

Weekly Influenza News

Week 1: December 30, 2018 to January 5, 2019

Week in Review:

Influenza Activity Indicator	Assessment of Indicator*	Interpretation
<u>Reported cases</u>	Higher	60 local lab-confirmed case reported in week 1 ; 30 cases reported in week 52
<u>Percent Positive of Flu Specimens[†]</u>	Higher	Simcoe Muskoka: - flu A (12.8%); flu B (0.0%) Ontario: - flu A (18.3%); flu B (0.1%)
<u>Local Institutional Outbreaks</u>	Similar	No influenza outbreaks reported for the 2018-19 season to date.
<u>Local Emergency Department respiratory visits: week 1</u>	Lower	Percentage of visits is lower compared to previous week and lower compared to the same period for the 2017-18 season.
Week 1 Overall Assessment December 30, 2018 to January 5, 2019	Higher	Reported Activity Level: Sporadic 57 cases of Flu A in SMDHU this week. 3 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 52

Reported Local Influenza Cases

In Simcoe Muskoka, there have been **142 lab-confirmed influenza case reported** as of 8 January 2019. 60 (42%) of which were reported in week 1 – this is higher compared to week 52.

Of the 138 reported influenza A cases, 20 have been subtyped:

- 18/20 (90%) are influenza A, H1 strain/ H1N1 pdm09
- 2/20 (10%) are influenza A, H3 strain

🔗 Figure 1 and Figure 2 below provide historic comparisons

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

Lab-confirmed Influenza Cases	Week 1		Season-to-Date	
	N	%	N	%
Influenza A	57	95%	138	97%
Influenza B	3	5%	4	3%
Influenza A & B	0	0%	0	0%
Total	60	100%	142	100%
Notes:				
Data source: Communicable Disease Intake Database, extracted on January 08, 2019.				

Historical Comparison

Figure 1: Reported Influenza Cases, Type A, Current Influenza Season with Historical Comparison, Simcoe Muskoka

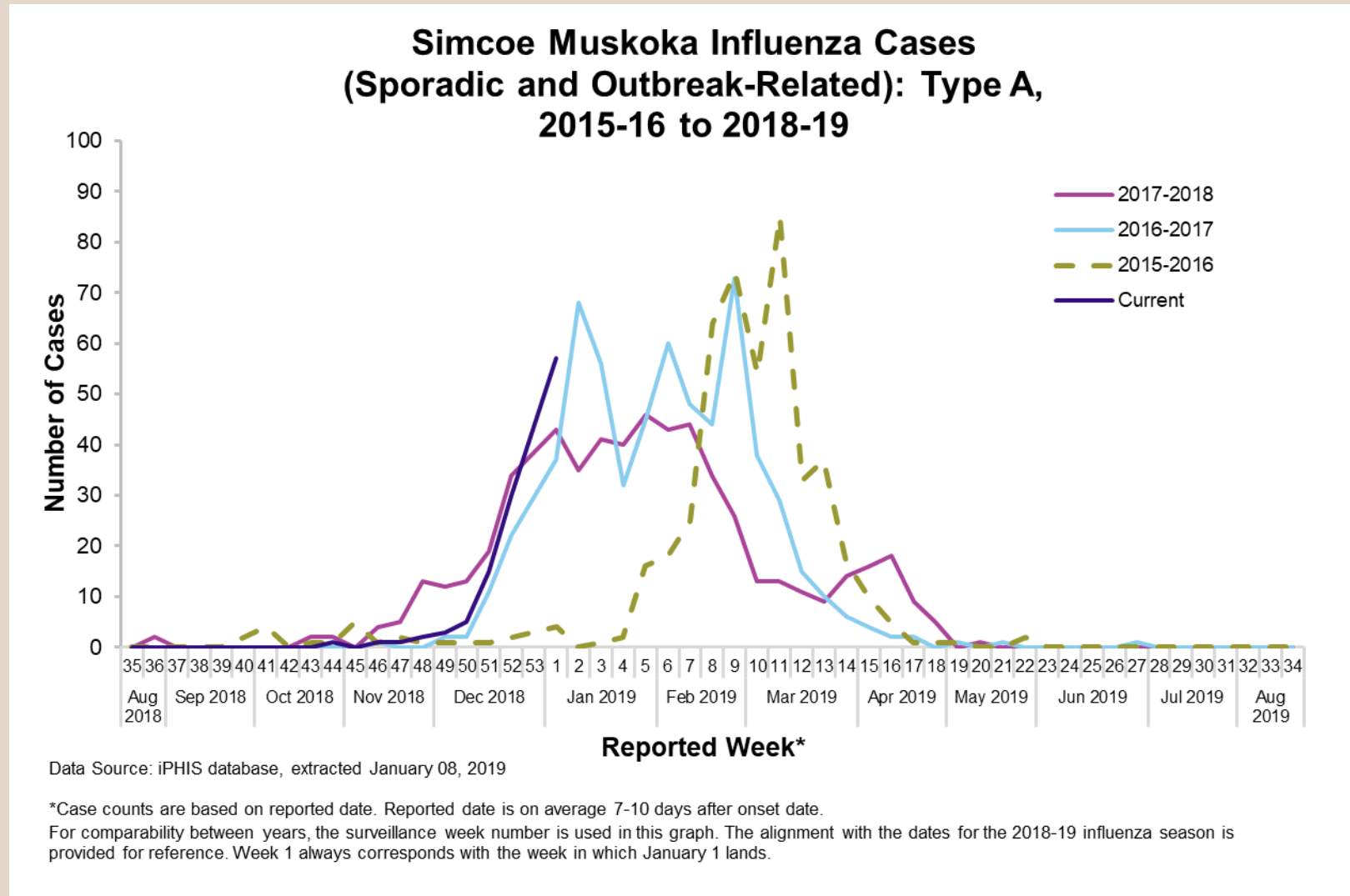
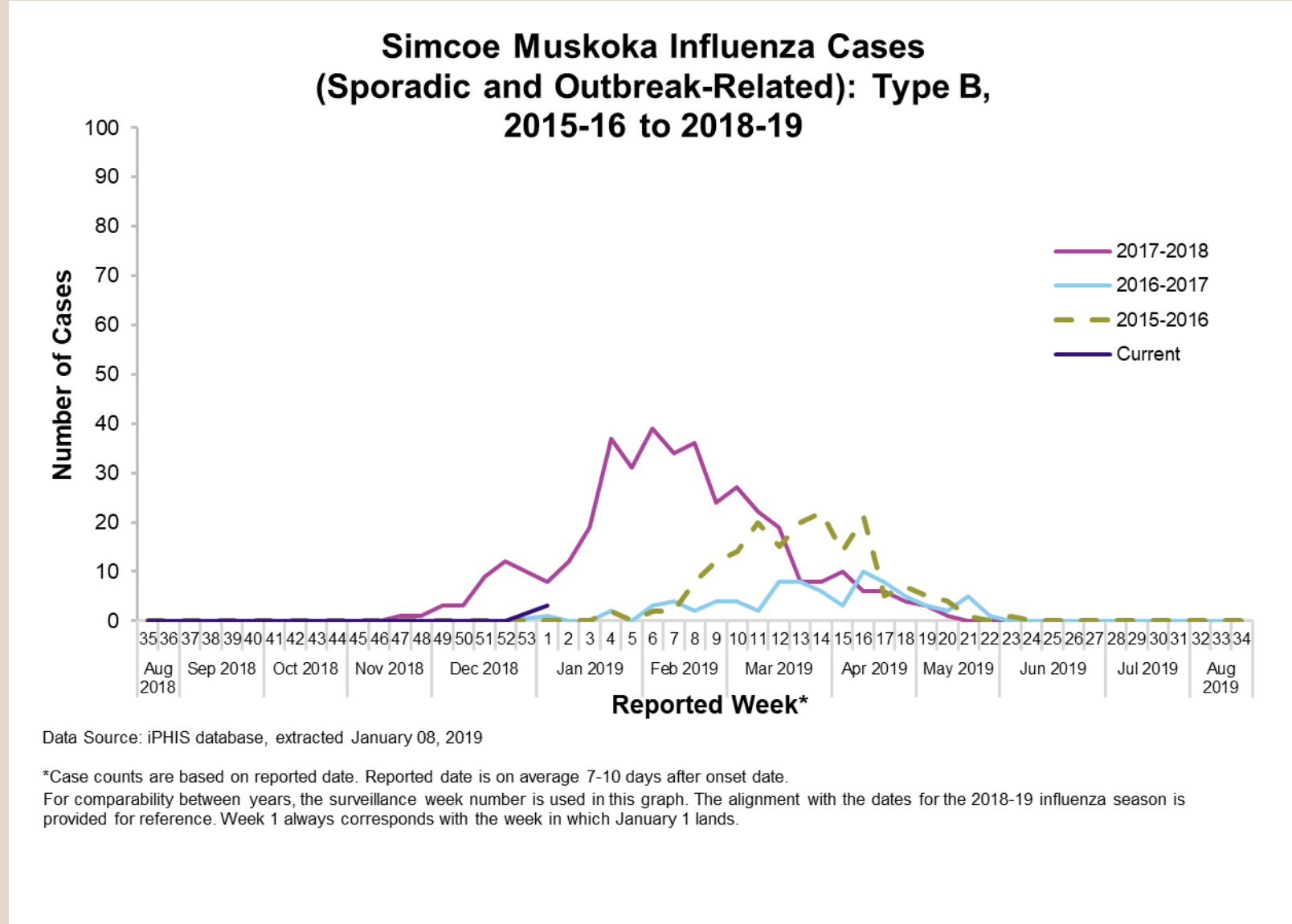


Figure 2: Reported Influenza Cases, Type B, Current Influenza Season with Historical Comparison, Simcoe Muskoka



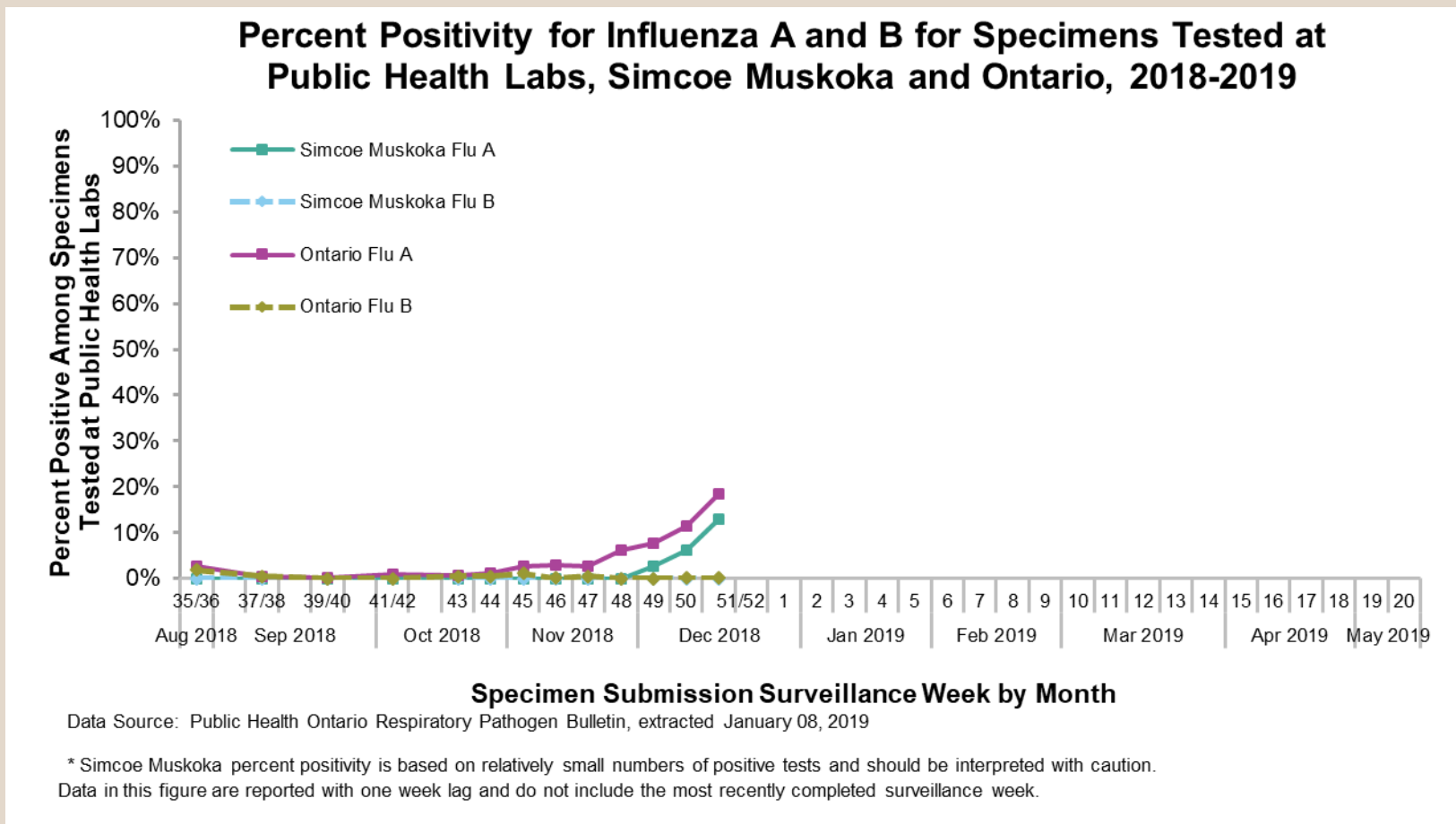
Percent positivity

Note: Percent positivity is reported with one week lag and does not include week 1.

The percentage of flu specimens that are positive (percent positivity) for Influenza A and Influenza B is increasing. The provincial percent positivity for influenza A in week 52 was reported at 18.3%, which is higher when compared to week 51. Influenza B percent positivity was reported at 0.1% for week 52.

Locally for week 52, percent positivity for influenza A was reported at 12.8%, while influenza B was 0.0%.

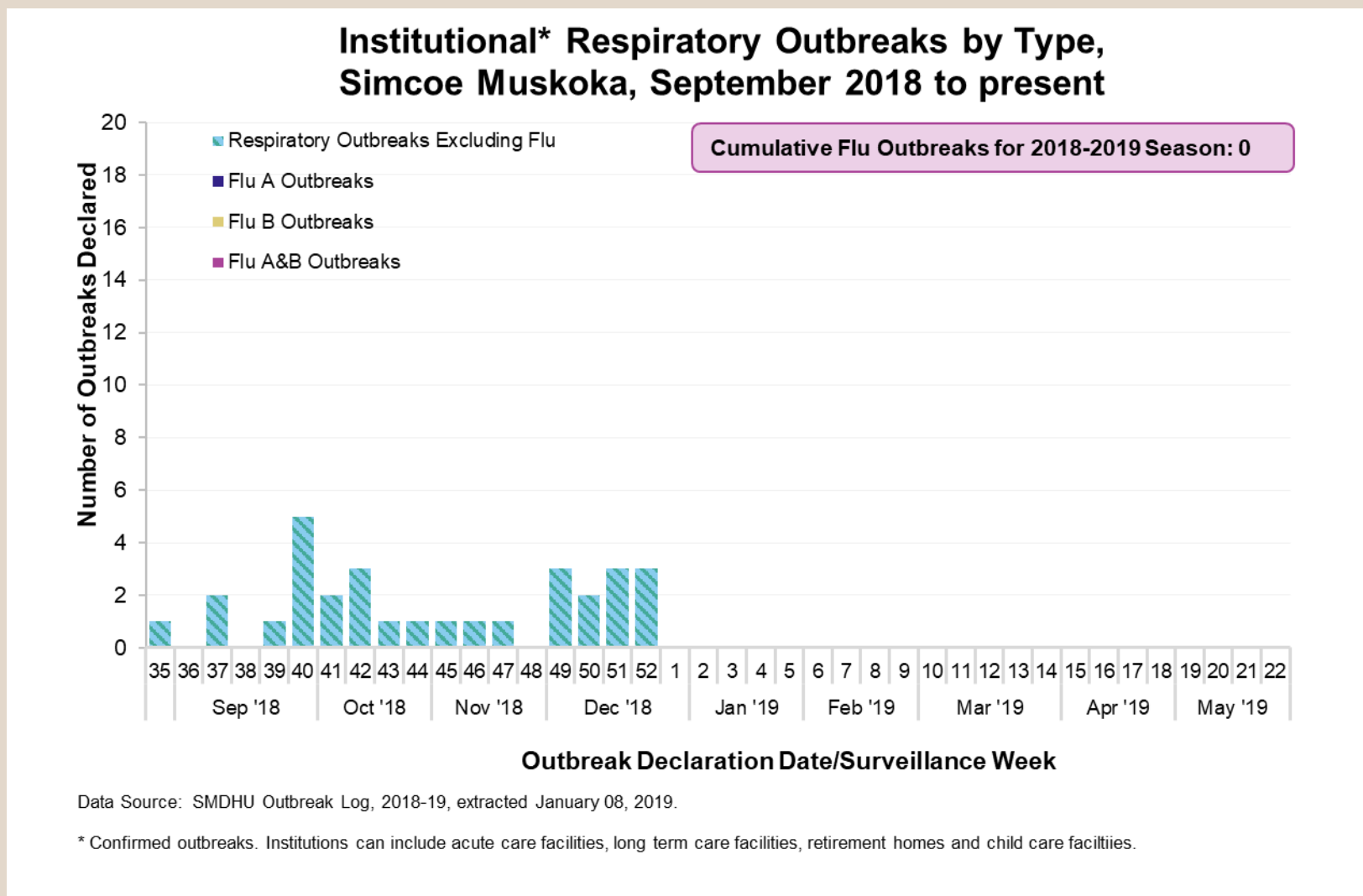
Figure 3: Percent Positivity, Influenza A & B, Simcoe Muskoka & Ontario, 2018-19



Institutional Respiratory Outbreaks

There have been no *lab-confirmed institutional flu outbreaks* in Simcoe Muskoka since September 1, 2018.

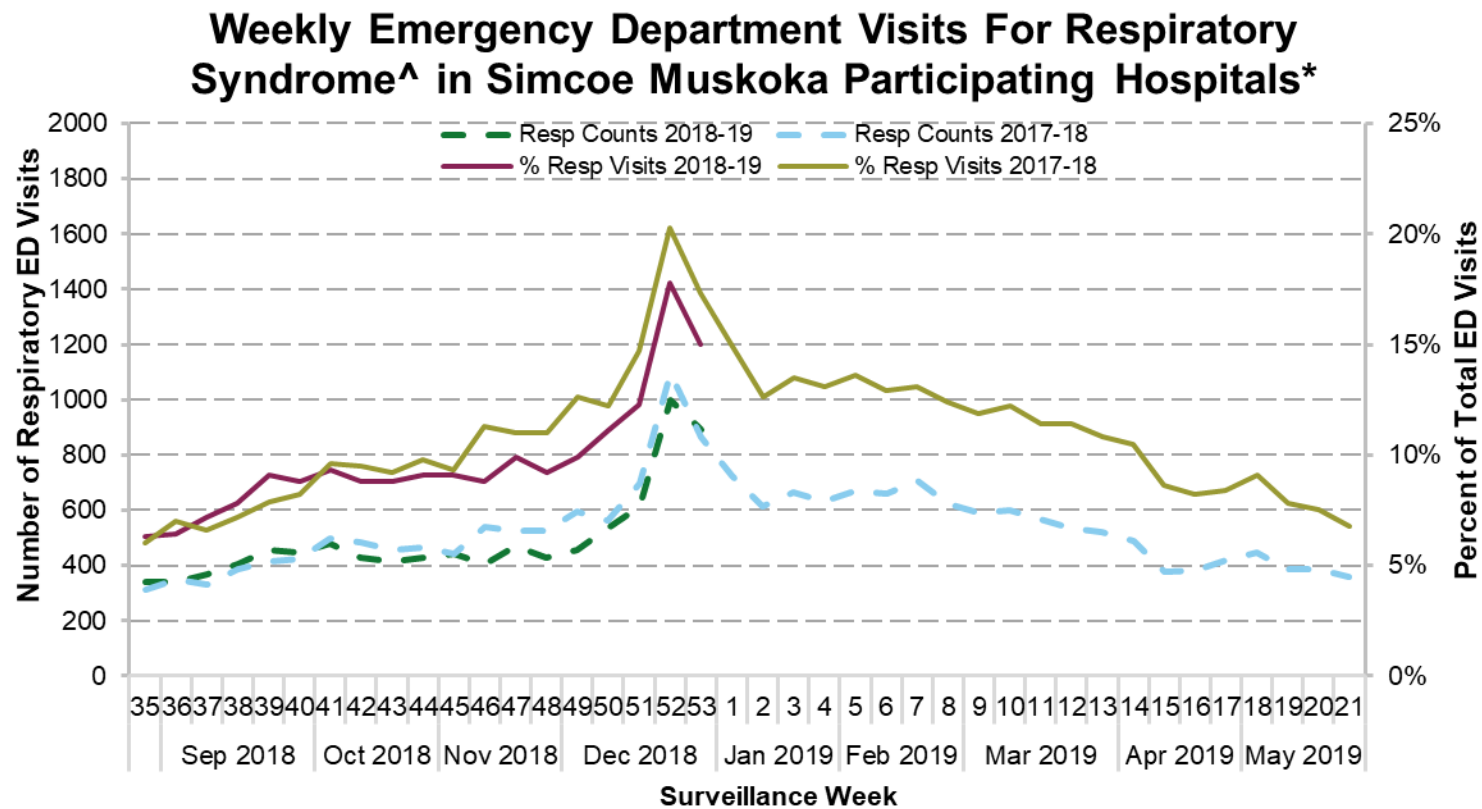
Figure 4: Institutional Outbreaks by Respiratory Pathogen, Simcoe Muskoka, 2018-19



Local Emergency Department Visits

Emergency department visits for respiratory syndrome in Simcoe Muskoka accounted for 15% of visits in week 1. This is lower when compared to week 52, and lower when compared to the same point in the 2017-18 season.

Figure 5: Emergency Department Visits for Respiratory Syndrome at Participating Simcoe Muskoka Hospital, 2017-18, 2018-19 Seasons



Data Source: Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance (ACES) System, extracted January 07, 2019

Data is considered preliminary and subject to change.

^ Respiratory syndrome is defined as "respiratory infection non croup, non bronchiolitis. Includes sore throat, cough, cold, ear infection, blocked ear, earache etc". This syndrome does not include influenza-like illness, which is "fever, myalgia, undifferentiated flu".

*Participating hospitals are: RVH, OSMH, MAH (Bracebridge and Huntsville), GBGH and CGMH. Includes Simcoe Muskoka residents and visitors.

The above data is provided through Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance (ACES), an emergency department (ED) syndromic surveillance system managed by KFLA Public Health Informatics for participating Ontario hospitals. Six hospitals participate in Simcoe Muskoka.

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	4	6	2%
Influenza A (H1N1) A/Michigan/45/2015-like	52	350	98%
Influenza B Vaccine Strains			
B/Colorado/06/2017-like	0	1	7%
B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (Quad vaccine only)	11	14	93%

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 52, extracted January 8, 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 52, 21 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 52 Provincial Summary: For the 2018-2019 surveillance season to week 52, 1767 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported across Ontario, 511 (28.9%) of which were reported in week 52. Among cumulative cases, 96.8% (1710/1767) were influenza A. Of the 332 reported influenza A cases with subtype information available, 32.8% (109/332) were H3N2 and 67.2% (223/332) were (H1N1)pdm09.

(Source: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, Surveillance Week 52, extracted January 8, 2019)

National

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

International Resources

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