

# Health **FAX**

## **Simcoe Muskoka No Longer in Widespread Influenza Activity: Vaccine Remains a Strong Match**

Attention: **Physicians, Long-Term Care Homes, Rest and Retirement Homes, Emergency Departments, Nurse Practitioners, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Professionals, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Neighbouring Health Units, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies**

Date: January 14, 2013

Effective January 14, 2013, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is no longer experiencing community-wide influenza activity. Localized influenza activity is still occurring in the community as defined by Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) criteria as "sporadically occurring ILI and lab-confirmed influenza together with outbreaks of ILI in schools and work sites, or laboratory-confirmed influenza in residential institutions occurring in < 50% of the health unit".

### **Simcoe County and District of Muskoka**

Local influenza A activity has decreased significantly from the peak that occurred in late December 2012 and early January 5, 2013. The numbers of influenza outbreaks, sporadic cases and emergency room visits for influenza-like illness have now returned to winter baseline levels. Since Sept 1, 2012, there have been 26 lab-confirmed influenza A institutional outbreaks in Simcoe Muskoka. In addition to the 77 outbreak-related cases, there have been 212 sporadic lab-confirmed cases for a total of 290 cases reported as of January 11, 2013. Local influenza A specimens sent for further subtyping have all been H3. There has been one influenza B.

**Provincially, 100% of the 78 influenza A samples and 80% (12/15) of influenza B samples sent for strain characterization have been a strain match to the 2012-13 influenza vaccine.**

Prescribers may continue to receive requests for Tamiflu prophylaxis. For any unimmunized staff working in institutions experiencing confirmed influenza outbreaks, Tamiflu prophylaxis at 75mg once daily until the outbreak is over is recommended and required as per Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care protocols. Canadian guidelines on the use of antiviral drugs for influenza are available at <http://www.ammi.ca/guidelines>.

All lab-confirmed influenza cases and institutional respiratory outbreaks are reportable to public health to ensure timely follow-up. For additional information or to report influenza cases and respiratory outbreaks please contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Communicable Disease Team at (705)721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 extension 8809.