Virus WAtch

Week ending 12th January 2020

Key Points

Influenza and influenza-like illnesses (ILI)

- **Summary**: Indicators of influenza activity were similar to levels usually reported during this time of year in WA.
- Sentinel GP data for the weeks ending 5/01/2020 and 12/01/2020 are not yet available.
- ILL presentations and admissions at sentinel EDs decreased in the past week.
- Influenza notifications and PathWest test percent positivity were at levels usually reported at this time of year.
- Influenza A accounted for (83%) influenza cases at PathWest in the past week, comprising 58% influenza A/H1 and 25% influenza A/not subtyped. Influenza B accounted for 17% of cases
- Non-influenza activity in sentinel EDs decreased slightly in the past week.

Gastroenteritis

- The number of presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs have decreased but remain higher than baseline levels.
- PathWest laboratory detections of norovirus decreased in the past week, and rotavirus remained at low levels.

Other vaccine-preventable diseases

- **Shingles and chickenpox**: The number of shingles presentations to sentinel EDs increased this week and were higher than baseline levels and chickpox presentations were similar to baseline levels.
- **Measles**: One measles case was 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 meningococcal serogroup W case was notified in the past week.


Virus WAtch is a weekly electronic publication by the Communicable Disease Control Directorate (CDCD) and key collaborators. It provides a brief summary of General Practice and Hospital Emergency Department sentinel surveillance data on influenza-like illness, gastroenteritis and varicella-zoster disease, together with relevant laboratory information, to alert health care workers in WA to important circulating viruses. All figures and data were accurate at time of publication, but subject to change. The data collections used to create this publication include:

- Sentinel General Practice data collected by WA members of the Australian Sentinel Practices Research Network (ASPREN)
- Emergency Department data provided by the Emergency Department Information System (EDIS), which currently incorporates data from the following hospitals: Fiona Stanley Hospital, Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital, Royal Perth Hospital, Perth Children's Hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital, St John of God Midland, Bunbury Hospital, Armadale Hospital, Joondalup Health Campus, and Rockingham General Hospital.
- Notification data derived from disease notifications received by CDCD, WA Department of Health from medical providers and public or private laboratories in WA. These data are updated routinely to include admission status for all public and public/private hospitals in WA and hospitalisation data are included in the report during the influenza season.
- Viral laboratory data obtained from PathWest laboratories at QEII Medical Centre, as well as via notification data sent by all WA laboratories to CDCD, WA Department of Health.

*these samples were tested using a rapid testing method that does not determine the influenza subtype (i.e influenza A/H3N2 or A/H1N1).
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses

The number of routine PathWest influenza detections was similar to the past week. Sentinel GP data for the weeks ending 5/01/2020 and 12/01/2020 are not yet available.

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

**ED viral-illness* presentations and admissions**

- Number of ILI presentations
- Number of ILI admissions
- ILI/1000 presentations
- ILI/1000 admissions

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

The number of respiratory viral presentations to sentinel EDs decreased in the past week and is similar to 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 in the past week remained similar to 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 30/12/2019 and 05/01/2020. 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.

The percentage of specimens positive for influenza virus at PathWest was at levels usually reported at this time of year. Of 212 specimens submitted, 12 (5.7%) 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.

Twelve positive samples were reported by PathWest in the past week which included 10 influenza A and two influenza B. Of the influenza A samples, seven were A/H1 and three 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 respiratory virus activity decreased slightly 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.
Sentinel GP data for the weeks ending 5/01/2020 and 12/01/2020 are not yet available.

Gastroenteritis presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs decreased in the past week but 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.

ED gastroenteritis presentations, 2016 to 2020

The number of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel EDs decreased in the past week but remained higher than the values normally reported at this time of year.

Viral rashes

GP varicella-zoster virus presentations

Sentinel GP data for the weeks ending 5/01/2020 and 12/01/2020 are not yet available.

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.

Chickenpox presentations to sentinel EDs in the past week were below the baseline levels, and the number of shingles presentations increased and were higher than baseline levels.

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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