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 15 of 2023 are presented in Table 1 below. Influenza A and B are co-circulating, however, the majority of cases reported to week 15 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 15, 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 (15 of 2023)</td>
<td>48,057</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia (09 of 2023)</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (15 of 2023)</td>
<td>312,993</td>
<td>97,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji (10 of 2023)</td>
<td>855</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan (14 of 2023)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao People’s Democratic Republic (15 of 2023)</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia (14 of 2023)</td>
<td>12,008</td>
<td>2,862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongolia (13 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 (14 of 2023)</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic of Korea (15 of 2023)</td>
<td>4,269</td>
<td>386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore (15 of 2023)</td>
<td>3,797</td>
<td>872</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 15, 2022 to week 15, 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 15 of 2023, sentinel hospitals in the northern provinces reported an ILI% of 2.9%, lower than the last week of 3.2% and higher than the same week of 2020-2022 (1.9%, 2.2%, and 1.7%) (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 15 of 2023, the ILI activity in Mongolia increased to 44 ILI cases per 10,000 population. This is above the upper tolerance limit (Figure 3).

![Figure 3: Percentage of visits for ILI at sentinel hospitals in Mongolia, 2019-2023](Source: China National Influenza Center)
Republic of Korea

In week 15 of 2023, the overall weekly ILI rate was 18.5% per 1,000 outpatient visits, which was higher than the 15.2% recorded in the previous week (Figure 4).

Sentinel influenza surveillance

Japan

In week 15 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).
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 15, the average consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel general outpatient clinics (GOPC) was 3.0 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was higher than the 1.4 recorded in the previous week (Figure 6). The average consultation rate for ILI among sentinel private medical practitioner (PMP) clinics was 48.5 ILI cases per 1,000 consultations, which was higher than the 31.0 recorded in the previous week (Figure 7).

![Figure 6: ILI consultation rates at sentinel general outpatient clinics, Hong Kong SAR 2020-2023](Source: Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection)

![Figure 7: ILI consultation rates at sentinel private doctors, Hong Kong SAR 2019-2023](Source: Hong Kong Centre for Health Protection)
China (South) - ILI Surveillance
During week 15 of 2023, the percentage of visits for ILI at national sentinel hospitals in Southern China was 7.1%, lower than the last week (8.9%) and higher than the same week of 2020-2022 (2.3%, 3.1%, and 3.0%) (Figure 8).

Singapore – Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) Surveillance
In week 15 of 2023, the average daily number of patients seeking treatment in the polyclinics for ARI is 3115 (over 5.5 working days) (Figure 9). The proportion of patients with influenza-like illness (ILI) among the polyclinic attendances for ARI is 0.4%. Of 1,399 samples tested for influenza in the past four weeks, the positivity rate in the community was 24.2%. 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%), 1 was positive for Influenza A(LVT) (0.2%), 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).

![Figure 11: Weekly number of ILI cases at sentinel sites (2019 to 2023)](Source: Lao National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology)

Cambodia
In week 15 of 2023, the Ministry of Health received data from all seven sentinel sites in Cambodia. The number of ILI cases in Cambodia slightly decreased in week 15 (97 cases) of 2023 compared to week 14 (128 cases). There was no positive case this week (Figure 12).

![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 16 April 2023, there have been 25,870 notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza were reported to the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System in Australia. There were 6,786 laboratory-confirmed influenza notifications with a diagnosis date this fortnight (3 April 2023 to 16 April 2023), compared to 5,710 notifications in the previous fortnight. From March 2023 the number of notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza has gradually increased. The number of notifications year-to-date is higher than the 5-year average, but lower than observed in the same period in 2019 (Figure 13).

New Zealand – Influenza like Illness

In the week ending of 16 April 2023, the influenza like illness (ILI) general practitioner consultation(Figure 14) rates remain at a similar level to the historical rate for this time of year. As of 16 April, national influenza-like illness (ILI) activity remains low. However, in Counties Manukau and MidCentral ILI activity has been increasing and is at higher than expected level for this year.

Pacific Island Countries and Areas (PICs) – ILI Surveillance

In week 15 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: Federated States of Micronesia, Niue, Kiribati, and Samoa (Figure 15).
Influenza Situation Update

26 April 2023
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](#)