

Week 43: October 23 to October 29, 2022

Week in Review:

Virus Activity Indicator	Influenza Assessment*	COVID-19 Assessment*	Interpretation
<u>Weekly Reported Cases</u>	Higher	Similar	<p>For week 43:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenza: 80; COVID-19: 464 <p>For the previous week (week 42):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenza 21; COVID-19: 476
<u>Percent Positive Specimens</u>	Higher†	Similar	<p>Simcoe Muskoka:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flu A[†] (12%); Flu B[†] (0.0%), COVID-19: (19%) <p>Ontario:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flu A[†] (4.2%); Flu B[†] (0.0%), COVID-19: (17%)
<u>Local Institutional Outbreaks</u>	Higher	Similar	<p>Institutional outbreaks declared in week 43:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenza: 2 (season to date: 2) COVID-19: 9 (season to date: 84)
<u>Local Emergency Department respiratory visits</u>	Higher		Percentage of visits is higher compared to previous week and higher compared to same period in the 2021-22 season
Week 43 Assessment October 23 to October 29, 2022	Higher	Similar	<p>Influenza Activity Level: Localized 79 flu A cases and 1 flu B cases reported this week</p> <p>COVID-19 Community Risk[†]: High COVID-19 case counts remain stable this week</p>
Predominant[^] Circulating Respiratory Viruses: COVID-19 (Omicron)			

Notes: Reported influenza activity level is based on activity levels as per [Influenza activity reporting in the Ontario Surveillance Package](#). COVID-19 Risk level is based on the risk level from the [Simcoe Muskoka Community Risk Level](#). Additional definitions are available [here](#).

* Compared to previous [surveillance week](#). Assessment of percent positivity for influenza is based on provincial numbers due to small numbers.

† Reported for week 42

^ Predominant is defined as any virus where provincial percent positivity is >10% as reported through [Ontario's laboratory respiratory pathogen surveillance](#)

Weekly Reported Cases

Influenza: In Simcoe Muskoka, there have been **135 lab-confirmed influenza cases reported** as of 1 November 2022; **80 (59%) of which were reported in week 43** – this was higher when compared to week 42.

Of the 134 reported influenza A cases, 22 have been subtyped:

- 22/22 (100%) are influenza A, H3 strain
- 0/22 (0%) are influenza A, H1N1 pdm09

COVID-19: In Simcoe Muskoka, there have been **464 lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases reported** in week 43 – this was similar when compared to week 42. Omicron is the dominant circulating variant.

Table 1: Summary of Influenza and COVID-19 Cases, 2022-23 Season

Lab-confirmed Cases	Week 43	Season-to-Date
Influenza	80	135
Influenza A	79 (99%)	134 (99%)
Influenza B	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
Influenza A & B	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
COVID-19	464	3,520
Data source: Case and Contact Management (CCM) System and Integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS), extracted on November 01, 2022.		
Notes: Season-to-Date includes cases reported from the Sunday of the week in which September 1, 2022 falls (i.e., August 28, 2022 onwards).		

Percent Positivity

For week 42, the percentage of influenza specimens that are positive (percent positivity) for **Influenza A is increasing**, both locally and provincially. For week 43, **COVID-19 percent positivity remains similar** to the previous week.

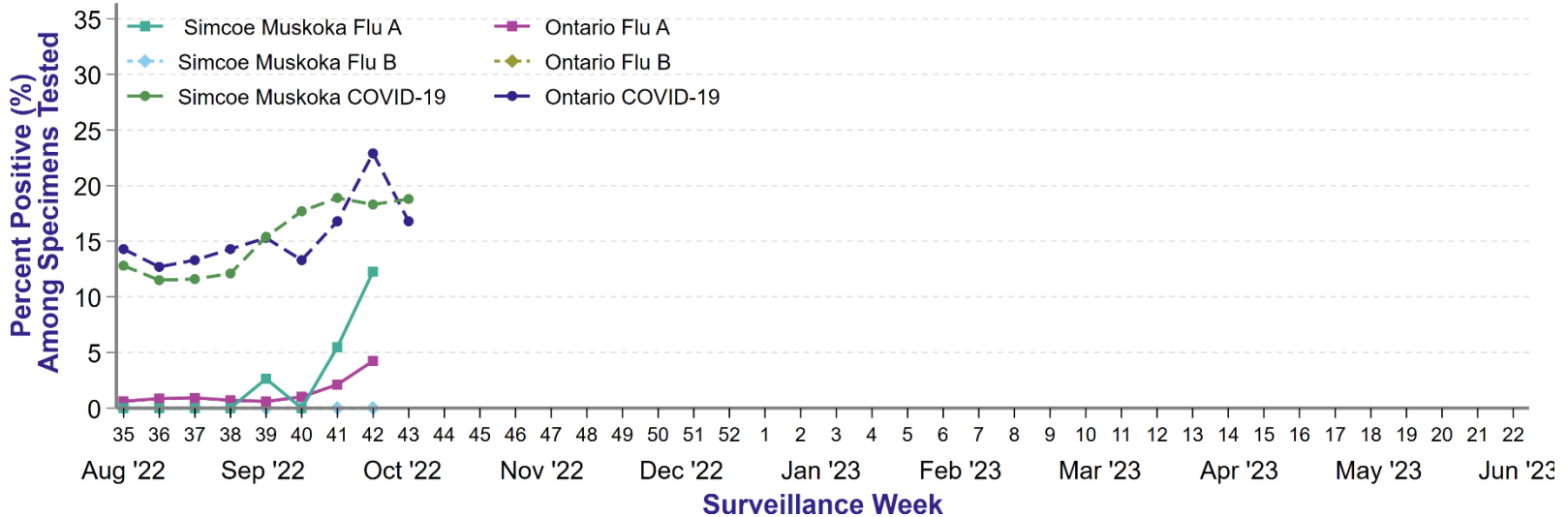
Table 2: Percent Positivity for Influenza (week 42) and COVID-19 (week 43), Simcoe Muskoka and Ontario

Region	Influenza A*	Influenza B*	COVID-19
Simcoe Muskoka	12.3%	0%	18.8%
Ontario	4.2%	0%	16.8%

Data source: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, extracted on November 01, 2022. Summarized data from Ontario Lab Information System (OLIS) COVID-19 test data from Ministry of Health SAS Visual Analytics COVID-19 Testing Report, extracted on November 1, 2022

Note: *Influenza percent positivity is reported with a one week lag and does not include week 43. COVID-19 percent positivity is reported for week 43; provincial data is incomplete and should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 1: Percent Positivity, Influenza A & B, COVID-19, Simcoe Muskoka & Ontario, 2022-23 Season



Data Source: Public Health Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin, extracted on 1 Nov 2022. Government of Ontario. 2020. Status of COVID-19 Cases in Ontario. Ontario Open Data. Ministry of Health. 2020. Ontario Lab Information System (OLIS) COVID-19 test data from Ministry of Health SAS Visual Analytics COVID-19 Testing Report, extracted on 27 Oct 2022.

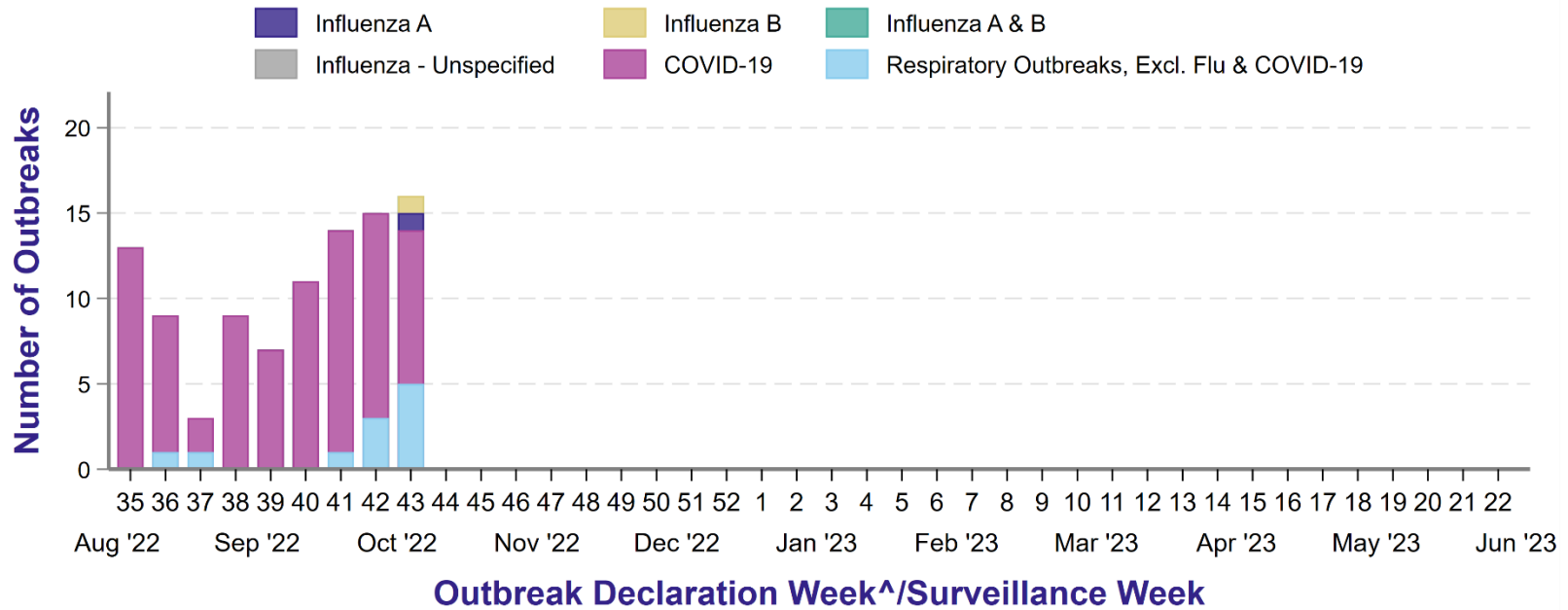
* Flu A and B specimens only include those tested at public health laboratories in Ontario. COVID-19 specimens are limited to those undergoing PCR testing. Note: Simcoe Muskoka percent positivity, particularly for influenza, is based on small numbers of positive tests and should be interpreted with caution. Influenza data in this figure are reported with one week lag and do not include the most recently completed surveillance week.

Institutional Respiratory Outbreaks

There have been 2 *lab-confirmed institutional influenza outbreaks* and 84 *lab-confirmed institutional COVID-19 outbreaks* in Simcoe Muskoka since September 1, 2022:

- Influenza A: 1 outbreak
- Influenza B: 1 outbreak
- Influenza A and B: 0 outbreaks
- COVID-19: 84 outbreaks

Figure 2: Institutional Outbreaks by Respiratory Pathogen, Simcoe Muskoka, 2022-23 Season



Data Source: Integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) & Public Health Case and Contact Management Solution (CCM) extracted by SMDHU on 1 Nov 2022.

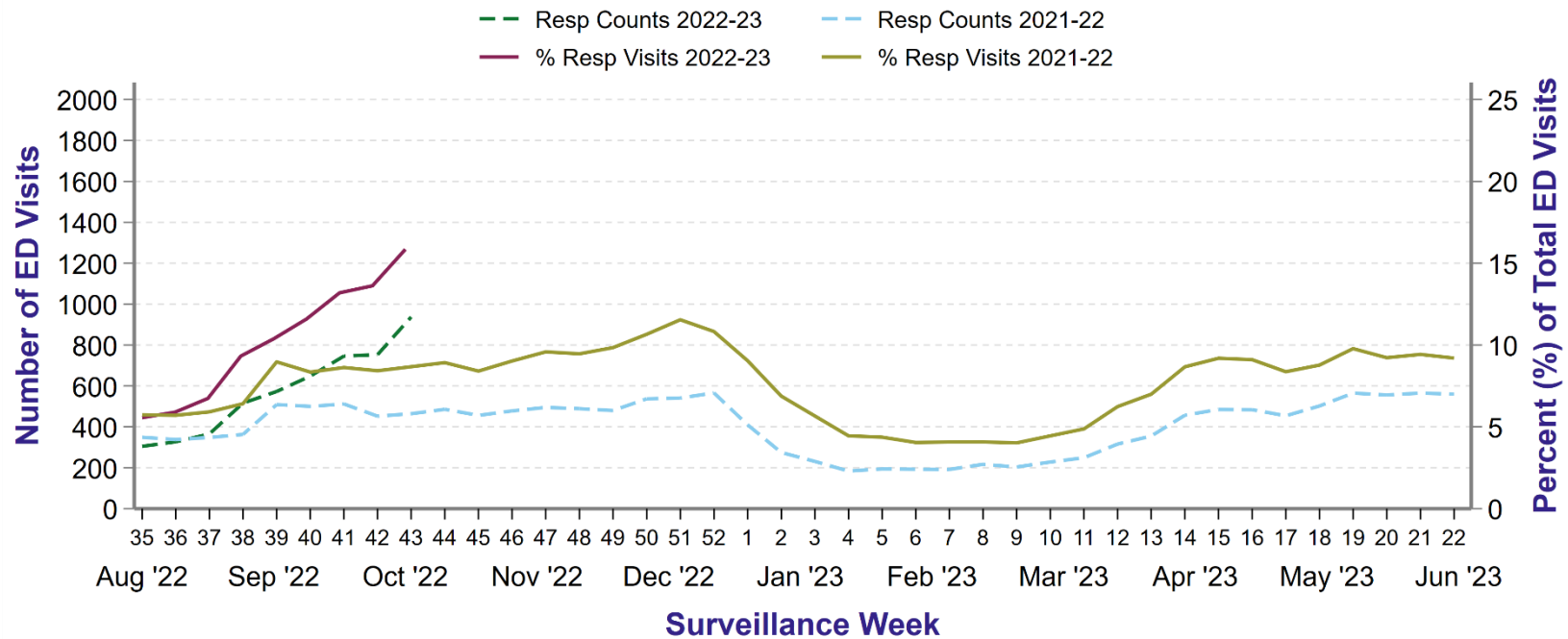
* Confirmed outbreaks only. Institutions can include acute care facilities, long-term care homes, retirement homes, corrections facilities and childcare facilities.

^Week declared is the week (Sun-Sat) in which the outbreak became a confirmed outbreak.

Local Emergency Department Visits

Emergency department (ED) visits for respiratory syndrome in Simcoe Muskoka accounted for **15.9% of visits in week 43**. This is **higher** when compared to week 42, and higher when compared to the same time in the 2021-22 season.

Figure 3: Emergency Department Visits for Respiratory Syndrome at Participating Simcoe Muskoka Hospitals, 2021-22 and 2022-23 Seasons



Data Source: Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance (ACES) System, extracted on 1 Nov 2022

^ 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, CGMH and SVMH; 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. Seven hospitals participate in Simcoe Muskoka.

Influenza Vaccine Match and Influenza Strains

The quadrivalent 2022-2023 cell culture-based or recombinant-based influenza vaccine for the northern hemisphere contains the following strains:

- A/Darwin/6/2021 (H3N2)-like virus;
- A/Wisconsin/588/2019 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus; and
- B/Phuket/3073/2013 (B/Yamagata lineage)-like virus.

Table 3: Local, Provincial and National Matched and Mismatched Influenza Specimens and National Match Percent, 2022-23 Season

Influenza Strains	Number of Specimens with Strain Characterization Results		National Match Percent [†]
	Ontario	Canada	
Influenza A Vaccine Strains			
Influenza A (H3N2) A/Darwin/6/2021-like	0	0	0%
Influenza A (H1N1) A/Wisconsin/588/2019 pdm09-like	0	0	0%
Influenza B Vaccine Strains			
B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria)-like	0	0	0%
B/Phuket/3073/2013 (B/Yamagata)-like (Quad vaccine only)	0	0	0%

Data Source: Government of Canada, [FluWatch Surveillance Report](#) – week 42, Influenza Strain Characterization, extracted November 1, 2022.

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. As of week 42, an additional 0 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

Percent positivity: The number of positive influenza or COVID-19 cases divided by the number of specimens tested. For influenza this is limited to specimens tested at Public Health Ontario Labs. For COVID-19, it is limited to PCR testing.

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](#).

Reported community risk level: The level of COVID-19 risk based on the Simcoe Muskoka [COVID-19 Community Risk Level](#).

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 lagged by one week compared to all other data presented in this update due to data availability. The emergency department data, local counts of influenza and COVID-19, and outbreaks are current to date.

The number of cases and/or outbreaks and percent positivity reported for a given surveillance week may change as more information becomes available.

Case Reporting: Sporadic cases do not accurately describe all cases of influenza and/or COVID-19 as those cases reported are skewed towards individuals more likely to seek medical care and be tested (e.g., young, elderly and immunocompromised) as well as healthcare workers.

Cases are reported based on where the individual normally lives which may not match where they acquired the illness.

Data Comparison: The indicators used in this report are different from those presented in the [COVID-19 Community Risk Level](#) and cannot be directly compared. Differences may be due to data reporting lag and/or indicator definitions.

Week 42 Provincial Summary:

For the 2022-2023 surveillance season to week 42:

Influenza: 682 laboratory-confirmed influenza cases have been reported across Ontario, 321 (47.1%) of which were reported in week 42. Among cumulative cases, 97.8% (667/682) were influenza A. Of the 559 reported influenza A cases with subtype information available, 88% (494/559) were H3 and 12% (65/559) were (H1N1)pdm09.

COVID-19: 67,432 laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases have been reported across Ontario, 9,634 of which were reported in week 42. Omicron is the dominant variant circulating.

Sources: Public Health Ontario [Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#) & [COVID-19 Data Tool](#), Surveillance Week 42, extracted November 1, 2022.

Additional Resources

Simcoe Muskoka

- Influenza – [Fact Sheet](#) and [HealthSTATS page](#)
- COVID-19 – [General Information](#), [Community Risk Level](#) and [HealthSTATS pages](#)

Provincial

- [Ontario Respiratory Pathogen Bulletin](#)
- [Public Health Ontario Laboratory Respiratory Pathogen Surveillance Reports](#)
- [COVID Data Tool](#)
- [Ontario Respiratory Virus Overview](#)

National

- Public Health Agency of Canada – [FluWatch](#), [Respiratory Virus Report](#), [COVID-19: Outbreak Update](#)

International Resources

- WHO – [Influenza \(Seasonal\)](#) and [COVID-19](#) Fact Sheets