Virus WAtch

Week ending 8th November 2020

Key Points

It is important to note that the influenza and ILI surveillance systems in WA have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore interpretation of 2020 influenza and ILI activity should be done with caution and needs to take into account the effects of changes in health seeking behaviour including accessing alternate health services such as telehealth, focused testing for COVID-19 at COVID-19 clinics or specific acute respiratory infection clinics and the impact of physical distancing measures.

Influenza and influenza-like illnesses (ILI)

- **Summary**: Indicators of influenza activity remain at or below interseasonal levels.
- ILI activity at sentinel GPs and EDs remains below levels usually seen at this time of year.
- There were no positive influenza samples reported by PathWest in the past week.
- Overall non-influenza activity remained low.

Gastroenteritis

- The rate of gastroenteritis presentations at sentinel GPs and EDs remained in the lower range of levels normally reported at this time of year.
- PathWest laboratory detections of norovirus were low in the past week, and rotavirus notifications remained at low levels.

Other vaccine-preventable diseases

- **Shingles and chickenpox**: Chickenpox presentations at sentinel GPs and EDs were above baseline levels this week. Shingles presentations at sentinel EDs were also above baseline this week.
- **Measles**: No measles cases were notified in the past week.
- **Mumps**: One mumps case was notified in the past week.
- **Rubella**: No rubella cases were notified in the past week.
- **Invasive meningococcal disease (IMD)**: No IMD cases were notified in the past week.

Other diseases

- **Coronavirus COVID-19**: As of 11 November 2020, a total of 780 COVID-19 cases have been confirmed in WA. See [webpage](http://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Infectious-disease-data/Virus-WAtch) for further information.
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses

The rate of ILI presentations to sentinel GPs in the past week remains in the lower range of levels usually reported at this time of year. There were no samples submitted for influenza testing by sentinel GPs in the past week.

The following is a summary of current Emergency Department Sentinel Surveillance (EDSS) data for respiratory viral presentations.

ED viral-illness* presentations and admissions

*The graph is a summary of presentations at Emergency Department Sentinel Surveillance (EDSS) sites using the ICD codes B34.9 and J06.9 which are consistent with a clinical presentation of a viral illness. This data may differ from that presented in the Winter Respiratory Illness Report provided by the Information and System Performance Directorate.

Respiratory viral presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs remains steady.
The graph is a summary of presentations at Emergency Department Sentinel Surveillance (EDSS) sites using the ICD codes B34.9 and J06.9 which are consistent with a clinical presentation of a viral illness. This data may differ from that presented in the Winter Respiratory Illness Report provided by the Information and System Performance Directorate.

The number of respiratory viral presentations to sentinel EDs remains in the lower range of levels usually reported at this time of the year.

The graph is a summary of all influenza notifications received by the DoH, Western Australia to the end of the current reporting week, for which cases had date of symptom onset or specimen collection between 2/11/2020 and 8/11/2020. The seasonal threshold defines a value above which may indicate epidemic seasonal influenza activity. The threshold value is calculated based on analysis of seasonal influenza data from the past four years.

Influenza notifications reported to the Department of Health in the past week remain below the seasonal threshold. One influenza notification was received by the Department of Health in the past week.
The graph is a summary of all WA samples reported by PathWest, excluding samples referred by other private laboratories for influenza subtyping.

The percentage of specimens positive for influenza virus at PathWest remains below levels usually reported at this time of year. None of the 383 specimens submitted for influenza testing were positive for influenza in the past week.

Influenza Types and Subtypes, 2019-2020

The graph is a summary of all WA samples positive for influenza reported at PathWest, excluding samples referred by other private laboratories for influenza subtyping. * These samples were tested using a rapid testing method that does not determine the influenza subtype (i.e. influenza A/H3N2 or A/H1N1).

No positive influenza samples have been reported by PathWest since July.
This week saw a slight increase in rhinovirus, parainfluenza virus 1 and RSV, however overall non-influenza activity remains low.

COVID-19 activity remains low in Western Australia. All recently reported cases were acquired at overseas.
Gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel GPs are in the range of values usually reported at this time of year.

Gastroenteritis presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs in the past week remain below baseline levels.

This graph is a summary of current EDIS data for gastroenteritis presentations and admissions. Baseline levels for gastroenteritis presentations and admissions were calculated using the mean of weekly EDIS data from week 1, 2015 to week 52, 2019.
The number of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel EDs remains well below the range of values normally reported at this time of year.

### Viral rashes

**GP varicella-zoster virus presentations**

- **No. of chickenpox/1000 consults**
- **No. of shingles/1000 consults**
- **Chickenpox baseline (2015-2019)**
- **Shingles baseline (2015-2019)**

Baseline levels for chickenpox and shingles presentations to WA ASPREN GPs per thousand consultations were calculated using the mean of weekly WA ASPREN data from week 1, 2015 to week 52, 2019.

No chickenpox presentations were reported by sentinel GPs. Shingles presentations were above baseline levels.
The following is a summary of current Emergency Department sentinel surveillance (EDSS) data for varicella-zoster virus presentations.

**ED varicella-zoster virus presentations**

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<thead>
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<th>Week ending</th>
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<th>No. of shingles presentations</th>
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Baseline levels for varicella-zoster virus presentations were calculated using the mean of weekly EDIS data from week 1, 2015 to week 52, 2019.

Chickenpox and shingles presentations at sentinel EDs were above baseline levels in the past week.

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