Virus WAthc

Week ending 03\textsuperscript{rd} January 2021

Key Points

Data have been reported to week 53 of 2020 (28\textsuperscript{th} December 2020 to 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 2021).

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 EDs remained significantly higher than levels usually reported at this time of year. ILI activity at sentinel GPs remains below levels usually seen at this time of year.
- There were no positive influenza samples reported by PathWest in the past week.
- RSV detections were higher than levels usually reported at this time of year.

Gastroenteritis

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

Other vaccine-preventable diseases

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

Other diseases

- **Coronavirus COVID-19**: As of 07 January 2021, a total of 874 COVID-19 cases have been confirmed in WA. See webpage 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.

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 to sentinel EDs increased in recent weeks.
The graph is a summary of respiratory viral 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 was significantly higher than the 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 28/12/2020 and 03/01/2021. 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. No influenza notifications were 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 748 specimens submitted for influenza testing were positive for influenza in the past week.

**Influenza types and subtypes, 2020 to 2021**

No PCR positive influenza samples have been reported by PathWest since July 2020.
The graph is a summary of all WA samples positive for a common respiratory virus other than influenza reported at PathWest.

RSV detections remained significantly higher than levels usually reported at this time of the year.

COVID-19 activity remains low in Western Australia. The majority of cases have been acquired overseas or at sea.
Gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel GPs were in the mid-range of values usually reported at this time of year.

Gastroenteritis presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs in the past week were below baseline levels.
The number of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel EDs remain well below the range of values normally reported at this time of year.

**Viral rashes**

The following is a summary of current Emergency Department sentinel surveillance (EDSS) data for varicella-zoster virus presentations.

**GP varicella-zoster virus presentations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week ending</th>
<th>No. of chickenpox/1000 consults</th>
<th>No. of shingles/1000 consults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15/11/20</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>27/12/20</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/01/21</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Only one chickenpox presentation has been reported by sentinel GPs in the past eight weeks. Shingles presentations in the past week were above baseline levels.
Baseline levels for varicella-zoster virus presentations were calculated using the mean of weekly EDIS data from week 1, 2015 to week 52, 2019.

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

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