Virological Surveillance Summary

The total number of specimens and number of positive specimens reported to FluNet by Western Pacific Region countries and areas between week 1 and week 30 are presented in the table below. Influenza A and B are cocirculating in the region, with influenza B (Victoria lineage) predominant in recent weeks (Figure 1).

Table 1: Cumulative data reported to FluNet from Western Pacific Region, weeks 1 to 30, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country (most recent week of report)</th>
<th>Total number of specimens processed</th>
<th>Total number of influenza positive specimens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia (30)</td>
<td>44,163</td>
<td>8,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia (27)</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (29)</td>
<td>423,833</td>
<td>92,891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji (24)</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (28)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic (28)</td>
<td>1,941</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia (26)</td>
<td>2,144</td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia (24)</td>
<td>2,821</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Caledonia (24)</td>
<td>1,140</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand (28)</td>
<td>1,578</td>
<td>783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (27)</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea (29)</td>
<td>6,848</td>
<td>1,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (27)</td>
<td>1,692</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam (21)</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype, Western Pacific Region, weeks 1 to 30, 2019 (Source: WHO FLUNET)
Influenza surveillance summary

Influenza surveillance in the WHO Western Pacific Region is based on outpatient and inpatient sentinel indicator based surveillance (IBS) systems, as well as event-based surveillance. Case definitions, population groups included, and data formats differ among countries. This influenza surveillance summary includes countries and areas where routine IBS is conducted and information is available.

The WHO surveillance case definition for influenza-like illness (ILI) is an acute respiratory infection with a measured fever of ≥38°C and cough, with symptom onset within the last 10 days. For SARI, it is an acute respiratory infection (ARI) with a history of fever or measured fever of ≥38°C and cough, with symptom onset within 10 days that requires hospitalization. Sentinel site data should be interpreted with caution since the number of sites reporting may vary between weeks.

Countries in the temperate zone of the Northern Hemisphere

In countries within the temperate zone of the Northern Hemisphere, influenza activity is within normal seasonal trends observed during the corresponding period from previous years.

Outpatient ILI Surveillance

China (North)
During week 29, the percentage of visits for ILI at national sentinel hospitals in Northern China was 2.2%, which is lower than the previous week (2.3%), and similar to that of the same week in 2018 (2.2%), but lower than the same week in 2016 and 2017 (2.3% and 2.5%) (Figure 2).

Mongolia
During week 29, ILI activity in Mongolia slightly increased compared to the previous week, but remains within the tolerance limits (Figure 3).

Republic of Korea (no updates)
In week 26, the overall weekly ILI rate was 4.1 ILI cases per 1,000 outpatient visits, lower than the previous week with 4.4 ILI cases per 1,000 outpatient visits, following trends seen in previous years (Figure 4).
Sentinel influenza surveillance

Japan

In week 28 of 2019, influenza sentinel hospital activity in Japan was low and similar to the same period in recent years (Figure 5).
Countries/areas in the tropical zone

Countries and areas in the tropical zone are generally observing influenza activity that is consistent with previous seasons.

Surveillance

Hong Kong SAR (China) – ILI and hospital Surveillance

In week 29, the average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel general outpatient clinics was 4.5 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than 5.7 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations recorded in the previous week and within expected seasonal levels compared to previous years (Figure 6). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private medical practitioners was 41.7 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than 46.3 recorded in the previous week (Figure 7).

China (South) - ILI Surveillance

During week 29, the percentage of visits for ILI at national sentinel hospitals in Southern China was 3.6%, the same as the previous week (3.6%) and lower than the same week of 2017 (4.1%), but higher than the same weeks of 2016 and 2018 (both 3.1%) (Figure 8).

Singapore – Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) Surveillance

In week 29, the average daily number of patients seeking treatment in the polyclinics for ARI was 3,290 over 5.5 working days, which is lower than the previous week of 3,312 over 5.5 working days. The proportion of patients with ILI among the polyclinic attendances for ARI was 2.7% (Figure 9).
**Laos PDR**

In week 29, the number of ILI cases presenting to sentinel sites increased compared to the previous week and is slightly higher than previous years. *(Figure 10)*.

![Figure 10: Weekly number of ILI presentations at sentinel sites, 2015-2019, Laos PDR](Source: Lao National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology)

**Countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere**

In the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere, influenza activity is reported during the influenza season usually starting in May. Influenza activity remains unusually high in Australia for this time of year.

**Australia – Laboratory-confirmed influenza and ILI**

In week 28, there were 12.5 ILI per 1,000 consultations at sentinel general practitioners, increasing from 12.0 per 1,000 consultations in week 27 and slightly higher than the 5 year average for this time of year. There have been 153,272 laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza reported to the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System. The number of laboratory confirmed influenza cases in week 28 was higher than the five year average for the same period. There has been a marked decrease over the previous 2 weeks. *(Figure 11)*.

![Figure 11: Australian notifications of laboratory confirmed influenza](Source: National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System, Australian Department of Health)
New Zealand – Influenza like Illness
General Practice visits for influenza-like illness is just below the baseline level in the week ending 21 July, with a decrease compared with the previous week. (Figure 12).

Pacific Island Countries and Areas (PICs) – ILI Surveillance
In the Pacific Island Countries and Areas, in week 29, the number of ILI cases reported increased in several PICs, including New Caledonia, Niue and Palau. (Figure 13).
Global influenza situation updates

Virological update

Global update

Others:

- Recommended composition of influenza virus vaccines for use in the 2019 southern hemisphere influenza season [Link]
- Recommended composition of influenza virus vaccines for use in the 2019-2020 northern hemisphere influenza season [Link]
- Antigenic and genetic characteristics of zoonotic influenza viruses and candidate vaccine viruses developed for potential use in human vaccines [Link]
- 4th WHO Informal Consultation on Improving Influenza Vaccine Virus Selection [Link]

WHO’s YouTube Channel: film exploring a number of key aspects of the constant evolution of influenza viruses and associated impacts on public health. [Arabic], [Chinese], [English], [French], [Russian], [Spanish]