Influenza Update N° 272

19 September 2016, based on data up to 04 September, 2016

Details of Influenza Transmission Zones available at:
http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/EN_GIP_Influenza_transmission_zones.pdf

Summary

Influenza activity varied in countries of temperate South America, is ongoing in South Africa and increased steadily in the last few weeks in Oceania. Influenza activity in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere was at inter-seasonal levels.

- In temperate South America, influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity decreased throughout most of the sub-region. In Chile, influenza-like illness (ILI) and laboratory confirmed influenza and RSV virus detections remained elevated; influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 was predominant with co-circulation of A(H3N2) viruses and influenza B viruses. Influenza activity was low in Argentina and Paraguay, while no influenza activity was reported in Uruguay. In Argentina however, ILI and severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) cases remained elevated. Respiratory syncytial virus activity remained elevated in the region.

- In the temperate countries of Southern Africa, influenza activity is ongoing, with co-circulation of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, A(H3N2) and B viruses.

- In Oceania, influenza virus activity increased slightly in recent weeks, but seems to have reached its peak. Influenza A(H3N2) remained the dominant circulating influenza virus. In contrast, in New Zealand ILI consultation rates remained below the seasonal baseline level, although 43% of ILI samples tested positive for influenza, with influenza A(H3N2) predominating.

- In the Caribbean countries, influenza and other respiratory virus activity remained low throughout most of the sub-region. The exception was Suriname where the number of SARI cases and hospitalizations continued to increase with parainfluenza virus predominating in the recent weeks. In Central America, influenza virus activity remained low but in most of the countries, detections of non-influenza respiratory viruses stayed elevated with RSV predominating.

- In tropical South America, influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and RSV virus detections generally decreased in recent weeks or remained low in most of the countries. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 detections continued to decrease in Brazil and Ecuador. In Peru, influenza activity continue to decrease, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and influenza B viruses co-circulating.

- In tropical countries of South Asia, influenza activity was generally low with seasonal influenza A and B viruses co-circulating in the region.

- In South East Asia, there was a decreasing trend in influenza detection in recent weeks, with co-circulation of seasonal influenza A and B viruses.

- Sporadic cases of influenza A(H3N2) virus infection were reported from northern, middle and western Africa in recent weeks, among the few countries reporting data during this period. In East Africa, ongoing elevated influenza B detections were reported by Madagascar. Kenya reported decreasing influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) activity.
In North America and Europe, influenza activity was low with few influenza virus detections. ILI levels were below seasonal thresholds.

Influenza activity was low in temperate Asia.

National Influenza Centres (NICs) and other national influenza laboratories from 68 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 22 August 2016 to 04 September 2016 (data as of 2016-09-16 03:54:50 UTC). The WHO GISAID laboratories tested more than 42184 specimens during that time period. 2911 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 2271 (78%) were typed as influenza A and 640 (22%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 301 (18.6%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 1313 (81.4%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 44 (24.9%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 133 (75.1%) to the B-Victoria lineage.

Countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere

Temperate South America
For more information see:
Southern Africa

In the temperate countries of Southern Africa, influenza virus detections are ongoing, with a co-circulation of A(H1N1)pdm09, A(H3N2) and B.
Oceania, Melanesia and Polynesia
In Oceania, influenza virus activity appears to be at its peak. In recent weeks, ILI rates continued to increase nationally in Australia and was at 20% in the week ending 2 of September. Influenza A(H3N2) remained the dominant circulating influenza virus. In New Caledonia influenza activity decreased. New Zealand continued to see levels of ILI activity below the seasonal baseline level; among the samples tested (n=23), 43% were positive for influenza, with influenza A(H3N2) predominating.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania, Melanesia and Polynesia

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 16/09/16

Countries in the tropical zone

Tropical countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America

African region
Sporadic cases of influenza A(H3N2) virus infection were reported by northern, middle and western Africa in recent weeks, among the few countries reporting data during this period. In East Africa, ongoing elevated influenza B detections were reported by Madagascar. Kenya reported decreasing activity of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2).

Tropical Asia
Overall, influenza activity in Southern Asia was low with both influenza A and influenza B viruses circulating. Nepal reported decreased detection of influenza A(H3N2) and B viruses.
In Southeast Asia, there was a decreasing trend in influenza detection in recent weeks, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, A(H3N2) and influenza B viruses co-circulating. Singapore, where predominantly influenza A(H3N2) virus circulated, reported decreased detections in the last few weeks. Cambodia continued to report an increase in influenza B virus positive specimens. Thailand reported predominantly increased detections of influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, with additional circulating A(H3N2) and B viruses. The majority of detections in Laos, Malaysia and the Philippines were due to B viruses, with co-circulating A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) viruses.

Countries in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere

North America
For more information see:

Europe
For more information see: https://flunewseurope.org/

Northern Africa and Western Asia
Influenza virus detections, of predominantly influenza A(H3N2), remained low in the countries reporting data during this period.

Central Asia
For more information see: https://flunewseurope.org/

Northern Temperate Asia
In temperate Northern Asia, influenza activity continued at low levels with both influenza A and B viruses detected in the region.

Source of data
The Global Influenza Programme monitors influenza activity worldwide and publishes an update every two weeks. The updates are based on available epidemiological and virological data sources, including FluNet (reported by the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System), FluID (epidemiological data reported by national focal points) and influenza reports from WHO Regional Offices and Member States. Completeness can vary among updates due to availability and quality of data available at the time when the update is developed.

Links to web pages
Influenza reports from WHO Regional Offices:
AMRO: www.paho.org/influenzareports
EURO: http://www.flunewseurope.org/
WPRO: http://www.wpro.who.int/emerging_diseases/Influenza

Epidemiological Influenza updates:
http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/latest_update_GIP_surveillance
Epidemiological Influenza updates archives 2015:
http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/GIP_surveillance_2015_archives

Virological surveillance updates:
http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/summaryreport
Virological surveillance updates archives:
http://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/updates/