Influenza Virological Surveillance in the WHO African Region

Epidemiological Week 40, October 2 to 8, 2017

During epidemiological week 40, 15 laboratories (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Cote d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Zambia) in the African region influenza laboratory network contributed data for analysis. During week 40, 111 specimens were positive for influenza out of the 512 that were tested (22% positivity rate). Influenza types and subtypes identified were influenza A/H3 (40/111, 36%), influenza A/H1N1pdm09 (47/111, 42%) and influenza B (24/111, 22%).

Cumulatively* from epidemiological week 1 to 40 the AFR influenza laboratory network has collected over 27,600 specimens and tested 26,576, of which 3,857 have been positive for influenza virus (positivity rate 15%).

*adjusted for retrospective data.

Figure 1 – Weekly virological assessment of influenza specimens collected in the African region, weeks 1 to 40, 2017
During epidemiological week 40, no data was received from the Northern transmission zone.

In the Eastern transmission zone 3 specimens tested positive for influenza virus of the 44 tested (46 collected). The positivity rate was 7%. Influenza types and subtypes identified included influenza A/H3 (1/3) and influenza B (2/3).

In the Western transmission zone 218 specimens were collected and tested for influenza, of which 32 were positive (positivity rate 15%). Influenza types and subtypes identified included influenza A/H3 (21/32) and influenza A/H1N1pdm09 (11/32).

For epidemiological week 40, 129 specimens were collected and tested for influenza in the Southern transmission zone, of which 17 were positive for influenza (positivity rate 13%). Influenza types and subtypes identified included influenza A/H3 (1/17) and influenza B (16/17). (Figure 2).
In the Middle transmission zone during epidemiological week 40, 121 specimens were collected and tested for influenza and 59 positives were identified (influenza positivity rate 48%). Once again an increase from the previous week (week 39, 40%). Influenza types and subtypes identified included influenza A/H3 (17/59), influenza A/H1N1pdm09 (36/59) and influenza B (6/59).

**Countries that report virological influenza data.**

Regionally, influenza A (all subtypes) remains the predominant influenza type circulating (2678/3857, 69%), represented by influenza A/H3 (1886/2678, 70%), A/H1 (2/2678, <1%) and A/H1N1pdm09 (714/2678, 27%) while 76 specimens remain untyped (3%). Influenza B represents 31% (1179/3857) of circulating influenza types (Figure 4).

**Figure 4. Influenza type and subtype distribution regionally and in the 5 transmission zones in the African region during weeks 1–13 (Q1), weeks 14-26 (Q2), weeks 1-39 (Q3) and weeks 1-40, 2017.**

The information presented in this report are subject to change following completeness and verification Member States.