

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 9, 2015)

Reporting period: Aug 30 – Sep 5, 2015 (Week 36)

- 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 36, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPCs) was 3.9 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than 4.7 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, left). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private doctors was 37.6 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than 44.2 recorded in the previous week (Figure 1, right).

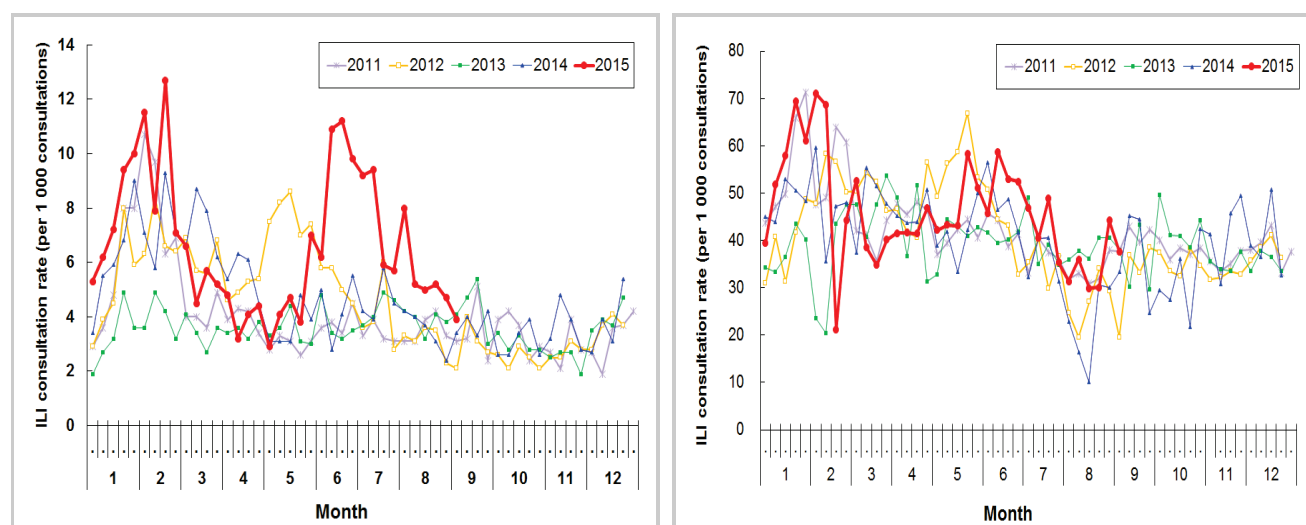


Figure 1 ILI consultation rate at sentinel GOPCs (left) and private doctors (right), 2011-15

Laboratory surveillance, 2011-15

Among the respiratory specimens received in week 36, 65 (2.60%) were tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses, including 51 (2.04%) influenza A(H3), 13 (0.52%) influenza B and 1 (0.04%) influenza C. The percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses last week was 2.60%, which was lower than 4.93% 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 20.0% respectively, as compared to 78.7% and 17.7% in previous week. That of C remained low.

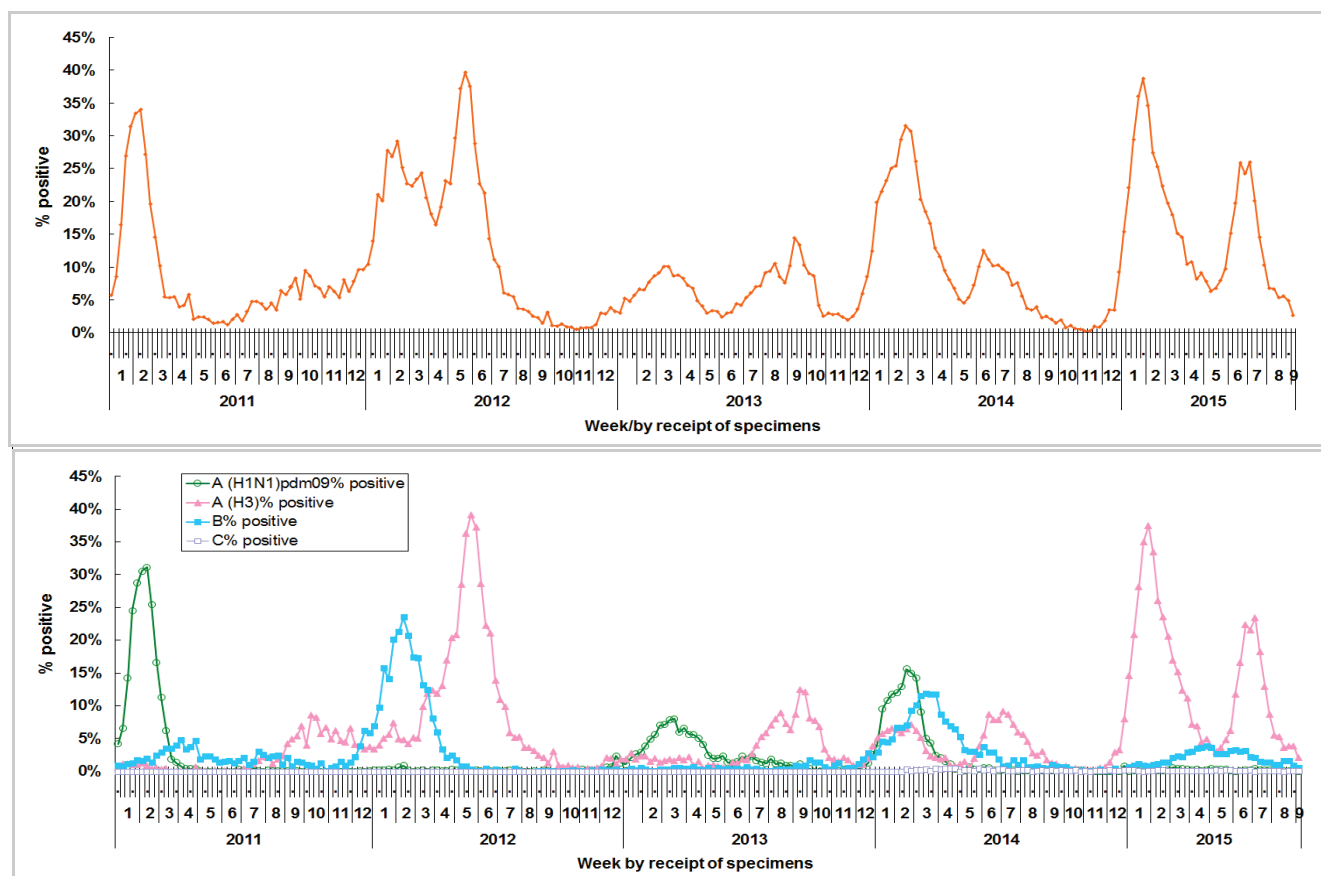


Figure 2 Percentage of respiratory specimens tested positive for influenza viruses, 2011-15 (upper: overall positive percentage, lower: positive percentage by subtypes)

Influenza-like illness outbreak surveillance, 2011-15

In week 36, 1 ILI outbreak (affecting 3 persons) occurring in an institution was recorded, as compared to 1 outbreak (affecting 4 persons) recorded in the previous week (Figure 3). In the first 4 days of week 37 (Sep 6 to 9, 2015), no institutional ILI outbreaks were recorded.

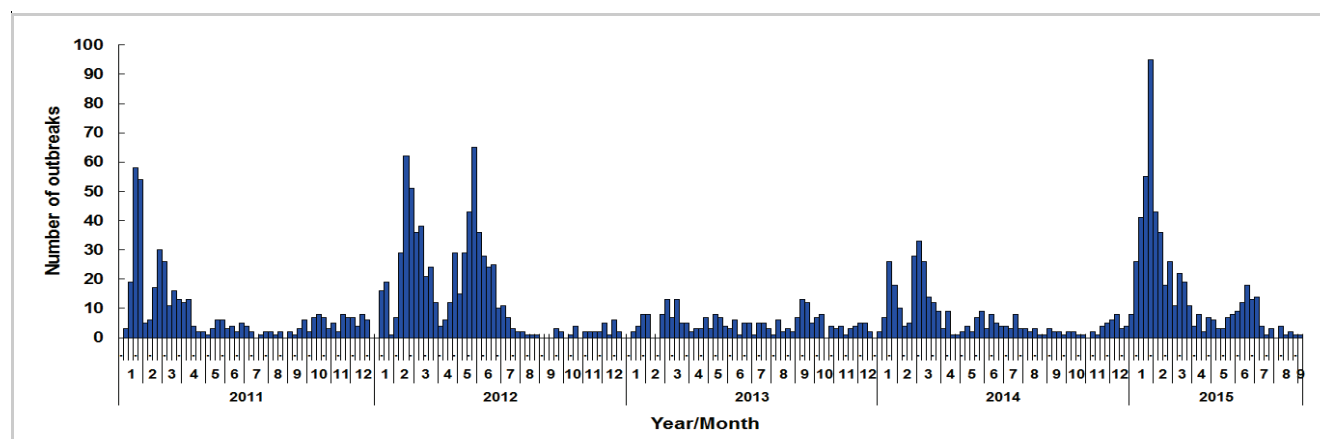


Figure 3 ILI outbreaks in schools/institutions, 2011-15

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

In week 36, the rate of the influenza-like illness syndrome group in the accident and emergency departments (AED) was 128.3 (per 1,000 coded cases), which was higher than the rate of 125.8 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.

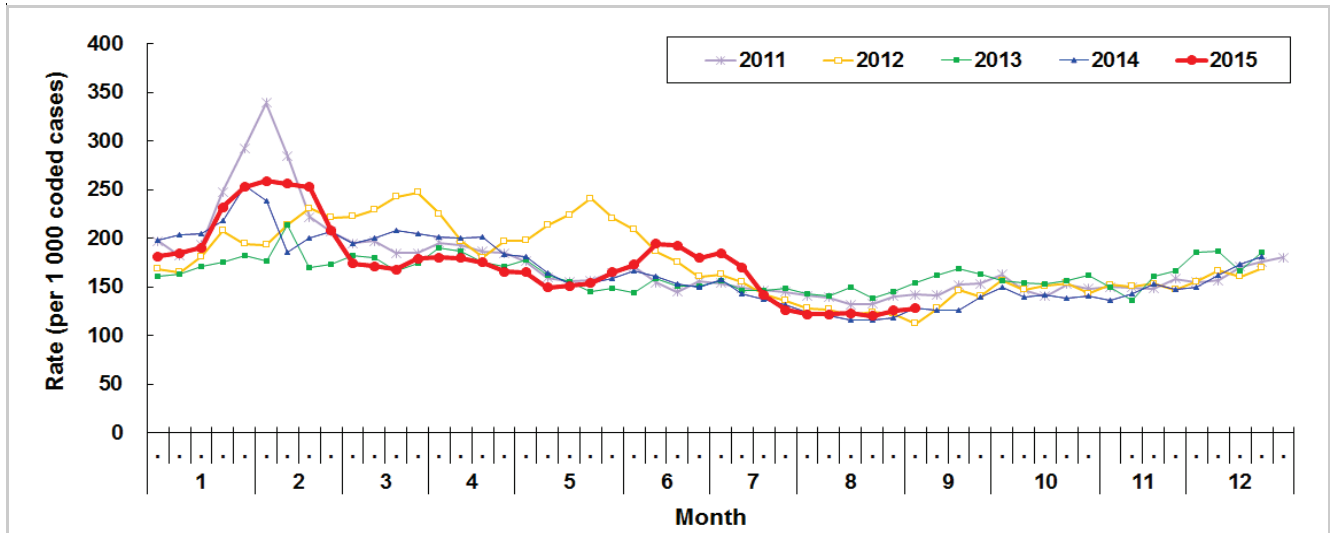


Figure 4 Rate of ILI syndrome group in AED, 2011-15

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

In week 36, 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 0.23, 0.01 and 0.07 cases (per 10,000 people in the age group) respectively, as compared to 0.27, 0.02 and 0.19 cases in the previous week (Figure 5). Weekly number of deaths with any diagnosis of influenza is also shown in Figure 5.

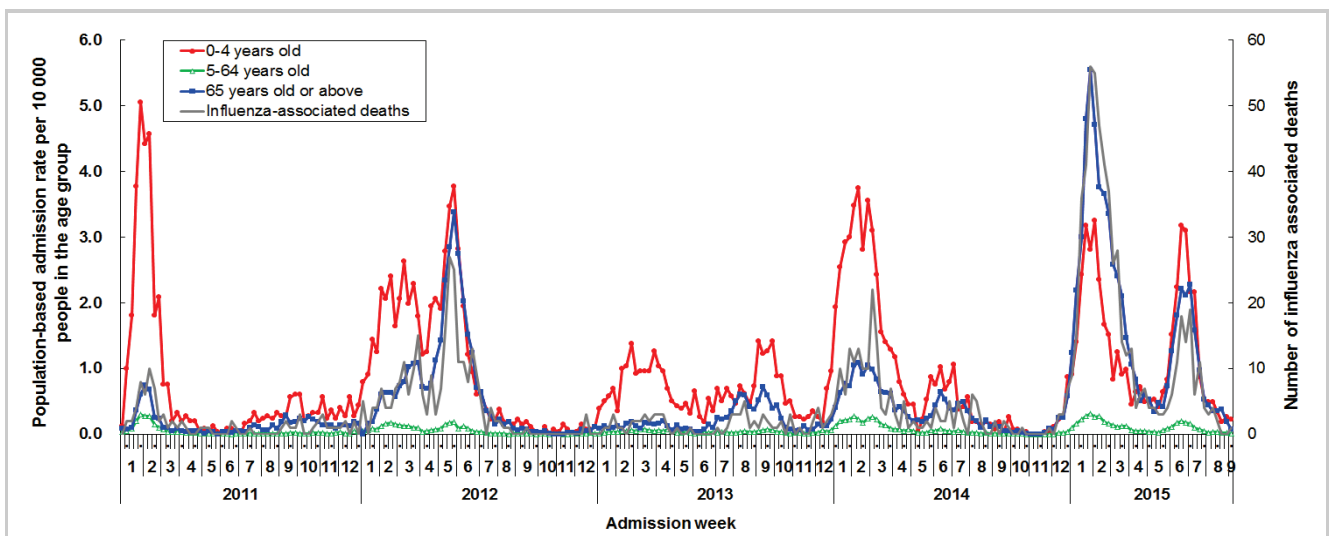


Figure 5 Influenza associated hospital admission rates and deaths, 2011-15

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

In week 36, 0.37% of children in the sentinel child care centres/ kindergartens (CCC/ KG) had fever (38°C or above) as compared to 0.54% in the previous week (Figure 6).

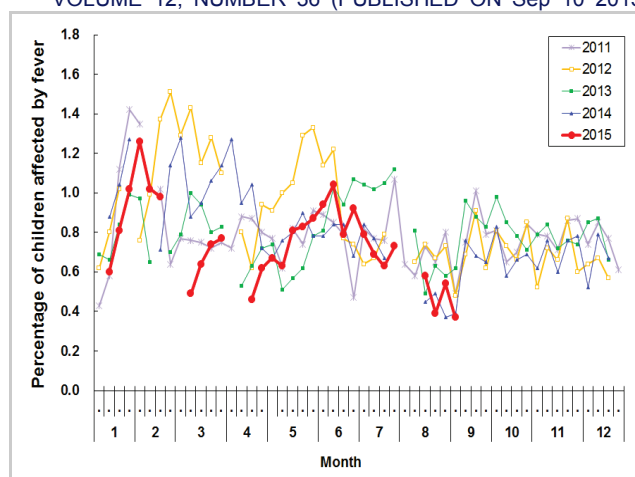


Figure 6 Percentage of children with fever at sentinel CCC/ KG, 2011-15

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

In week 36, 0.08% of residents in the sentinel residential care homes for the elderly (RCHes) had fever (38°C or above) which was the same as that recorded in the previous week (Figure 7).

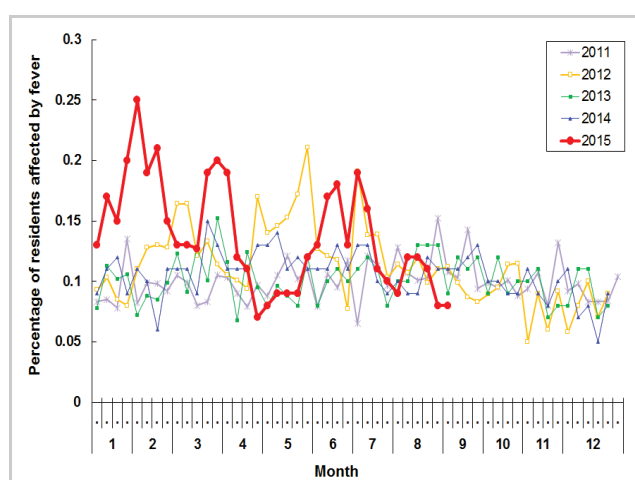


Figure 7 Percentage of residents with fever at sentinel RCHE, 2011-15

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

In week 36, the average consultation rate for ILI among Chinese medicine practitioners (CMPs) was 0.99 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations as compared to 1.08 in the previous week (Figure 8).

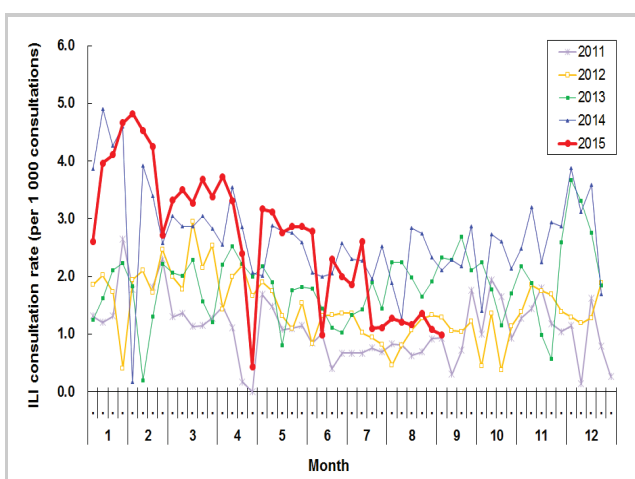


Figure 8 ILI consultation rate at sentinel CMP, 2011-15

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

- In week 36 and the first 4 days of week 37 (Sep 6 to 9, 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 36 and the first 4 days of week 37, 2015 (Sep 6 to 9, 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 29, 2015), the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness is below the national baseline.
- In Canada (Aug 16 to 29, 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 (Aug 3 to 30, 2015), all countries reported low intensity of influenza activity.
- In Australia (Aug 15 to 28, 2015), influenza activity appeared to have peaked in recent weeks with the exception of South Australia where activity continued to rise. Influenza B continues to be the dominant influenza type, comprising over two thirds of all notifications.
- In New Zealand (week ending Sep 6, 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 293 influenza B detections, 74 influenza A(not sub-typed), 59 influenza A(H3N2), and one influenza A(H1N1).
- In Mainland China (week ending Aug 30, 2015), southern China is still in summer influenza season but the influenza activity continued to decrease. 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](#).