



# *Influenza Activity Spotlight*

2012–2013 Season

Issue #19 — April 18, 2013

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**Reminder:** Summit calls are scheduled weekly every Thursday at 3 p.m. ET, unless cancelled. **Please email [L.J Tan](mailto:LJ.Tan@preventinfluenza.org) or [LaDora Woods](mailto:LaDora.Woods@preventinfluenza.org) if you have any updates on activities to provide to the Summit.**

**SAVE THE DATE!** The National Influenza Vaccine Summit (NIVS) will be meeting in conjunction with the National Adult Immunization Summit on May 14–16, 2013 in Atlanta, Georgia. Registration for the event and for the rooming block will be closing on April 30. For details and information on how to register for the meeting, contact [LaDora Woods](mailto:LaDora.Woods@preventinfluenza.org) or [L.J Tan](mailto:LJ.Tan@preventinfluenza.org). More details and a draft agenda will be provided as soon as available.

## **1. Summary of the National Influenza Vaccine Summit Call – 4/11/2013**

### **Announcement – L.J Tan (IAC)**

L.J reminded participants that registration for the National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit will close at the end of the month. The registration site ([www.preventinfluenza.org/register](http://www.preventinfluenza.org/register)) includes a link to the rooming block at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Persons who have not already registered should do so as soon as possible.

### **Influenza Surveillance and H7N9 Update – Scott Epperson (CDC)**

Scott reported that all seasonal influenza surveillance indicators are continuing their steady decline. We possibly will see additional seasonal influenza reported over the next few weeks due to increased testing occurring in response to H7N9. The latest seasonal influenza information will be posted at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu).

Internationally, cases of Avian Influenza A (H7N9) have been reported in China from the Shanghai Province and 3 neighboring provinces. Of the 33 cases reported, 9 (28%) have died. Onset of these cases was from late February through April 4. The majority (61%) of cases have been in persons >65 years of age. Information is not available on the vaccination status of the cases or a history of exposure to animals. No human-to-human transmission has been reported. The China CDC is expanding surveillance for acute respiratory infections. Several species of birds have tested positive for H7N9, and all live animal markets have been closed in the region.

No H7N9 cases have been reported in the United States. State and local health departments are continuing testing that has been in place for seasonal influenza. Last week CDC issued a Health Alert for providers to consider novel influenza and to collect specimens from patients with respiratory illness and a history of recent travel to China or who have been in contact with a case. The Alert also highlighted the importance of adherence to previously recommended infection control measures to prevent spread of influenza. CDC currently is producing guidance on infection control, specimen testing, and surveillance. At this time, no recommendation to restrict travel to China has been issued. The CDC laboratory is continuing to work on primers and probes for specimen testing in the U.S. and internationally.

## **CDC's Response and Communications on H7N9 – Erin Kennedy (CDC) and Cindy Fowler (CDC)**

Erin reported that CDC activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) on April 9. This Level 2 (limited) activation provides CDC with additional resources and supports increased avenues of communication to help manage the situation. Updated information is being posted to the CDC website (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9-virus.htm>) as soon as it is available.

Cindy Fowler, from CDC's Health Communication Science Office, noted that media interest in H7N9 is growing, but the level of public interest remains relatively low at this time because no disease has been found in the United States. CDC will be distributing information through multiple channels and with partners such as CSTE, ASTHO, NACCHO and AIM. Key communication points will be shared at least weekly, or more frequently if the situation warrants, and CDC will hold press briefings as needed. (The transcript from the April 5 press briefing is available [here](#).) In addition to the H7N9 webpage, information also will be shared through other channels such as a COCA call for clinicians (to be next week at a time to be announced) and a *VICNetwork* webinar scheduled for April 16. CDC is preparing commentary to accompany a *New England Journal of Medicine* article on influenza in China. Mini-trainings are being provided to customs and border protection officers as a refresher, and travelers to China are being reminded to pay attention to hygiene and avoid routine contact with animals.

2. **The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report** for week 14 (ending April 6, 2013) is available [here](#). Of 4,462 specimens tested and reported by U.S. World Health Organization (WHO) and National Respiratory and Enteric Virus Surveillance System (NREVSS) collaborating laboratories in week 14, 484 (10.9%) were positive for influenza. The proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) was 1.5%. This is below the national baseline of 2.2%. Two of 10 regions reported ILI at or above region-specific baseline levels. Two (2) states experienced low activity, 48 states and New York City experienced minimal activity, and the District of Columbia had insufficient data. This site also includes maps of ILINet State Activity Levels and the [geographic spread](#) of influenza illness as reported by state and territorial epidemiologists. This map indicates geographic spread of influenza viruses but does not measure the intensity of influenza activity. CDC's Seasonal Influenza [Key Points](#) for have been released. Archives of previous *FluViews* may be found [here](#).

### **3. Information from CDC**

- On April 12, 2013, CDC posted a [Flu Spotlight](#), *Additional H7N9 Cases Reported in China; CDC Receives H7N9 Virus Isolate*.
- On April 11, 2013, the *New England Journal of Medicine* published two pieces related to H7N9 influenza.
  - An [article](#) entitled “Human Infection with a Novel Avian-Origin Influenza A (H7N9) Virus” describes the epidemiologic, clinical and laboratory analysis of the first three human cases of avian influenza A (H7N9) virus infection detected in China.
  - A [commentary](#) by CDC authors entitled “Global Concerns Regarding Novel Influenza A (H7N9) Virus Infections” identifies some unique characteristics of H7N9 influenza and highlights CDC's preparedness efforts to learn more about H7N9 and its potential as a public health threat.
- As updated information on the H7N9 situation becomes available, CDC will provide it on its [website](#). CDC's Avian Influenza A (H7N9) Virus Key Points from April 12 are available [here](#).
- Additional [information](#) related to these cases is updated by the World Health Organization (WHO).

#### 4. **Second Newsletter from the Asian Pacific Alliance for the Control of Influenza (APACI)**

The second [newsletter](#) from the APACI is now available.

#### 5. **Update from the College Health Surveillance Network (CHSN)**

The CHSN monitors the incidence of ILI among students seen at student health services, both as an absolute number and as a percent of total primary care visits. The CHSN includes 21 schools representing 671,000 students. Currently 15/21 schools participating in the network submit de-identified ILI data into a central database each week. Weekly data (most recent is from April 4) is available [here](#).

#### 6. **Phase I Clinical Trial for H5N1 Vaccine Yields Positive Results**

IDRI (Infectious Disease Research Institute) and Medicago Inc. have reported positive interim results from a Phase I clinical trial for an H5N1 Avian Influenza VLP vaccine candidate ("H5N1 vaccine"). This is similar technology used for developing the HPV vaccine. The H5N1 vaccine was found to be safe and well-tolerated and induced a solid immune response exceeding the three CHMP (Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use) immunogenicity criteria for licensure of influenza vaccines. The [results](#) were announced at the World Vaccine Congress in Washington, DC.

#### 7. **Recent H7N9 Media Reports**

##### [Another Bird Flu Outbreak](#) (New York Times)

Just as the world was breathing easier about a deadly bird flu virus that killed 371 people over the past decade before dropping out of sight, a different form of bird flu has emerged in China that is causing concern among health experts.

##### [40% of Chinese Sick with H7N9 Bird Flu Had No Contact with Poultry - Report](#) (Forbes)

Forty percent of China's H7N9 bird flu cases involve individuals that have had no clear-cut contact with poultry, the Beijing News newspaper reported today. Sizing up the risks from the disease, experts working with the government's National Health and...

##### [Sixty Cases of Influenza A\(H7N9\) Virus Now Confirmed in China](#) (Newsroom America)

The World Health Organization says another nine laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza A(H7N9) virus have been confirmed in China, taking the total number of confirmed cases to 60 including 13 deaths. Of the latest laboratory...

##### [China's Bird Flu Death Toll Rises to 16, Government Warns of Spread](#) (Reuters)

Two more people in China have died from a new strain of avian influenza, bringing to 16 the number of deaths from the H7N9 virus, and the government has warned that the number of infections could rise. The latest victims were from...

##### [Death Toll Hits 16 in China Bird Flu Outbreak](#) (South China Morning Post)

China has confirmed 77 human cases of H7N9 avian influenza since announcing two weeks ago that it had found the strain in people for the first time. The new strain of the flu had been confined to the eastern city of Shanghai and nearby Zhejiang...

##### [Slaughtering Live Fowl in Traditional Markets to be Banned from June 17](#) (China Post)

TAIPEI, Taiwan – The Council of Agriculture (COA) will completely prohibit slaughtering live fowl in traditional markets all around Taiwan proper starting June 17, the Central Epidemic Command Center for H7N9 influenza announced yesterday. The COA...

**[Bird Flu a 'Truly Nasty Virus'](#)** (ABC News)

HONG KONG -- A new strain of bird flu has been reported in China, and it has sickened 63 people and killed 14. I spoke with my former colleagues at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, who are some of the world's leading experts on influenza.

**[Ban Set for Slaughter in Markets](#)** (Taipei Times)

Newly slaughtered chickens lie on a counter at a market in Taipei yesterday as the Council of Agriculture announced a ban on slaughtering chickens at traditional markets, starting on June 17, to prevent transmission of avian influenza.

**[Joint Taiwan-China Vaccine](#)** (Focus Taiwan News Channel)

As China's bird flu crisis causes jitters across Asia, including Taiwan, and shows no sign of easing, some health experts attending an annual regional economic forum in early April suggested that Taiwan and China work together to come up with a vaccine.

**[China's Bird Flu Investigation Calls in World Scientists](#)** (CBC.ca)

International flu experts will head to China in the next few days to help investigate the outbreak of H7N9 bird flu, the World Health Organization says. Another eight people are infected with the virus, which is tied to 14 deaths in 71 confirmed cases...

**[Fast Bird-Flu Test May Not Go Far Enough, says Expert](#)** (South China Morning Post)

The government's quick test for the H7N9 flu virus in imported poultry at the border may not be enough to stop infected birds entering the city, a University of Hong Kong microbiologist says. Ho Pak-leung said the 3 per cent sample size for the test...

**[New China Bird Flu a Moving Target](#)** (BusinessWorld Online Edition)

So far, genetic sequence data from samples from three H7N9 victims and posted on the website of GISAID, the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data, show the strain is a so-called triple reassortant virus with a mixture of genes from three...

**[4-Year-Old Bird Flu 'Carrier' Worries China](#)** (CNN)

Doctors say the discovery of a 4-year-old carrier of the H7N9 bird flu virus who shows no symptoms of the potentially lethal virus is a worrying development that could make the spread of the infection more difficult to monitor. The Beijing...

**[Chinese H7N9 Virus Making Its Way to Labs Around the World](#)** (Science AAAS)

Researchers at many institutes are still awaiting their own sample, eager to develop diagnostics and vaccines, gauge the virus's potential to sicken animals and spread between them, and better understand its molecular makeup. On Tuesday, the World ...

**[Ill-Advised: Researchers Agree Puzzling New Bird Flu Should Be Taken Seriously](#)** (Scientific American)

An influenza A virus called H7N9 exploded onto the global infectious-diseases radar on April 1 when the World Health Organization revealed China had found three people infected with a new form of bird flu. Since then 77 cases (as of 1 P.M. EDT, April...

**[Beijing's First H7N9 Patient to be Discharged Wednesday](#)** (Xinhua)

A seven-year-old girl who tested positive for the H7N9 avian influenza virus will be discharged from a Beijing hospital on Wednesday, local health authorities said Tuesday. After six days of treatment, the temperature of...

**[Bird Flu Scare Hits China Poultry Sector](#)** (ABC Online)

China's poultry industry has lost billions of dollars following the country's latest bird flu scare, which has now claimed 14 lives from 63 infections. Reuters has quoted China's National Poultry Industry Association as saying the bird flu scare has...

[It Could Happen: King County Prepares for Possible Bird Virus Pandemic](#) (Puget Sound Business Journal, Seattle)

King County health officials are warily watching the N7N9 bird virus in China, in case the spread of the disease requires them to swiftly implement their Pandemic Influenza Response Plan. That plan requires significant participation from the business...

[Bird Flu Fears Mount in China as Herbal Remedies Run Out](#) (Bloomberg)

With scientists so far unable to pinpoint the H7N9 influenza virus' animal host, locals are preparing for a possible pandemic by stocking up on popular plant remedies as well as face masks and hand sanitizers and other over-the-counter remedies...

[Eleven More Cases of Bird Flu Reported in China Brings Total to 71](#) (The Global Dispatch)

Chinese health officials have reported 11 new confirmed cases of human H7N9 avian influenza since the last update, bringing the total cases to 71, according to a Xinhua report today. Image/CIA. Infections were confirmed in Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Anhui ...

[Aussie Expert to Help Beijing Fight Bird Flu](#) (The Australian)

Dr Kelso is one of four overseas influenza experts that the government is reportedly calling on to prevent the deadly virus from spreading further, according to Bloomberg. China's hospitals have been put on high alert and a public health campaign is...

[Bird Flu's Latest Talons Force Defense in China](#) (MarketWatch)

A surprise attack by a new strain of the bird flu virus has forced Chinese authorities into the trenches for a two-pronged defense against unseen enemies. The primary threat is the deadly virus that scientists identified as a...

[Australia Closely Watching Chinese Bird Flu](#) (ABC Online)

Australian biosecurity officials say they are closely monitoring a new bird flu outbreak in China, but remain alert and not alarmed. The new H7N9 strain of avian influenza has already killed 16 people in China, but Biosecurity Australia says the risk...

## 8. Other Influenza-Related Media Reports

[Man Dies of Bird Flu in Egypt](#) (Ahram Online)

An Egyptian health ministry official has confirmed the second human death from bird flu (avian influenza virus) in 2013, state-run news agency MENA reported on Wednesday. The 26-year-old man, who died in Daqahliya governorate (northeast of Cairo)...

[Bird Flu Found at Bernard Matthews Farm in Suffolk](#) (BBC News)

Tests are being carried out after signs of the disease were spotted at a Bernard Matthews farm, which is not being identified. Bird flu has been detected, but Defra said initial tests were negative for the H5 and H7 strains, which are a potential...

[Swine Flu Returns to Kolkata After Three Years](#) (Times of India)

After staying lull for almost three years, swine flu has returned to haunt the city and its suburbs. With two cases being confirmed last week, the health department is gearing up to take stock of the situation before the problem assumes an...

[Swine Flu Claims One More, Toll Rises to 16](#) (Daily Bhaskar)

With the death of a 67-year old man in a private hospital on Monday night, the toll due to swine flu in Indore has risen to 16 this year. In-charge of the Indore unit of Integrated Disease Surveillance Project (IDSP) Dr GL Sodhi said the...

**[Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Market in Asia-Pacific to 2018 - Positive Impact of Government Support Offset by Limited Production Capacity, High Investment and Strict Regulations as Barriers to New Entrants](#)** (PR Newswire)

The report also delves deep into vaccination patterns for seasonal influenza in the Asia-Pacific Region. Further, the geographical distribution of seasonal influenza vaccines across Japan, Australia, New Zealand, China, Taiwan, Philippines, Hong Kong...

**[Flunisyn Phase 2a Trial Data Shows Positive Results in Elderly Population](#)** (News-Medical.net)

This latest study in the elderly population, a group where conventional influenza vaccine is poorly effective, showed that Flunisyn™ induced a robust CMI across a number of influenza antigens, with a responder frequency of 95%. The vaccine was found...

**[Keys to a Successful 2013 Flu Season: Planning Starts Now](#)** (Drug Store News)

Spring is one of my favorite times of the year. It signals the end of many things and the start of others. Winter becomes spring. Flowers bloom. March Madness wraps up and The Masters' tee off. Flu season transforms into flu season. Skiing and...

**9. FDA Announces New Strains for the 2013–2014 Influenza Season**

After a [meeting](#) (*note: Medscape subscription required to view article*) held February 27, the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee to the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommended that trivalent vaccines for the 2013-2014 season retain current vaccine strain A/California/7/2009pdm09-like (2009 H1N1) virus.

The committee also recommended replacing current vaccine strain A/Victoria/361/2011 (H3N2)-like virus with an A(H3N2) virus antigenically similar to the cell-propagated prototype virus A/Victoria/361/2011 (A/Texas/50/2012) and replacing current vaccine strain B/Wisconsin/1/2010-like virus with a B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like (B/Yamagata lineage) virus.

The committee also recommended that quadrivalent vaccines, which are expected to be available for the upcoming season, contain a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like (B/Victoria lineage) virus in addition to the viruses recommended for the trivalent vaccines.

**10. Don't Forget to Update and Submit to the New Adult Vaccine Locator!**

The new Adult Vaccine Finder is now available! Please forward the following information to immunization providers with whom you work!

**Attention Immunization Providers:** If interested in letting the public know about vaccines offered at your practice or clinic, go to <http://vaccine.healthmap.org>. This site already includes more than 54,000 locations that provide flu shots and has provided this information to 500,000 users from the general public. On January 28, 2013, the site expanded to include 10 additional adult vaccines. If you want to register your location on this website, click on the "about" button on the top right hand side and follow the prompts to register, or go to <https://flushot.healthmap.org/admin/signup>.

**11. Summit Website Offers Wonderful Resources on Influenza Vaccination!**

Remember to visit the Summit [website](#) for the latest on influenza immunization resources and to view archived copies of the weekly updates.