

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (14) in DH 8/27/1 IV

7 March 2008

Dear Doctor,

Latest Influenza Situation

I would like to update you on the latest situation of influenza activity in the community.

During the week ending March 1, 2008, our laboratory surveillance system recorded 166 influenza virus detections - 50 influenza A (H1N1) viruses, 19 influenza A (H3N2) viruses and 97 influenza B viruses. This compares with an average of 144 and 177 influenza virus detections per week during the peak of winter influenza seasons in 2006 and 2007 respectively.

The sentinel surveillance networks detected an increasing influenza-like illness (ILI) activity in the community. During the week ending March 1, 2008, consultation rates for ILI in private doctors and GOPC were 57.5 and 8.9 per 1000 consultations respectively. These ILI rates are comparable with those of previous years during the seasonal peak.

As of March 6, a total of 15 confirmed influenza outbreaks in institutions have been recorded since the beginning of 2008.

This year, circulating influenza viruses showed a mixed composition, with A/H3N2/Brisbane, A/H1N1/Solomon Islands, A/H1N1/Brisbane and B/Yamagata and B/Malaysia. These influenza viruses have also appeared in different countries recently.

The current flu vaccine used in Hong Kong is formulated based on the World Health Organization's recommended composition for Northern Hemisphere 2007/08. While it does not exactly match all the influenza strains that are circulating now, it still offers some degree of protection against influenza. According to serological studies by the World Health Organization, the current vaccine confers 40 to 85 per cent of protection against the H3N2 Brisbane-like virus, 49 to 59 percent protection against the A/H1N1/Brisbane-like virus and 22% for B/Yamagata-like virus.



So far more than 275,000 doses of flu vaccines have been administered to eligible target groups under the Government Influenza Vaccination Programme (GVIP), which has been launched since November last year. Approximately 25,000 doses are remaining and the programme will last

as long as the vaccine stock lasts and eligible people are urged to receive vaccination as soon as possible.

According to our communications with vaccine suppliers, there are still stocks of influenza vaccines from the local pharmaceutical companies that supply influenza vaccines and we are liaising with them to facilitate release to the private sector.

Our Public Health Laboratory Centre has started testing for amantadine and oseltamivir resistance among influenza viruses circulating in Hong Kong since 2006. It detected no oseltamivir resistant influenza viruses in both 2006 and 2007. Since January 2008, 24 oseltamivir resistant influenza A(H1N1) viruses with the same H274 mutation were detected out of 235 samples. 46 influenza A(H3N2) and 66 influenza B were also tested, none was resistant to oseltamivir. CHP is monitoring the situation closely and will continue to test H1N1 viruses for oseltamivir resistance.

You may wish to refer to the daily update on the influenza situation at the CHP website <http://www.chp.gov.hk/>. You are also reminded to report respiratory illnesses occurring in institutional settings for prompt outbreak control.

Yours faithfully,



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