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 13 of 2023 are presented in Table 1 below. Influenza A and B are co-circulating, however, the majority of cases reported to week 13 of 2023 have been Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 (Figure 1). Caution should be taken when interpreting these data as there are reporting delays.

Table 1: Cumulative data reported to FluNet from Western Pacific Region, week 1, 2023 to week 13 2023

<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 (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>40,532</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>241,226</td>
<td>78,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji (10 of 2023)</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic (12 of 2023)</td>
<td>1,367</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>11,121</td>
<td>2,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia (12 of 2023)</td>
<td>6,881</td>
<td>1,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Caledonia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>3,559</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (13 of 2023)</td>
<td>3,126</td>
<td>714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viet Nam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype, Western Pacific Region, Week 13 2022 to week 13, 2023 (Source: WHO FLUNET)

Influenza surveillance summary

Influenza surveillance in the WHO Western Pacific Region is based on outpatient and inpatient 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, ILI and influenza activity are similar to the corresponding period from previous years.

**Outpatient ILI Surveillance**

**China (North)**

During week 13 of 2023, sentinel hospitals in the northern provinces reported an ILI% of 4.4%, lower than the last week of 5.8% and higher than the same week of 2020-2022 (2.3%, 2.2%, and 2.0%) (Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Percentage of visits for ILI at sentinel hospitals in Northern China, 2019-2023](source: China National Influenza Center)

**Mongolia**

During week 12 of 2023, the ILI activity in Mongolia decreased to 32 ILI cases per 10,000 population. This is below the upper tolerance limit (Figure 3).

![Figure 3: Proportion of outpatient ILI visits per 10,000 people in Mongolia, 2020-2023](source: Mongolia National Influenza Center)
**Republic of Korea**

In week 13 of 2023, the overall weekly ILI rate was 14.5 ILI cases per 1,000 outpatient visits, which was higher 13.2% recorded in the previous week. (Figure 4).

![Figure 4: Weekly ILI incidence rate per 1,000 outpatient consultations, Republic of Korea, 2018-2023](Source: Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency)

**Sentinel influenza surveillance**

**Japan**

In week 13 of 2023, the number of cases reported weekly by sentinel hospital sites remained low in Japan. The number of cases in 2023 was consistently low (Figure 5).

![Figure 5: Number of influenza cases reported weekly per reporting sentinel hospital site, Japan 2013-2023](Source: Japan National Institute of Infectious Diseases)
Countries/areas in the tropical zone

ILI and influenza activity is similar to the corresponding period from previous years in some of the countries and areas in the tropical zone.

Hong Kong SAR (China) – ILI and hospital Surveillance

The latest surveillance data showed that the overall seasonal influenza activity in Hong Kong remained low. In week 13, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPC) was 1.7 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than the 1.5 recorded in the previous week (Figure 2.1 left). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private medical practitioner (PMP) clinics was 42.0 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was lower than the 28.5 recorded in the previous week (Figure 2.1 right).

China (South) – ILI Surveillance

During week 13 of 2023, the percentage of visits for ILI at national sentinel hospitals in Southern China was 10%, lower than the last week (10.1%) and higher than the same week of 2020-2022 (2.5%, 3.0%, and 3.5%) (Figure 8).

Figure 2.1 Left: ILI consultation rates at sentinel general outpatient clinics, Hong Kong SAR 2020-2023
Source: Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection

Figure 2.1 Right: ILI consultation rates at sentinel private doctors, Hong Kong SAR 2019-2023
Source: Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection

Figure 8: Percentage of visits due to ILI at national sentinel hospitals in Southern China, 2019-2022
Source: China National Influenza Center
**Singapore** – Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) Surveillance

In week 13 of 2023, the average daily number of patients seeking treatment in the polyclinics for ARI is 2826 (over 5.5 working days) (**Figure 9**). The proportion of patients with influenza-like illness (ILI) among the polyclinic attendances for ARI is 0.9%. Of 1,419 samples tested for influenza in the past four weeks, the positivity rate in the community was 26.9%. Of the 421 specimens that tested positive for influenza in March 2023, 258 were positive for Influenza A(H3N2) (61.3%), 94 were positive for Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 (22.3%) and 68 were positive for Influenza B (16.2%) (**Figure 10**).

**Lao PDR**

During week 12 of 2023, the National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology received data from all seven sentinel sites in Lao PDR. The number of ILI cases presenting at sentinel sites was 98 cases higher than the previous week. There were 126 samples tested for influenza in week 12, 2023. Influenza A/pdmH1N1 was identified (n=10) and Flu B Vic (n=5) (**Figure 11**).
Cambodia
In week 13 of 2023, the Ministry of Health received data from all seven sentinel sites in Cambodia. The number of ILI cases in Cambodia slightly increased in week 12 of 2023 (124 cases) compared to week 13 of 2023 (130 cases). The positivity rate was 7.14% for this week. (Figure 12).

![ILI Weekly Positive Rate](image)

Figure 12: Number of ILI cases from seven sentinel sites and influenza positivity rate by the week, of 2020-2023, Cambodia
(Source: Communicable Disease Control Department, Cambodia Ministry of Health)

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 in Australia and New Zealand.

Australia – Laboratory-confirmed influenza
In the year to 13 November 2022, there have been 227,359 notifications reported to the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System in Australia. Of these, 824 notifications had a diagnosis date in the latest reported fortnight (31 October 2022 - 13 November 2022). This is higher than the number of notifications with a diagnosis date in the previous fortnight (778). The weekly number of notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza in 2022 has decreased to below the weekly 5-year average since mid-July (Figure 13).

![Notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza by month and week from 2017 to 2022 in Australia](image)

Figure 13: Notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza by month and week from 2017 to 2022 in Australia
(Source: National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System, Australian Department of Health)
**New Zealand – Influenza like Illness**

In the four weeks to 25 November 2022, the influenza like illness (ILI) general practitioner consultation rate declined (Figure 14). GP consultation rates remain lower than the historical rate for this time of year. Rates were highest in Counties Manukau, which were higher than observed historically, though showed a decrease throughout the month.

![Weekly rates of general practice ILI consultations per 100,000 people in New Zealand in 2020-2022](Chart)

**Figure 14: Weekly rates of general practice ILI consultations per 100,000 people in New Zealand in 2020-2022**

(Source: New Zealand Institute of Environmental Science and Research)

**Pacific Island Countries and Areas (PICs) - ILI Surveillance**

In week 13 of 2023, 18 out of 21 PICs reported ILI surveillance data. No reports are available for American Samoa, Guam, and Nauru. The following countries reported increased influenza-like illness activity, compared with the same weeks in 2022: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Republic of Marshall Islands, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Samoa, Tonga (Influenza B outbreak is ongoing), Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna. **(Figure 15).**
Influenza Situation Update
Caution should be taken in interpreting these data as there may be changes in the number of sentinel sites reporting to the Pacific Syndromic Surveillance System.

FSM: Federated States of Micronesia, CMNI: Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands

Figure 15: Reported cases of influenza-like illness in Pacific Island Countries, 2019-2023
(Source: Pacific Syndromic Surveillance System Weekly Bulletin)
Global influenza situation updates

**Virological update**

**Global update**

**Others:**
- New recommended composition of influenza virus vaccines for use in the 2023 southern hemisphere influenza season [Link](#)
- Recommended composition of influenza virus vaccines for use in the 2022-2023 northern hemisphere influenza season [Link](#)
- WHO Consultation on the Composition of Influenza Virus Vaccines for Use in the 2023 Southern Hemisphere Influenza Season 19-22 September 2022 [Link](#)
- WHO issues updated influenza vaccines position paper [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](#)