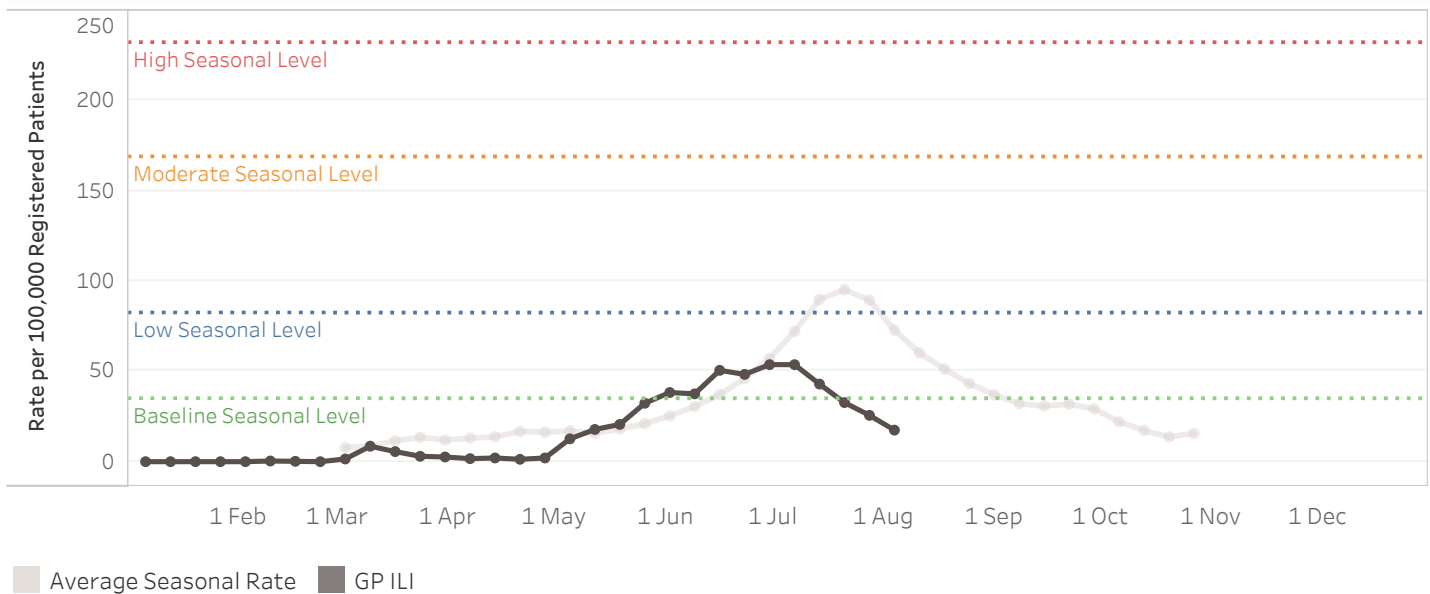


Week Ending 4 August 2019

National Overview

Influenza-like illness (ILI) activity remains below the seasonal baseline threshold this week, with a further decrease in activity since last week. Influenza-positive ILI activity remains above the seasonal baseline threshold but there was also a decrease in activity since last week. Over 50% of samples tested in general practices (GPs) and 35% of samples tested in hospitals are influenza positive, which is one of the highest positivity rates for this period in recent years. Currently, influenza A(H3N2) and B/Victoria viruses are co-circulating, with B/Victoria predominating in the community and influenza A viruses predominating in hospitals. The 2019 seasonal influenza vaccine strains remain a good match to influenza viruses detected in New Zealand.

Weekly General Practice Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Rates To 04 Aug 19

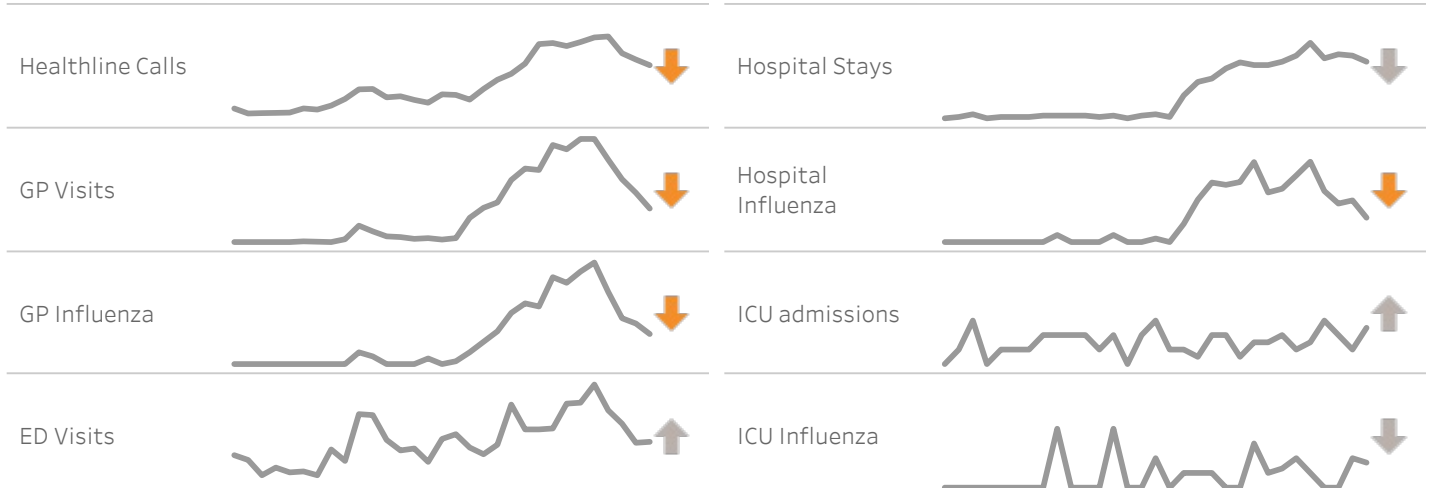


Community influenza-like illness (ILI) activity remains below the seasonal baseline threshold this week, with a further decrease in activity since last week. There were 4 ILI outbreaks reported this week (2/4 with virus and institution types reported): 2 in Waikato DHB, 1 in MidCentral DHB (influenza A in a long term care facility) and 1 in West Coast DHB (influenza B/A in a school).

Indicators of severity remain low. Severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) surveillance started on April 29th, but surveillance in intensive care units (ICU) for very severe or unusual presentations is year round. Activity in ICU is low. SARI activity is just below the seasonal baseline level this week.

Arrow colour indicates whether the current weekly change is statistically significant.

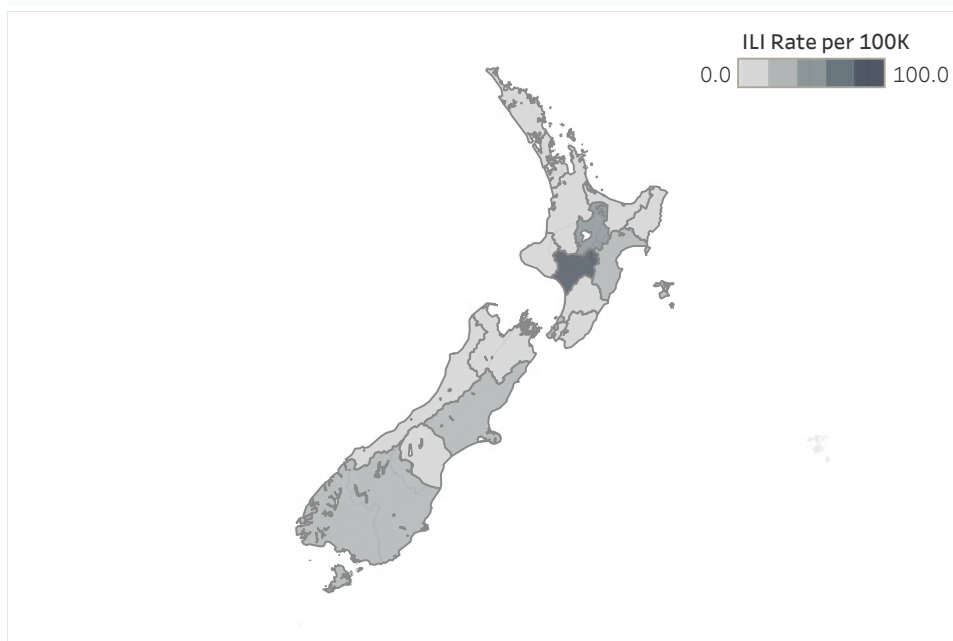
Arrow colour indicates whether the current weekly change is statistically significant.



Activity by DHB

Rates of General Practice (GP) visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) are now below the baseline level, with a statistically significant decrease in national activity compared with the previous week. Lakes, Auckland and Capital and Coast DHBs have recorded the highest ILI GP visit rates this week. Healthline calls for ILI also decreased significantly this week compared to the previous week. Wairarapa and Tairāwhiti DHBs had the highest rates of Healthline calls for ILI this week.

GP Visits (ILI) Rate by DHB - Current Week



Control Measures

The 2019 publically funded seasonal Influenza vaccine contains the following four components (i.e. a quadrivalent vaccine):

- an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus;
- an A/Switzerland/8060/2017 (H3N2)-like virus;
- a B/Colorado/06/2017-like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage); and
- a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (B/Yamagata/16/88 lineage).

Overseas acute respiratory disease surveillance

- Pacific region: In Australia, early, high seasonal influenza and influenza-like illness (ILI) activity has been declining through July to rates nearing the average of previous years.^{1,2} Some of the reduction in laboratory-confirmed influenza notifications may be due to data entry delays. Over the past two weeks, activity has decreased in all states and territories except the Northern Territory and Queensland. Nationally, influenza A(H3N2) virus continues to predominate, with the proportion of influenza B cases decreasing in the past month. Clinical severity for the season to date is low. Circulating seasonal viruses remain a good match overall to the 2019 seasonal influenza vaccine strains. Influenza outbreaks continue to be reported in several Pacific Island Countries and Territories: influenza A and B in New Caledonia and Fiji, and influenza B in French Polynesia.³
- Asia: Influenza activity remained low in Southern Asia.¹ Activity increased in South East Asia, with continued high activity in Myanmar (A(H1N1)pdm09), and increased activity in Thailand (A(H3N2) and B/Victoria-lineage viruses co-circulating).
- South and Central America: Activity decreased across temperate South America, with all seasonal influenza subtypes co-circulating.¹ Overall activity remained low in tropical South America and Central America.
- Africa: Low influenza activity was reported across most of Africa, with the exception of a few countries in Eastern Africa.¹ Activity continued to decrease in South Africa, with influenza positivity returning to below threshold (A(H3N2) predominance).
- Northern Hemisphere: Currently low influenza activity overall.¹
- Emerging diseases: In 2019, ongoing detections of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in the Middle East and human infection with avian Influenza A(H7N9) and A(H9N2) in China have been reported (associated with exposures to camels and birds, respectively).^{4,5} These emerging viruses (MERS-CoV, A(H7N9) and A(H9N2)) are not known to spread easily from person-to-person at present and are classified by the WHO as being of low risk of international spread.⁵

Further information on overseas acute respiratory disease activity:

1. WHO Global Flu Update: www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/latest_update_GIP_surveillance/en/ (accessed 07/08/19)
2. Australia: www.health.gov.au/flureport (accessed 07/08/2019)
3. Pacific: www.spc.int/phd/epidemics/ (accessed 07/08/19)
4. WHO Emergency Preparedness, response: www.who.int/csr/don/archive/year/2019/en/ (accessed 07/08/19)
5. WHO Avian and other zoonotic influenza: www.who.int/influenza/human_animal_interface/en/ (accessed 07/08/19)