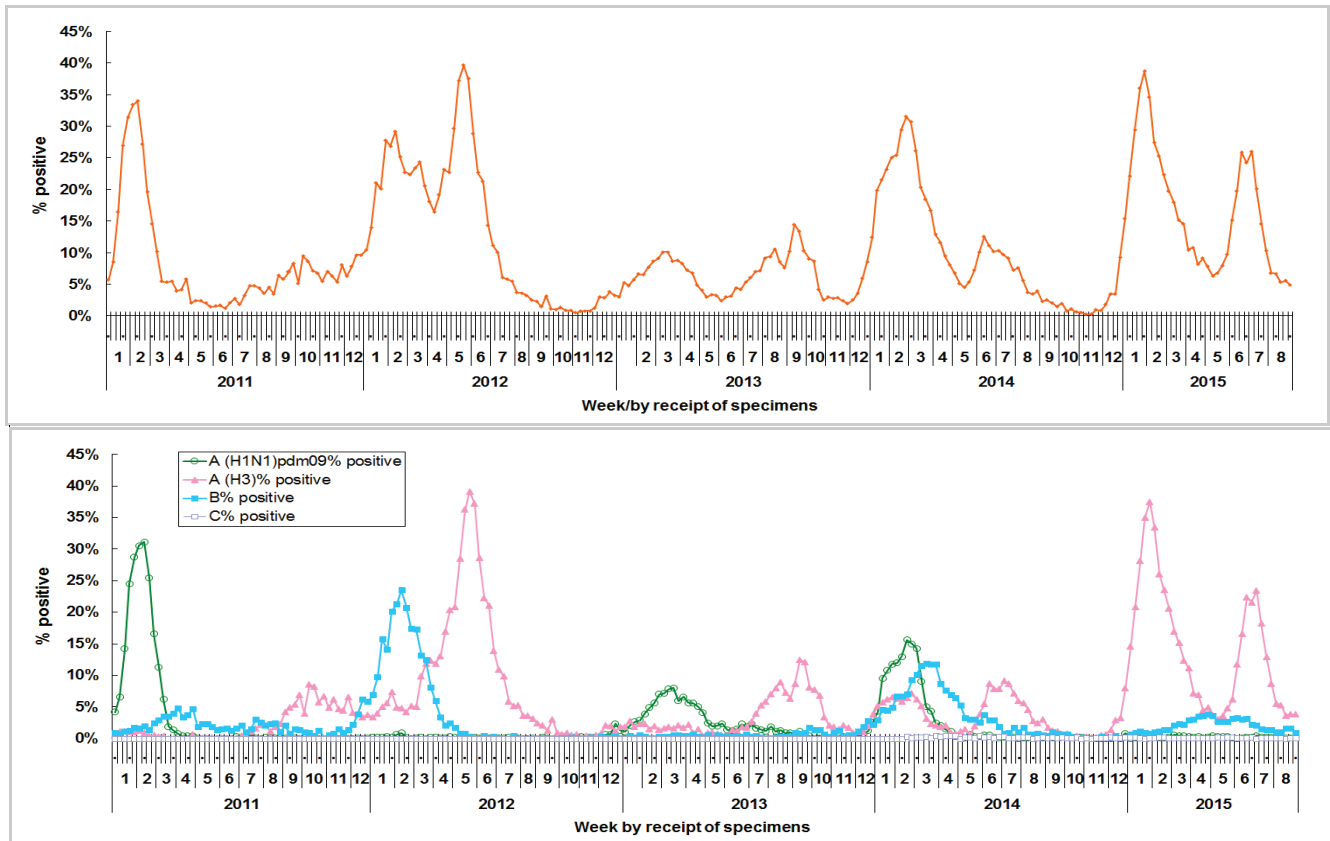


Figure 2 Percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for influenza viruses, 2011-15 (upper: overall positive percentage, lower: positive percentage by subtypes)

Influenza-like illness outbreak surveillance, 2011-15

In week 35, 1 ILI outbreak (affecting 4 persons) occurring in schools/ institutions was recorded, as compared to 2 outbreaks (affecting 9 persons) recorded in the previous week (Figure 3). In the first 5 days of week 36 (Aug 30 to Sep 3, 2015), 1 institutional ILI outbreak (affecting 3 persons) was recorded.

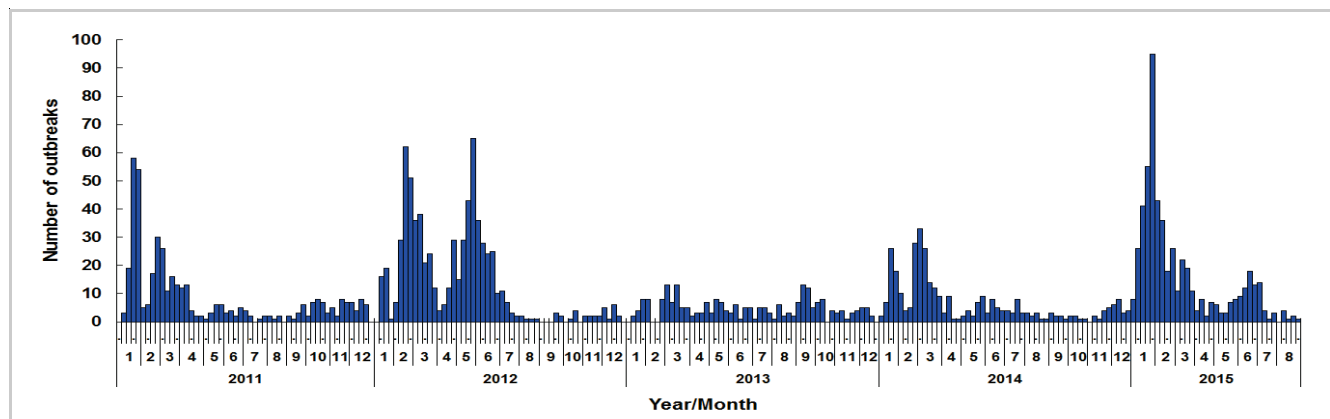


Figure 3 ILI outbreaks in schools/institutions, 2011-15

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

In week 35, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 126.2 (per 1,000 coded cases), which was higher than the rate of 120.6 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.

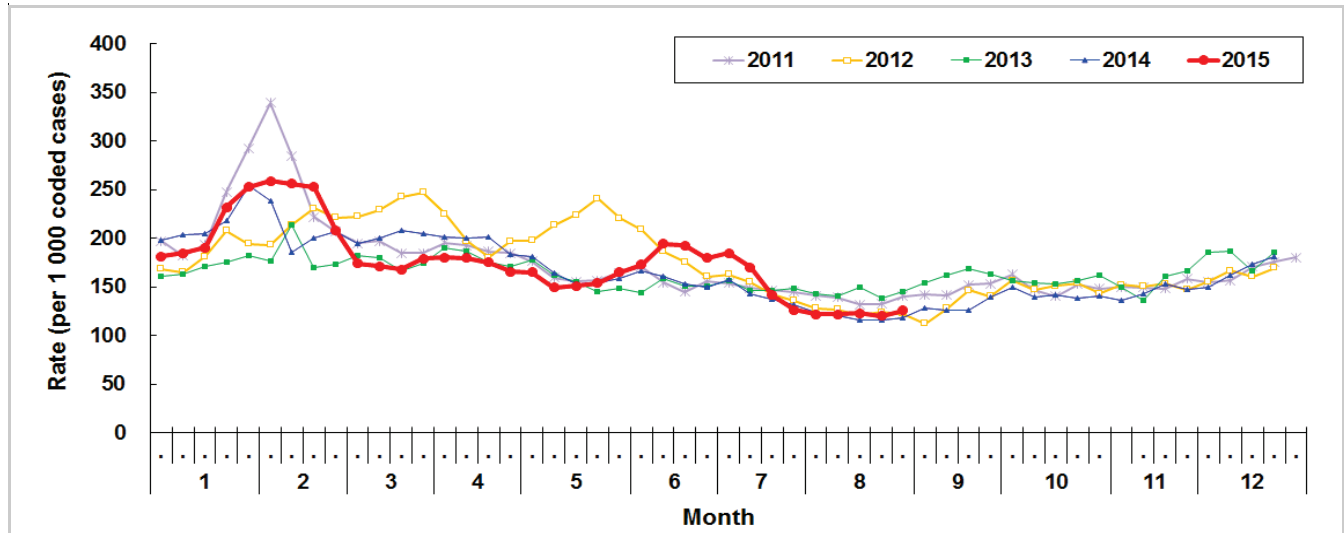


Figure 4 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2011-15

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

In week 35, 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 0.27, 0.02 and 0.16 cases (per 10,000 people in the age group) respectively, as compared to 0.15, 0.02 and 0.36 cases in the previous week (Figure 5). Weekly number of deaths with any diagnosis of influenza is also shown in Figure 5.

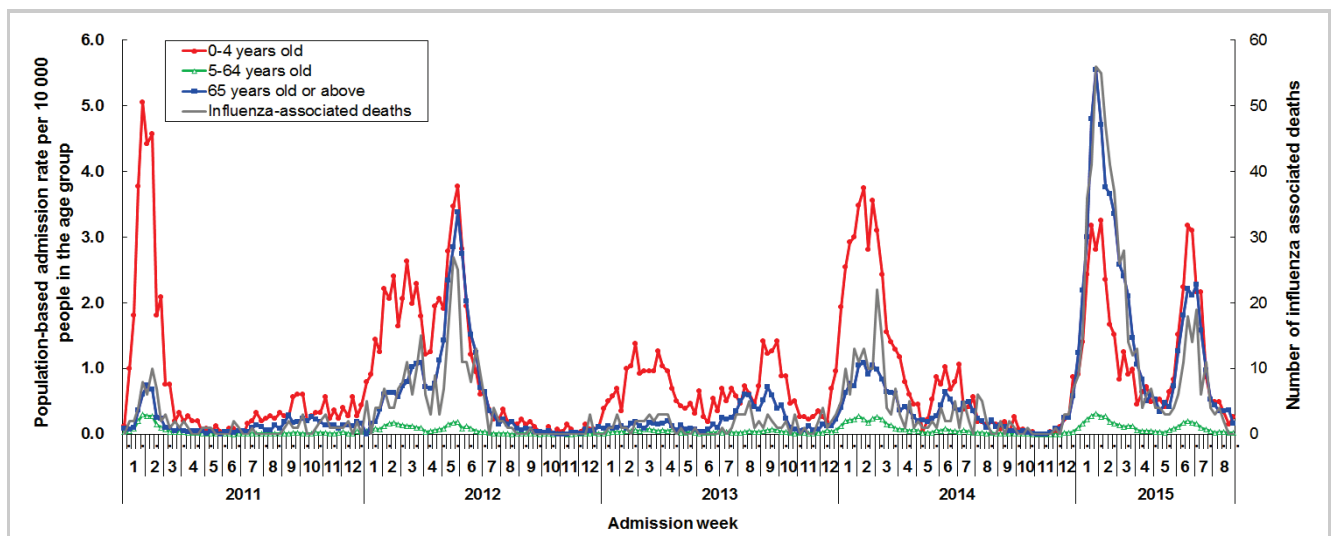


Figure 5 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2011-15

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

In week 35, 0.54% of children in the sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (38°C or above) as compared to 0.39% in the previous week (Figure 6).

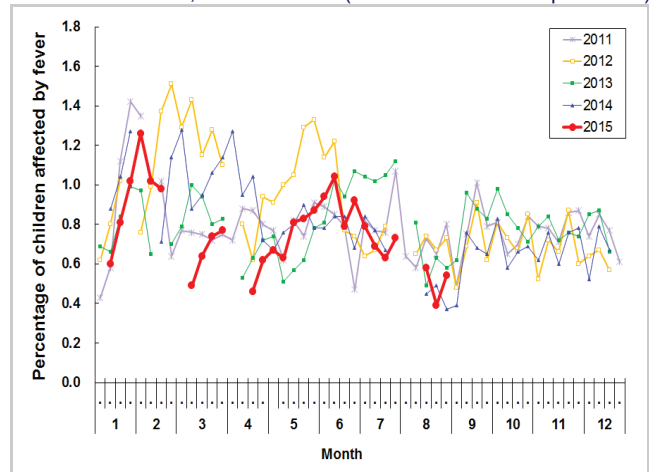


Figure 6 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2011-15

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

In week 35, 0.08% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHes) had fever (38°C or above) as compared to 0.11% in the previous week (Figure 7).

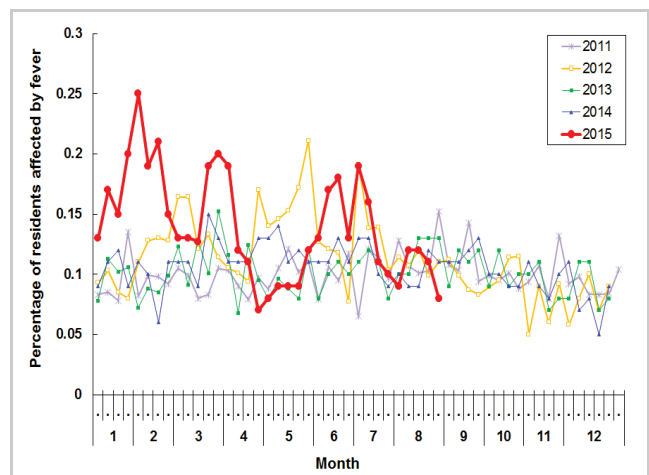


Figure 7 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2011-15

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

In week 35, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 1.08 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations as compared to 1.36 in the previous week (Figure 8).

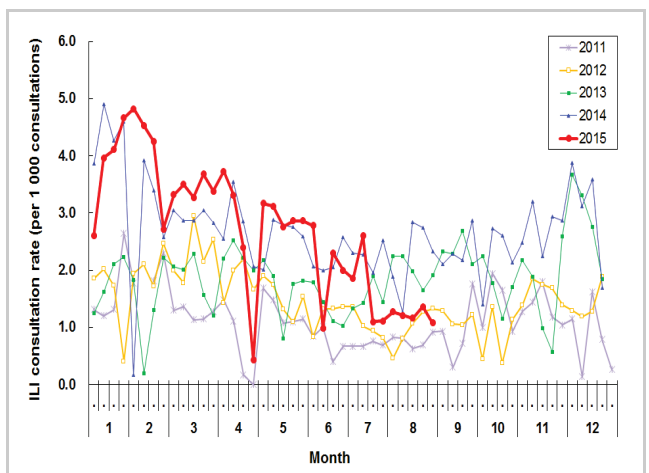


Figure 8 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2011-15

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

- In week 35 and the first 5 days of week 36 (Aug 30 to Sep 3, 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 35 and the first 5 days of week 36, 2015 (Aug 30 to Sep 3, 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 Aug 22, 2015), the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness is below the national baseline.
- In Canada (Aug 2 to 15, 2015), the overall influenza activity remained low.
- In the United Kingdom (week ending Aug 23, 2015), the influenza activity remained at a very low level.
- In Europe (Jun 29 to Aug 2, 2015), all countries reported low intensity of influenza activity.
- In Australia (Aug 1 to 14, 2015), influenza activity continued to increase nationally this fortnight. Influenza B continues to be the dominant influenza type, comprising two thirds of all notifications.
- In New Zealand (week ending Aug 30, 2015), the ILI consultation rate has decreased as compared with previous week. The current rate of ILI consultation is below the alert threshold but above the seasonal threshold. Among the specimens received from sentinel and non-sentinel surveillance, there were 253 influenza B detections, 85 influenza A(not sub-typed), and 84 influenza A(H3N2).
- In Mainland China (week ending Aug 23, 2015), southern China is still in summer influenza season. Influenza A(H3N2) is the predominating virus. In northern China, the influenza activity was gradually increasing but detections of influenza virus remained relatively 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](#), [Australian Department of Health](#), [New Zealand Ministry of Health](#) and [Chinese National Influenza Center](#).