Virus WAtch

Week ending 16th February 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.
- ILI activity at sentinel GPs remained low in the previous weeks.
- ILI presentations and admissions at sentinel EDs were relatively stable in the past week but presentations were higher than expected for this time of year.
- PathWest influenza detections and test percent positivity were at levels usually reported at this time of year.
- Influenza A accounted for (93%) influenza cases at PathWest in the past week, comprising 86% influenza A/H1 and 7% influenza A/not subtyped*. Influenza B accounted for 7% of cases.
- Non-influenza activity in sentinel EDs decreased slightly in the past week.

Gastroenteritis

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

Other vaccine-preventable diseases

- **Shingles and chickenpox:** The chickenpox presentation and shingles presentation rates reported by WA ASPREN GPs were similar to the baseline this week. The number of chickenpox and shingles presentations to sentinel EDs in the past week was below the baseline levels.
- **Measles:** No measles cases were notified in the past week.
- **Mumps:** No mumps case was notified in the past week.
- **Rubella:** No rubella cases notified in the past week.
- **Invasive meningococcal disease (IMD):** No IMD cases notified in the past week.

Other diseases

- **Coronavirus COVID-19:** The first confirmed case of COVID-19 diagnosed in a WA resident, a passenger on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, was notified this week. See [webpage](http://www.health.wa.gov.au) for further information.
*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 decreased in the past week and there were no detections among samples submitted for influenza testing by sentinel GPs.

The rate of ILI presentations to sentinel GPs in the past week was in the mid-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.

**ED viral-illness presentations and admissions**

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

**ED viral-illness presentations, 2016 to 2020**

- **2016**
- **2017**
- **2018**
- **2019**
- **2020**

Respiratory viral presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs remained relatively stable in the past week.

The number of respiratory viral presentations to sentinel EDs decreased in the past week and is above 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 10/02/2019 and 16/02/2020. 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 235 specimens submitted, 15 (6%) 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.
Fifteen positive samples were reported by PathWest in the past week which included 14 influenza A and one influenza B. Of the 14 influenza A samples, 13 were A/H1 and one was 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 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.
The rate of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel GPs decreased in the past weeks and has remained in the lower-range of levels normally reported at this time of year.

**ED gastroenteritis presentations**

Gastroenteritis presentations and admissions to sentinel EDs in the past week were lower 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 remained higher than the values normally reported at this time of year.

**Viral rashes**

The chickenpox presentation and shingles presentation rates reported by WA ASPREN GPs were similar to the baseline this week.

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.

The number of chickenpox and shingles presentations to sentinel EDs in the past week were below the 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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