Virus WAtch

Week ending 17th November 2019

Key Points

Influenza and influenza-like illnesses (ILI)

- **Summary**: Indicators of influenza activity were below levels usually reported during this time of year in WA.
- ILI activity at sentinel GPs remained low in the past week.
- ILI presentations and admissions at sentinel EDs increased in the past week.
- PathWest influenza detections and test percent positivity were at low levels for this time of year.
- Influenza A accounted for all influenza detections at PathWest in the past week. Of those that were subtyped 67% were A/H1 and 33% were A/H3.
- Overall non-influenza activity decreased this week.

Gastroenteritis

- The rate of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel GPs, and the number of presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs in the past week were higher than baseline levels.
- PathWest laboratory detections of norovirus and rotavirus remained at low levels.

Other vaccine-preventable diseases

- **Shingles and chickenpox**: While chickenpox presentations to sentinel EDs in the past week were comparable to baseline levels, shingles presentations were higher.
- **Measles**: No measles cases were notified this week.
- **Mumps**: One mumps case was notified in the past week.
- **Rubella**: No rubella cases notified in the past week.
- **Invasive meningococcal disease (IMD)**: One meningococcal case, serogroup C in an adult, was notified in the past week.
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses

The number of routine PathWest influenza detections increased in the past week. There were no detections among the samples submitted for influenza testing by sentinel GPs.

The rate of ILI presentations to sentinel GPs this week was in the lower range of levels usually reported during this time of year.
The following is a summary of current Emergency Department Sentinel Surveillance (EDSS) data for respiratory viral presentations.

Respiratory viral presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs increased in the past week.

The number of respiratory viral presentations to sentinel EDs increased in the past week and remained in the mid-range of levels usually reported during this time of year.

*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.
Influenza notifications reported to the Department of Health remained below the seasonal threshold.

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 11/11/2019 and 17/11/2019. 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.

The percentage of specimens positive for influenza virus at PathWest remained below levels usually reported at this time of year. Of 231 specimens submitted, eight (3%) tested positive 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.
Eight positive samples were reported by PathWest in the past week, all of which were influenza A; four were A/H1, two were A/H3 and two were not subtyped.

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).

Overall non-influenza activity decreased in the past week.

The graph is a summary of all WA samples positive for a common respiratory virus other than influenza reported at PathWest.
The rate of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel GPs increased in the past week and was higher than the values normally reported at this time of year.

Gastroenteritis presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs in the past week were higher than 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, 2014 to week 52, 2018.
The number of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel EDs increased in the past week and was higher than the values normally reported at this time of year.

**Viral rashes**

There were no chickenpox presentations reported by WA ASPREN GPs in the past week, and the rate of shingles presentations was comparable to the baseline level.

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, 2014 to week 52, 2018.
The following is a summary of current Emergency Department sentinel surveillance (EDSS) data for varicella-zoster virus presentations.

While chickenpox presentations to sentinel EDs in the past week were comparable to the baseline level, shingles presentations were higher.

Baseline levels for varicella-zoster virus presentations were calculated using the mean of weekly EDIS data from week 1, 2014 to week 52, 2018.

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