



# *Influenza Activity Spotlight*

2013–2014 Season

Issue #5 — September 16, 2013

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**Reminder:** Summit calls are scheduled every Thursday at 3 p.m. ET, unless cancelled. These calls will resume on the regular weekly schedule on September 5, following the Labor Day weekend. 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.

## 1. Summary of the National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit Call – 9/12/2013

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

Because influenza activity in the U.S. during the previous week was uneventful, Scott provided an overview of influenza in the southern hemisphere over the last few months.

#### ***Temperate Climate Countries:***

**Australia and New Zealand** have detected a lower number of cases this season than last, but we may not yet have reached the peak. Influenza A(H3N2) has been more common in Australia, while both A(H3N2) and B have been common in New Zealand.

In **Southern Africa**, cases have been decreasing since early June, when most reported cases were A(H1N1). More recently, cases of A(H3N2) have been on the rise.

In **South America**, activity peaked in June with A(H1N1) in Argentina, while Chile reported primarily A(H3N2).

#### ***Tropical Climate Countries:***

**Brazil** has had both A(H1N1) and B strains circulating.

In **Peru**, A(H1N1) has been predominant, with a sharp increase and decline in mid-to-late July.

In **Southern and Southeast Asia**, incidence has been steady, but has remained at fairly low levels. Influenza A(H1N1) has been reported in Cambodia, Thailand, and India. In Vietnam, a mixture of A(H1N1) and A(H3N2) were reported early in the season, but A(H3N2) and B now predominate.

The overall level of activity and reported types/subtypes varies from country to country. We cannot really know what this will mean for the Northern Hemisphere. In response to questions about media reports indicating the first reported case of influenza for this season in Los Angeles and an outbreak in a dormitory, Scott noted that influenza and outbreaks occur year round, and these reports do not provide a good indication of the upcoming season. We are in the middle of September and should expect to begin hearing about increasing reports, particularly among college students and others in settings of close contact. CDC will continue to monitor surveillance in the U.S. and will provide updates on the [influenza website](http://www.cdc.gov/flu) and during Summit calls.

### **Influenza Vaccine Doses Distributed – Erin Kennedy (CDC)**

Erin reported that 134-139 million doses of influenza vaccine are anticipated to be available during the 2013–2014 season, which is similar to the 134.9 million doses distributed last season. As of August 30, 54.1 million doses had been distributed. This is slightly below the 60 million doses that had been distributed by this time in the 2012-2013 season. Vaccine distribution data is not broken down by trivalent vs. quadrivalent vaccine. Updated information on vaccine distribution is available [here](#).

### **Estimated Incidence of Pertussis in People Aged >50 years – Leonard Friedland (GSK)**

Len provided a synopsis of a [poster](#) presented at today's ICAAC meeting. Personnel from GSK's Vaccines Health Outcomes Department used mathematical modeling to estimate the incidence of pertussis in persons  $\geq 50$  years of age. Although this type of multiple linear regression analysis has previously been used to estimate levels of influenza and RSV, this is the first time it has been used for pertussis. During the study period of 2006–2010, there were 20.7 million cases of cough illness among persons aged 50–64 and 27.5 million among persons  $\geq 65$ . The model attributed 2.5% and 1.7%, respectively, of these illnesses to *B. pertussis*, with a predicted rate of 202/100,000 in person aged 50–64 and 227/100,000 in those  $\geq 65$ . This indicates that pertussis incidence in older adults is much higher than generally reported, and this incidence increases with age.

### **Influenza Communication Resources – Cindy Fowler (CDC)**

Cindy began with an update on upcoming key events for the 2013–2014 influenza season.

- The annual NFID influenza season kickoff press conference will take place in Washington, DC on **September 26**. Scheduled speakers include Drs. Howard Koh and Anne Schuchat, who will review coverage rates from last season and discuss this year's vaccine supply, composition and options. L.J noted that Marla Dalton with NFID will be on next week's Summit call to discuss this event in greater detail.
- National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW) will be held December 8–14.
- The National Influenza Vaccine Disparities Partnership has been instrumental in bringing elected leaders to the forefront of the influenza campaign. Members of the Georgia Conference of Black Mayors have signed a resolution promoting influenza vaccine in their cities. This has snowballed into similar support from the US Conference of Mayors. CDC is working with the Disparities group to obtain more local support and to amplify these messages.
- CDC has provided a 5-year cooperative agreement for school-based influenza activities to collaborating organizations National Foundation for Infectious Diseases-Childhood Influenza Immunization Coalition (NFID-CIIC), National Association of School Nurses (NASN) and Families Fighting Flu (FFF). The first year of the project will include a pilot program in Chicago public schools promoting influenza vaccination for public school students in K-5, teachers, and parents. Additional schools will be added in the future.

The remainder of Cindy's presentation highlighted the huge wealth of materials available for the general public, clinicians, and public health partners at CDC's [influenza website](#). Partners are encouraged to take the time to review the full website, but the following provides a *brief* overview of the types of information available.

Topic	URL	Includes:
Flu Activity and Surveillance	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly situation updates</li> <li>• <i>FluView</i> interactive tools on vaccine coverage</li> </ul>
General information for influenza prevention partners	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/index.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/index.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaigns</li> <li>• Media resources</li> <li>• Vaccine promotion tools</li> <li>• Latest updates available on <i>What's New</i> news feed</li> <li>• Tools for staying connected</li> </ul>
Partner success stories	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/success_stories.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/success_stories.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of successful activities that can be emulated in other areas</li> <li>• Submit your own success story!</li> </ul>
Influenza Vaccination Calendar of Events	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/partners-form.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/partners-form.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter your influenza vaccination activities into the online calendar of events</li> <li>• See what other organizations are doing this season</li> </ul>
Free resources	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Print - new materials added to prior availability</li> <li>• Video, audio, web tools, imagery, mobile pages &amp; apps</li> <li>• Flu Quiz &amp; Pledge</li> <li>• Widgets</li> <li>• New Hispanic motion comic book avail on YouTube and video</li> </ul>
Information for health professionals	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical information, vaccine recommendations, training tools, &amp; MUCH more!</li> </ul>
Outreach to diverse populations	<a href="http://www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/disparities.htm">www.cdc.gov/flu/partners/disparities.htm</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African-American</li> <li>• AI/AN</li> <li>• Hispanics</li> <li>• Hispanic motion comic book</li> <li>• Materials for grassroots outreach to African Americans</li> </ul>

Cindy provided a status update for several specific products:

- **Key points for the 2013–14 Influenza Season** – in final stages of clearance; anticipating distribution to partners over the next week or so.
- **Web updates** – ongoing; should be complete before Sept 26.
- **Matte articles** – currently being revised and will need clearance before posted.
- **Guidelines** – soon to be posted to the web; information on how partners can customize CDC flu print materials in order to insert organization name, tagline, event details and to acknowledge partners that print and distribute materials on their own initiative.

A Twitter chat being organized by the American Health Care Association, with participation from CDC and the IAC (participation by AARP is pending), will be focused on preventing influenza in the elderly. The event will be held on Friday, September 27 at 2pm EST, with Mike Jhung from the CDC serving as the subject matter expert. Tips will be shared about influenza vaccination and other ways to prevent influenza, such as practicing good health habits and taking antivirals if prescribed. Some of the tweets will address influenza in long-term care facilities.

CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR) has published the [study](#), "Influenza Vaccination Practices of Physicians and Caregivers of Children with Neurologic and Neurodevelopmental Conditions – United States, 2011–12 Influenza Season." This is a survey study examining the number of parents who vaccinated or planned to have their child vaccinated during the influenza season. Health providers were also surveyed to determine their awareness of high-risk conditions that contribute to influenza complications in children. High-risk conditions in children present added concerns during influenza season because these children are more likely to become severely ill or succumb to influenza. The study provides evidence that many of these children do not receive yearly vaccine to help protect against influenza. It also indicates that some health care providers do not recognize all conditions, such as intellectual disabilities, that put children at risk for influenza complications. A summary of the key findings may be found [here](#).

Finally, Cindy reported that earlier this week CDC launched a Google search and ad display campaign which features 2 PSAs on YouTube targeting the general audience, as well as pregnant women, persons with chronic conditions, and seniors. CDC has prepared the first expert video commentary on vaccine recommendations and options for this season, and this will be posted soon. There are plans to update existing Medscape text commentaries as well.

Cindy reminded partners to [submit](#) any questions or suggestions to CDC.

### **Other Items – Litjen Tan (IAC)**

L.J reminded partners that the weekly eUpdates are archived and are available [here](#).

- 2. The CDC/Influenza Division Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report** ending week 36 (ending September 7, 2013) is available [here](#), and region specific data may be viewed [here](#). During week 36, 5.7% of all deaths reported through the 122-Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to P&I. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 6.1% for week 36. Three new influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported to CDC during week 36. One death was associated with an influenza A (H3) virus and occurred during week 11 (week ending March 16, 2013), and two deaths were associated with an influenza B virus and occurred during weeks 12 and 13 (weeks ending March 23 and 30, 2013). A total of 164 influenza-associated pediatric deaths have been reported during the 2012–2013 season. Additional data can be found [here](#). Nationwide during week 36, 0.7% of patient visits reported through the U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) were due to influenza-like illness (ILI). This percentage is below the national baseline of 2.2%. An [Influenza Summary Update](#) of the influenza activity reported by state and territorial epidemiologists indicates geographic spread of influenza viruses, but does not measure the intensity of influenza activity. (This map has not yet been updated for the upcoming season.) Archives of previous *FluViews* are available [here](#).

- 3. Novel Influenza H3N2v Activity**

No additional novel influenza A virus infections have been reported to CDC during week 36. A total of 18 H3N2v cases have been reported this summer in Illinois (1), Indiana (14), Michigan (2), and Ohio (1). So far during 2013, one person has been hospitalized as a result of H3N2v illness; no deaths have occurred. At this time no ongoing human-to-human transmission has been identified, and all 18 cases have reported close contact with swine in the week prior to illness onset.

Because of reporting schedules, state totals posted by CDC may not always be consistent with those reported by state health departments. If there is a discrepancy between state and CDC case counts, data from the state health department should be used as the most accurate number.

Early identification and investigation of human infections with novel influenza A viruses is critical in order to evaluate the extent of the outbreak and possible human-to-human transmission. Additional [information](#) on influenza in swine, variant influenza infection in humans, and strategies to interact safely with livestock is available from CDC.

CDC's [key points](#) regarding recent human infections with influenza H3N2 variant (H3N2v) virus infections in the United States are available here (CDC H3N2v Flu Key Pts 9-6-2013) and were included in [Influenza Activity Update #4](#).

#### 4. More information from CDC

CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) has published the [study](#), "Influenza Vaccination Practices of Physicians and Caregivers of Children with Neurologic and Neurodevelopmental Conditions – United States, 2011-12 Influenza Season."

- This is a survey study examining the number of parents who vaccinated or planned to have their child vaccinated during the flu season. Health providers were also surveyed to determine their awareness of high-risk conditions that contribute to flu complications in children. High-risk conditions in children present added concerns during flu season, because these children are more likely to become severely ill or succumb to the flu.
- The study provides evidence that many of these children do not receive yearly flu shots to help protect against the flu. It also indicates that some health care providers do not recognize all conditions that put children at risk for flu complications, like intellectual disabilities.
- A summary of the key findings is available [here](#).

Influenza vaccine has already started shipping and is available in many locations. Content updates are in progress for CDC's influenza [website](#), but there already are a variety of free print, audio/video, social media tools, and web tools available for different audiences on the [Free Resources page](#). A summary of the ACIP recommendations for the 2013–2014 season is available [here](#). CDC's key points for the 2013-2014 season are coming soon. Outside of preparing materials for your events, consider the following to promote influenza vaccination and remain current on the latest updates:

- Bookmark CDC's flu prevention partner [webpage](#) as your one-stop shopping for the latest flu information and resources! And check back often.
- Take the CDC Flu Vaccination [Pledge](#) yourself, and download the widget for placement on your organization's website.
- Don't forget to enter your seasonal flu vaccine promotion activities into the calendar of events for the 2013-2014 flu season.
- Stay connected:
  - CDC [Content Syndication](#)
  - Follow CDC Flu on [Twitter](#)
  - Join the Conversation on CDC's [Facebook page](#)
  - Get [Email Updates](#)
  - Get [News Feeds](#)

#### 5. Influenza Vaccine Supply Update from CDC

Manufacturers estimate 135-139 million doses of influenza vaccine will be produced for the U.S. market this season. During 2012–2013, 134.9 million doses of flu vaccine were distributed in the United States.

- Of the overall influenza vaccine supply projected for the 2013–2014 season, manufacturers estimate that 30–32 million doses will be available as quadrivalent flu vaccines.
- Of the total quadrivalent influenza vaccine supply, approximately 13–15 million doses of the nasal spray influenza vaccine (LAIV) will be available.

The number of flu doses distributed will be updated each week and posted [here](#). Summit members also can go to the [FDA lot release site](#) to obtain information about lots of influenza vaccine (including quadrivalent) released. However, the number of doses in each lot is unknown.

#### **6. National Vaccine Advisory Committee (NVAC) Adopts New Standards for Adult Immunization Practice!**

On September 10, NVAC voted to adopt the new Standards for Adult Immunization Practice. The updated standards have many new objectives, but of note is the paradigm shift that ALL providers of adult care have a fundamental responsibility to assess for, counsel on, strongly recommend, and provide adult vaccines. If the provider does not provide the vaccine, a referral to a provider who vaccinates must be made, and the patient's receipt of that vaccine followed up on. When finalized, these standards will be distributed to the Summit for partners to advise their providers. Of note, the work to update the Adult Immunization Standards was initiated through the Summit.

#### **7. UN Agency Warns of H7N9 and H5N1 Avian Influenza Reemerging in Upcoming Influenza Season**

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other international experts are recommending vigilance and promoting targeted surveillance against the bird flus. Despite being more prepared to respond to the lethal bird flu viruses, these experts are warning that the H7N9 and H5N1 avian influenza viruses could reemerge and be a major impact particularly with the upcoming flu season closing in. Additional information is available [here](#).

#### **8. AAP Recommends Influenza Vaccine ASAP**

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is [recommending](#) that all children aged 6 months and older receive an influenza vaccine as soon as it becomes available. AAP noted that available vaccines for the 2013–2014 influenza season include the trivalent vaccine, which protects against three strains of flu, and a new quadrivalent vaccine that protects against an additional fourth strain of the virus.

A special effort should be made to vaccinate people in vulnerable groups, including children with chronic health conditions, children of American Indian or Alaskan Native heritage, health care workers, women who are pregnant, may become pregnant or are breastfeeding, and household contacts and caregivers of children in high-risk populations.

“Parents should not delay vaccinating their children to obtain a specific vaccine,” said Dr. Henry Bernstein, a pediatrician and lead author of the flu recommendations. “Influenza is unpredictable, and what’s most important is that people receive the vaccine soon so that they will be protected when the virus begins circulating.”

#### **9. Despite Increased Vulnerability, Kids with Neurological Disorders No More Likely to Get Influenza Vaccine**

Although children with neurologic conditions are at high risk for complications of influenza infection, only half were vaccinated during the 2011 to 2012 influenza season, according to a [report](#) published in the September 13 issue of the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Of note, Autism Speaks supports the CDC recommendation. However, anti-vaccination statements are available on the Age of Autism [site](#).

## **10. Sequestration Forces Air Force to Limit Free Influenza Vaccines to Active Personnel**

The [Air Force](#) will no longer be offering free influenza vaccines to its civilian staff. The Air Force is in no position to provide free influenza shots to its civilian staff due to sequestration. In 2012, 12,000 employees were benefited by the vaccination program of the Air Force. This year this facility has been limited only to the beneficiaries of TRICARE, the Defense Department health system, members of the military, their families and military retirees.

## **11. Project Identifies Potential Super-Spreaders of Infection**

The objective of this [study](#) was to combine contacts data and virological data for studying influenza transmission during an outbreak occurring in a hospital unit. The researchers identified patients and HCWs with a high number of contacts, who could be considered as potential super-spreaders of infections. This is key information that may help to implement prevention and control measures.

## **12. Adults with Asthma Are Not Getting Influenza Vaccinations!**

A [survey](#) reveals that only a minority of adults with asthma get vaccinated against influenza, despite their high risk. Because influenza can worsen asthma, U.S. National Asthma Education and Prevention Program recommends that people with asthma get a regular flu jab.

## **13. Triple Dose Tamiflu Beats Back H1N1**

Patients critically ill with H1N1 influenza who received a triple dose of [oseltamivir](#) (Tamiflu, Tamivir) had a significantly more rapid viral clearance than those who received normal doses. The treatment was well-tolerated, and there were many more patients achieving viral clearance.

## **14. Legal Responsibilities in Choosing Not to Vaccinate**

“In a recent blog post, Bioethicist Arthur Caplan [suggested](#) that in cases similar to Micha’s, the non-vaccinating parents should be held responsible...There are two arguments that can be used to support Caplan’s points and justify tort liability. The first focuses on compensation for the victims. The medical and scientific consensus is that the risks of vaccinating are significantly smaller than the risks of not vaccinating. Therefore, those that do not vaccinate are choosing the larger risk: an unreasonable choice...The second argument focuses on preventing externalities observed when parents roll the cost of their decisions onto others.”

## **15. NIH Study Establishes Human Model of Influenza H7N9 Pathogenesis**

A National Institutes of Health (NIH) clinical [study](#) of healthy adult volunteers who consented to be infected with the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus under carefully controlled conditions has provided researchers with concrete information about the minimum dose of virus needed to produce mild-to-moderate illness.

## **16. Health Officials Warn About Early Influenza Season**

Tarrant County in Texas is [urging](#) influenza vaccinations in case there is an early influenza season.

## **17. 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 you are 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>.

#### **18. 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.