

Weekly Influenza News

Week 11: March 10 to March 16, 2019

Week in Review:

Influenza Activity Indicator	Assessment of Indicator*	Interpretation
<u>Reported cases</u>	Lower	23 local lab-confirmed cases reported in week 11 ; 32 cases reported in week 10
<u>Percent Positive of Flu Specimens[†]</u>	Similar	Simcoe Muskoka: - flu A (23.5%); flu B (0.0%) Ontario: - flu A (16.2%); flu B (0.3%)
<u>Local Institutional Outbreaks</u>	Similar	Twelve institutional influenza outbreaks reported for the 2018-19 season to date.
<u>Local Emergency Department respiratory visits: week 11</u>	Similar	Percentage of visits is similar compared to previous week and lower compared to the same period for the 2017-18 season.
Week 11 Overall Assessment March 10 to March 16, 2019	Similar	Reported Activity Level: Localized
		23 cases of Flu A in SMDHU this week. No cases of Flu B in SMDHU this week.
<u>Predominant Influenza Strains:</u> Influenza A (H1N1)		

Notes: Reported activity level is based on the weekly submission of [Appendix C](#) to Public Health Ontario. Definition available [here](#).

*Compared to previous [surveillance week](#)

† Reported for week 10

Reported Local Influenza Cases

In Simcoe Muskoka, there have been **582 lab-confirmed influenza cases reported** as of 19 March 2019. 23 (4.0%) of which were reported in week 11 – this is lower compared to week 10.

Of the 575 reported influenza A cases, 109 have been subtyped:

- 74/109 (68%) are influenza A, H1 strain / H1N1 pdm09
- 35/109 (32%) are influenza A, H3 strain

🔗 Figure 2 and Figure 3 below provide historic comparisons

Table 1: Summary of influenza cases for 2018-19 season

Lab-confirmed Influenza Cases	Week 11		Season-to-Date	
	N	%	N	%
Influenza A	23	100%	575	99%
Influenza B	0	0%	7	1%
Influenza A & B	0	0%	0	0%
Total	23	100%	582	100%

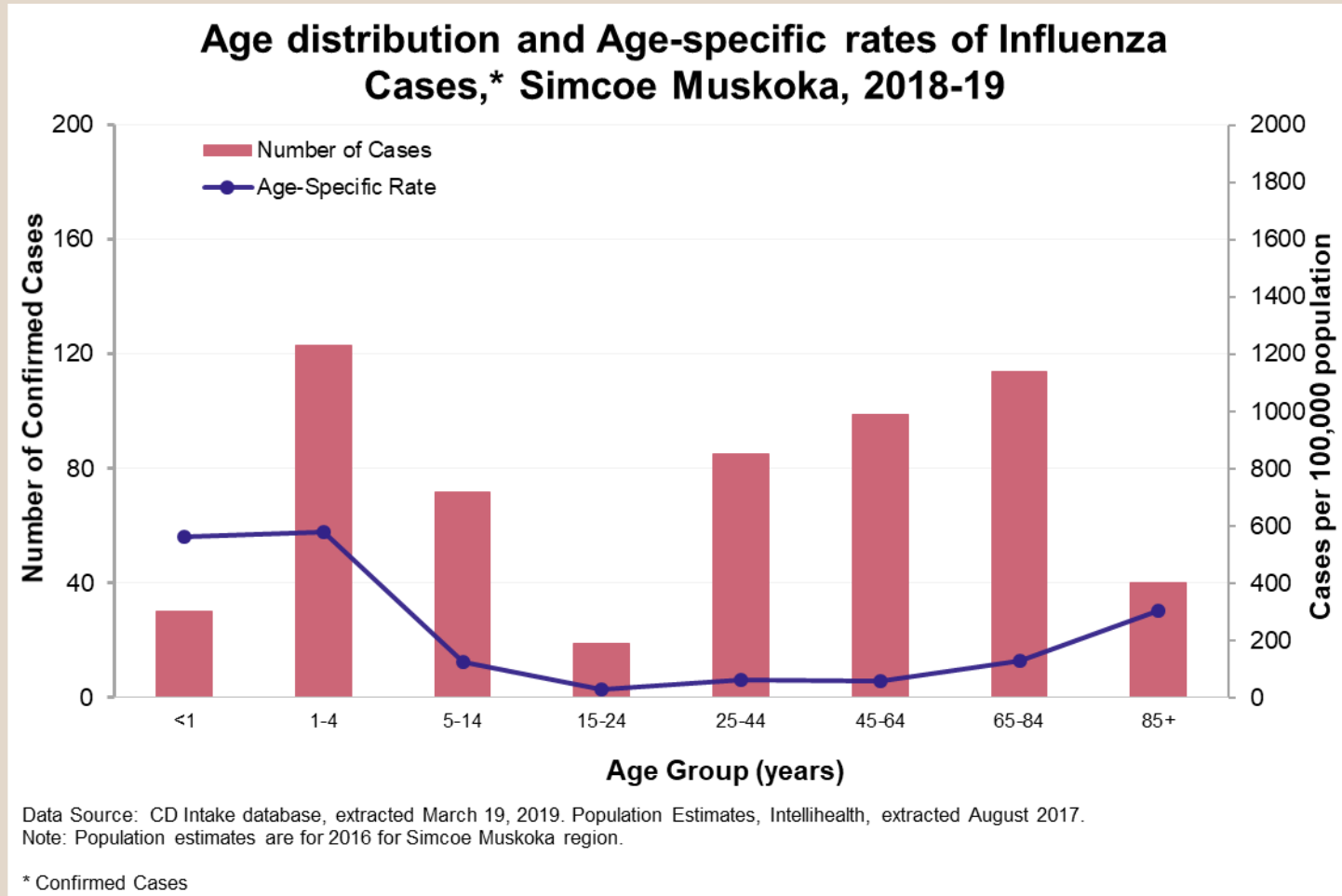
Notes:
Data source: Communicable Disease Intake Database, extracted on March 19, 2019.

Age Distribution

For the season-to-date, the majority of cases (74%) have been reported in individuals under the age of 65 years, with the highest age-specific rates being seen in children between one and four years (39% of cases have been in those under the age of 14 years). One quarter (27%) of cases have been reported in individuals aged 65 and older.

Median age of reported flu cases: 35 years

Figure 1: Number and Age-specific Rate of Influenza Cases by Age Group, Simcoe Muskoka, September 2018 to present



Historical Comparison

Figure 2: Reported Influenza Cases, Type A, Current Influenza Season with Historical Comparison, Simcoe Muskoka

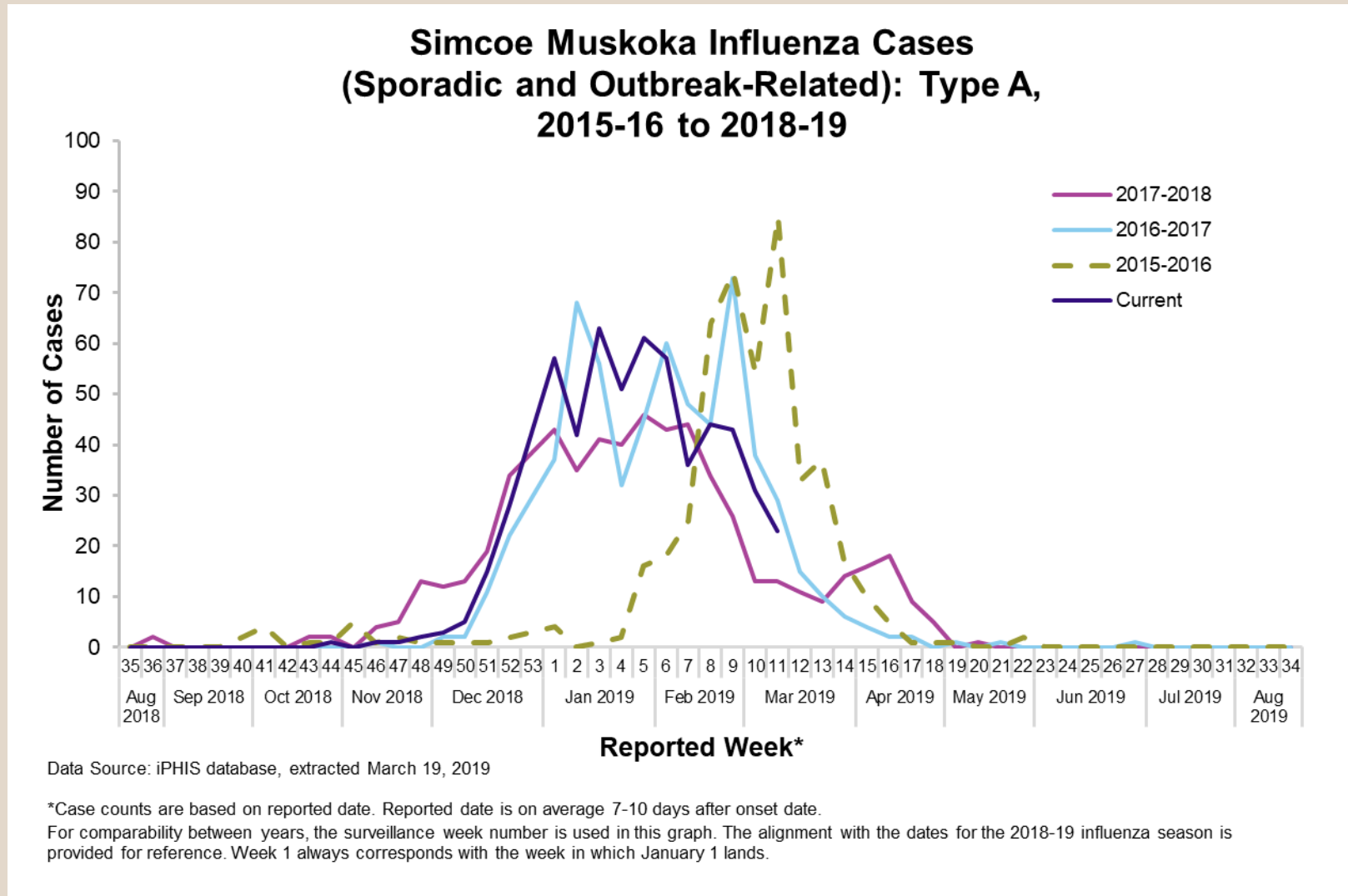
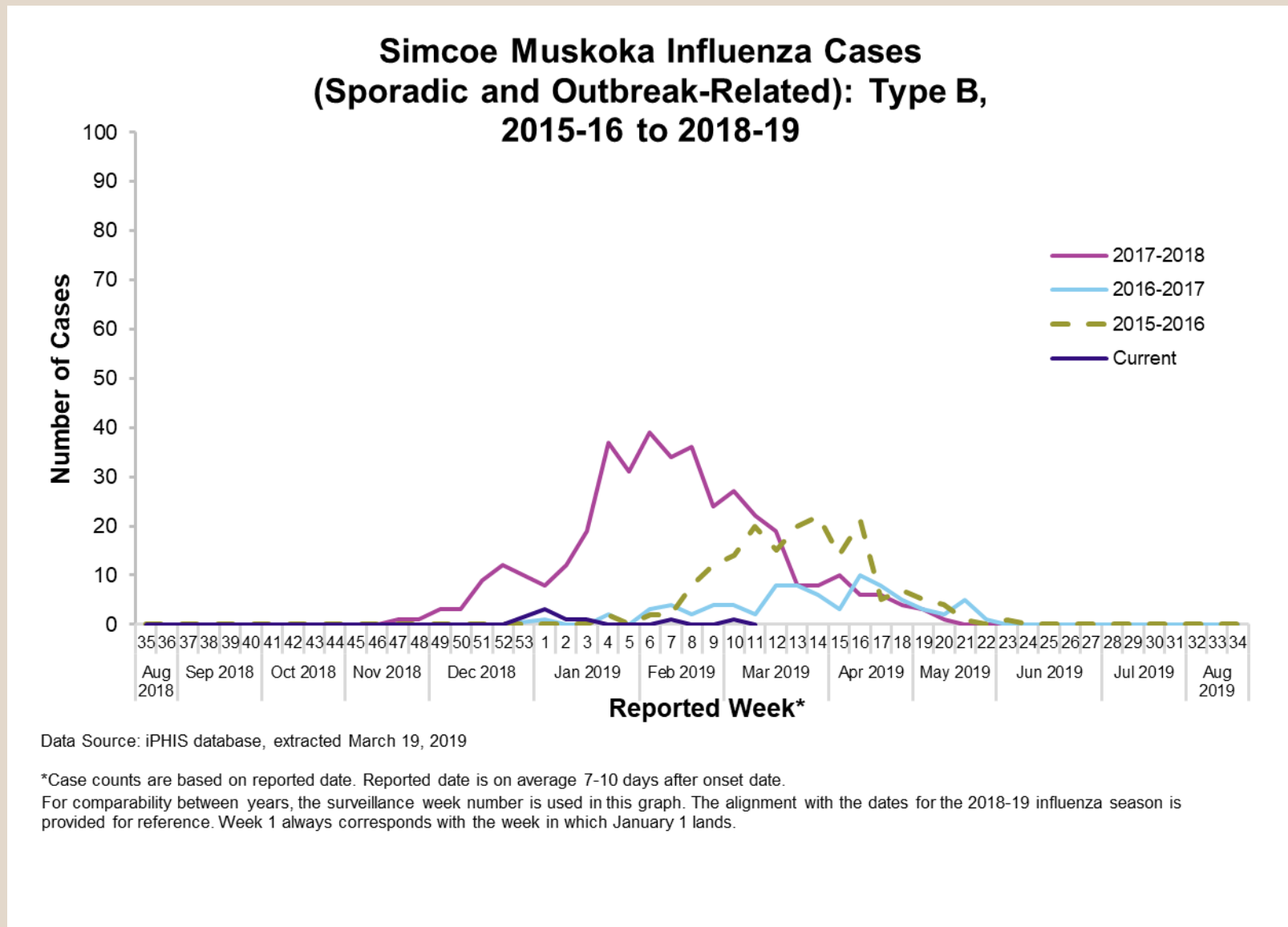


Figure 3: Reported Influenza Cases, Type B, Current Influenza Season with Historical Comparison, Simcoe Muskoka



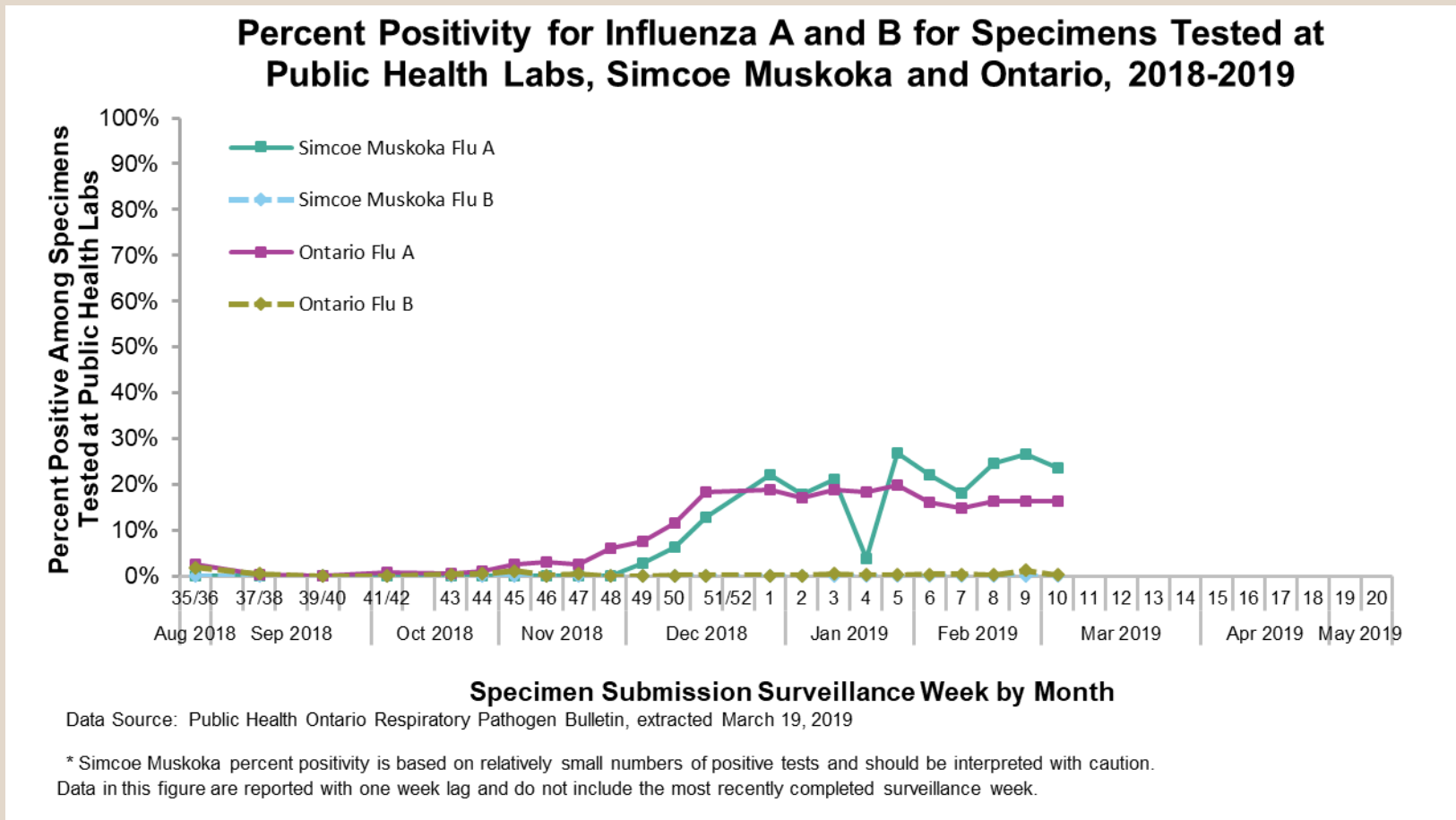
Percent positivity

Note: Percent positivity is reported with one week lag and does not include week 11.

The percentage of flu specimens that are positive (percent positivity) for Influenza A and Influenza B has peaked. The provincial percent positivity for influenza A in week 10 was reported at 16.2%, which is similar when compared to week 9. Influenza B percent positivity was reported at 0.3% for week 10.

Locally for week 10, percent positivity for influenza A was reported at 23.5%, while influenza B was 0.0%.

Figure 4: Percent Positivity, Influenza A & B, Simcoe Muskoka & Ontario, 2018-19

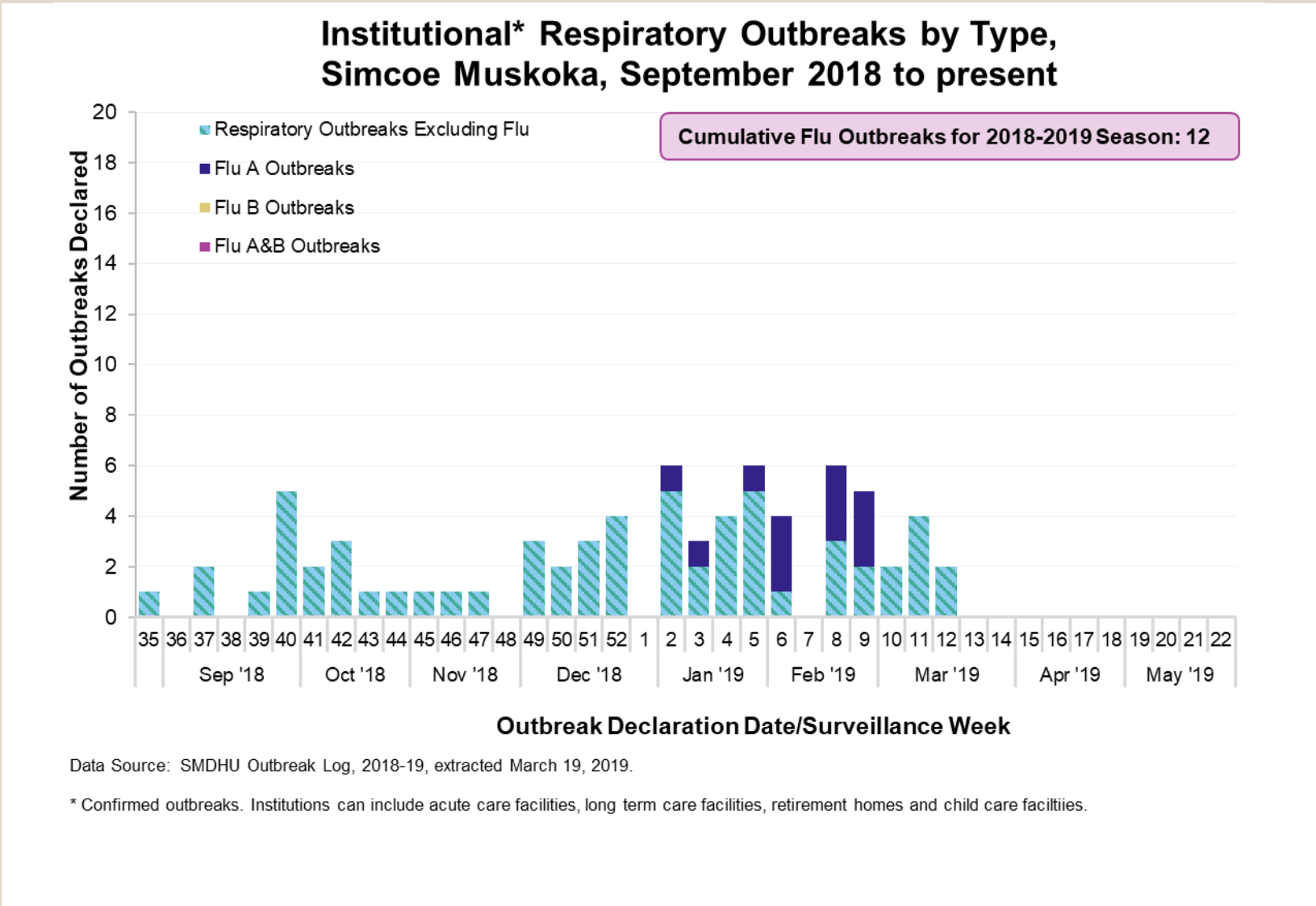


Institutional Respiratory Outbreaks

There have been 12 *lab-confirmed institutional flu outbreaks* in Simcoe Muskoka since September 1, 2018.

- All are influenza A outbreaks.

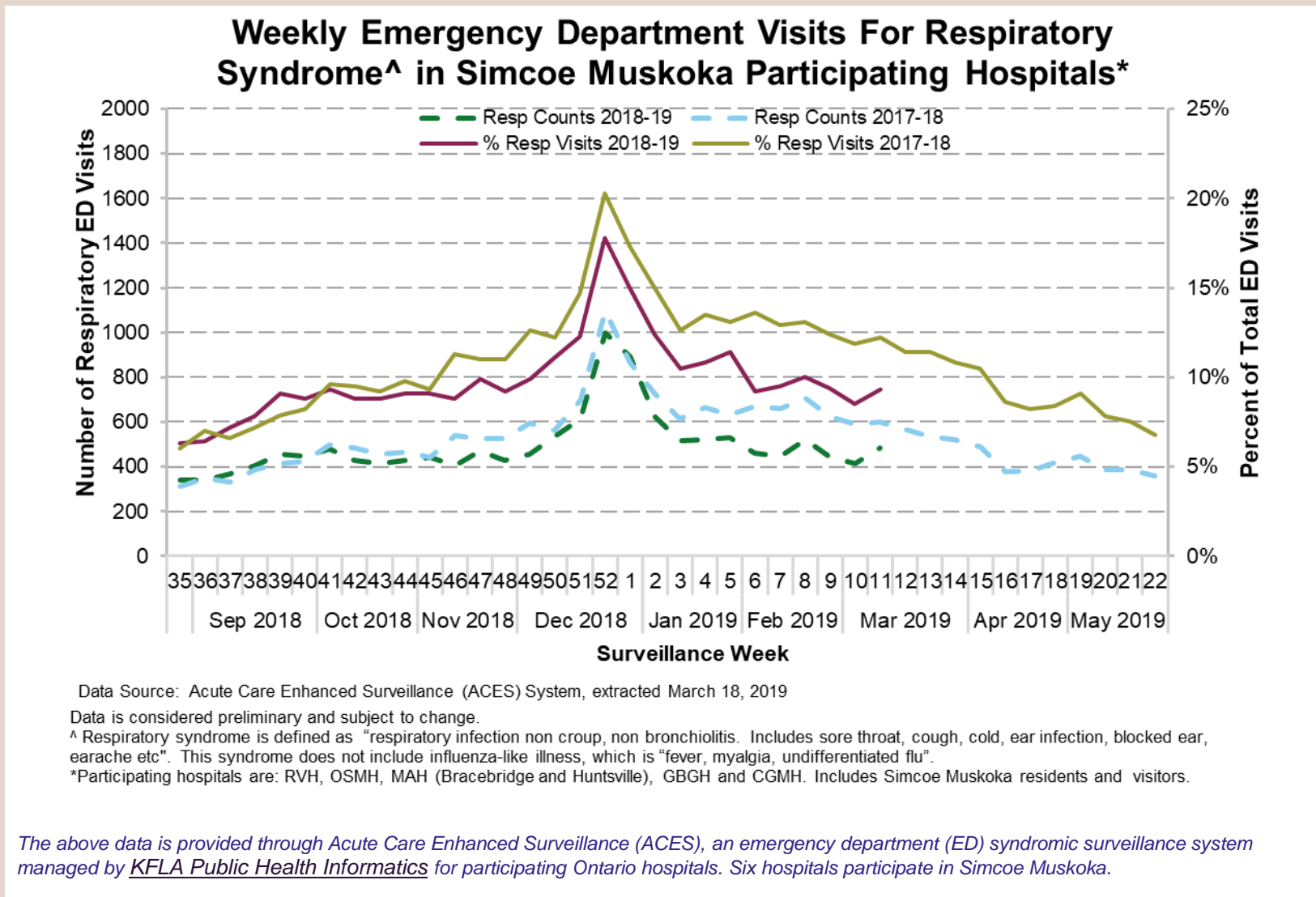
Figure 5: Institutional Outbreaks by Respiratory Pathogen, Simcoe Muskoka, 2018-19



Local Emergency Department Visits

Emergency department visits for respiratory syndrome in Simcoe Muskoka accounted for 9.3% of visits in week 11. This is similar when compared to week 10, and lower when compared to the same point in the 2017-18 season.

Figure 6: Emergency Department Visits for Respiratory Syndrome at Participating Simcoe Muskoka Hospital, 2017-18, 2018-19 Seasons



Vaccine Match and Influenza Strains

The trivalent 2018-2019 influenza vaccine for the northern hemisphere contains the following strains:

- A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2)-like virus; and
- B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage).

Table 2: Local, Provincial and National Matched and Mismatched Flu Specimens and National Match Percent, 2018-19

Influenza Strains	Number of Specimens with Strain Characterization Results		National Match Percent [†]
	Ontario	Canada	
Influenza A Vaccine Strains			
Influenza A (H3N2) A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016-like	70	93	6%
Influenza A (H1N1) A/Michigan/45/2015-like	579	1,340	94%
Influenza B Vaccine Strains			
B/Colorado/06/2017-like	6	16	46%
B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (Quad vaccine only)	15	19	54%

Data Source: Ontario and Canada Counts: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Report, Table 7: Strain characterization completed on influenza isolates at the National Microbiology Laboratory Surveillance week 10, extracted March 19, 2019.

Provincial and national counts are reported with one week lag and do not include the most recently completed surveillance week. Surveillance weeks can be found [here](#).

[†] Non-vaccine match strains are not reported. Percent match is based on antigenically similar strains. Antigenic similarity may not be reflective of influenza vaccine effectiveness.

As of week 10, 82 additional specimens did not grow to sufficient hemagglutination titers for antigenic characterization, but were found to be of the same genetic group as A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016-like virus through sequence analysis.

Technical Notes

Definitions

Percentage positivity: the number of positive flu cases divided by the number of specimens tested at Public Health Ontario Labs

Reported activity level: the level of influenza activity that is reported to Public Health Ontario by Simcoe Muskoka, based on influenza cases and outbreaks. Definitions available [here](#).

Surveillance week: The week number corresponding to the week of year, running Sunday to Saturday, inclusive, for reporting influenza activity. January 1 always falls within week 1. A list of the current season's surveillance weeks can be found [here](#).

Limitations

Timeliness:

The provincial data are from one week previous because that is the most recent data available.

The hospital data, local counts of influenza, and outbreaks are current to date.

The number of cases listed in a given surveillance week may change as more information becomes available

Case-Follow-up and iPHIS Data Entry:

While Public Health Ontario only requires case information as provided by the laboratory report, the health unit investigates all outbreak cases, as information is available, in order to provide a more accurate local picture of adverse outcomes and subtyping.

Case Reporting:

Sporadic cases do not accurately describe all cases of influenza as those cases reported are skewed towards individuals more likely to seek medical care and be tested (e.g. young, elderly and immunocompromised).

Additional Resources

Simcoe Muskoka

- [Influenza Fact Sheet](#)
- [Influenza HealthSTATS page](#)

Provincial

- [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Laboratory Respiratory Pathogen Surveillance Reports](#)
- [ILI Mapper](#)

Week 10 Provincial Summary: For the 2018-2019 surveillance season to week 10, 9,399 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported across Ontario, 421 (4.5%) of which were reported in week 10. Among cumulative cases, 98.4% (9246/9399) were influenza A. Of the 1,988 reported influenza A cases with subtype information available, 32.3% (643/1988) were H3 and 67.7% (1345/1988) were (H1N1)pdm09.

(Source: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, Surveillance Week 10, extracted March 19, 2019)

National

- [Public Health Agency of Canada FluWatch](#)

International Resources

- [WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System](#)