

South Eastern Sydney LHD Influenza Update – Year 2020

Summary

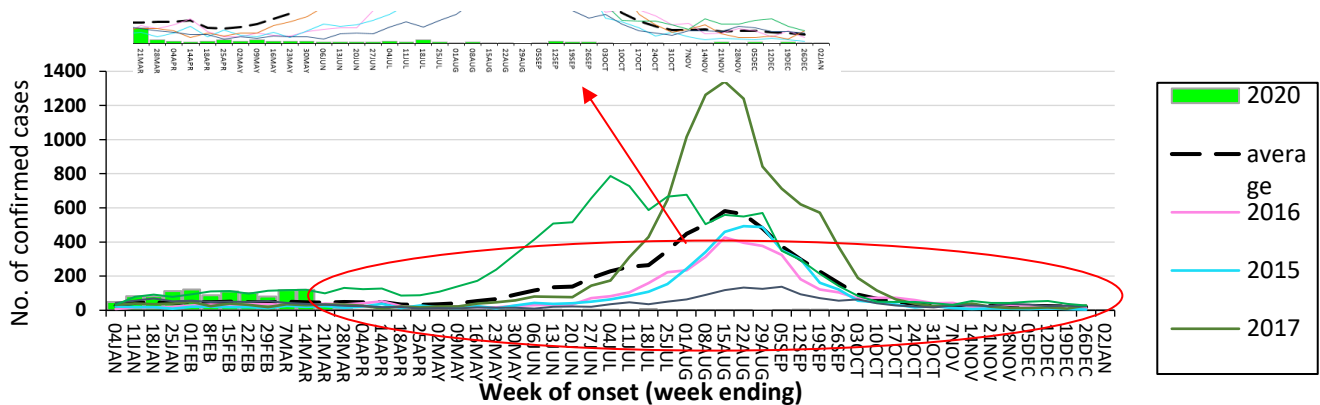
- **Laboratory notifications:** were overall very low, approximately one sixth of the average for the previous 5 years, despite high levels of testing.
- **Outbreaks:** one influenza outbreak and eighteen influenza-like illness outbreaks in residential aged care facilities were reported in 2020.
- **Emergency Departments:** in 2020 all categories of acute respiratory presentation were below average except presentations for testing in SESHD hospital COVID clinics (counted in ED presentations until June 2020).

1. South Eastern Sydney LHD (SESLHD)

1.1 Laboratory notifications of influenza

- At total of 1208 influenza notifications for SESLHD residents were received in 2020. More than 90% of these notifications were received before Australia closed its borders to all non-citizens and non-residents on 20 March 2020.

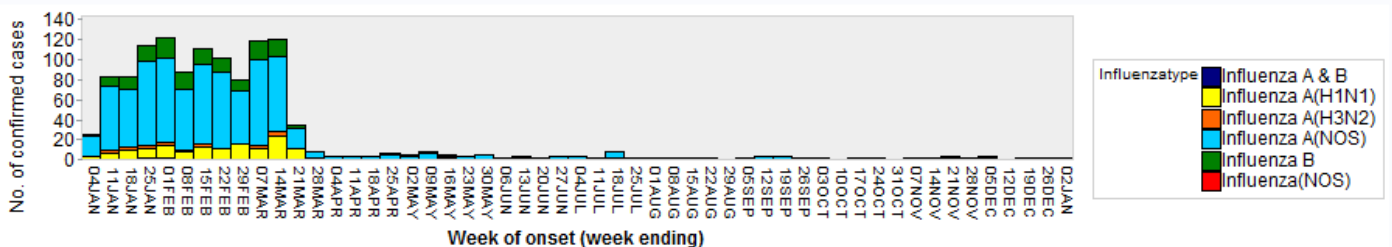
Confirmed influenza cases in SESLHD, 2020 compared to previous 5 years



Influenza A strains were predominant, representing 84.8% of all influenza notifications.

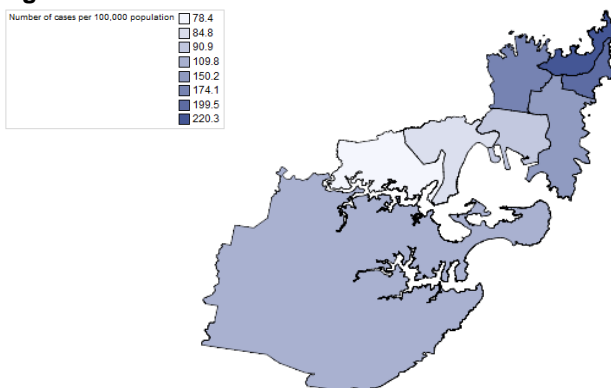
Influenza A Total	Influenza A			Influenza A & B	Influenza B	Influenza not typed	Total
	Not Subtyped	A(H3N2)	A(H1N1)				
1025 (84.8%)	859	21	145	7 (0.6%)	175 (14.5%)	1	1208

- Confirmed influenza cases in SESLHD by type, by week, 2020

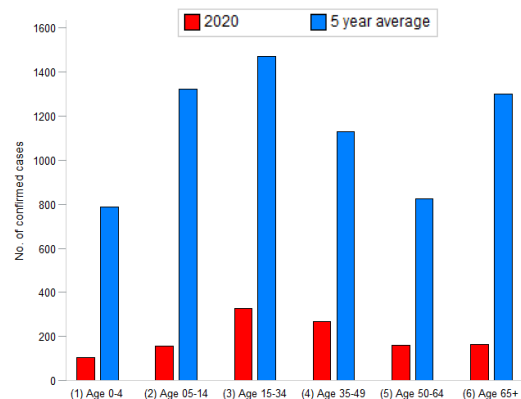


- The number of cases were well below the 5 year average in all age groups. People aged 15 to 34 were the most affected representing 27.5% of the notifications.
- The highest rate of confirmed cases was recorded in Woollahra LGA with 220.3 confirmed cases per 100,000.

Rate of confirmed cases (per 100,000) by local government area



Number of confirmed cases by age group



1.2 Aged Care Facility outbreaks reported to Public Health

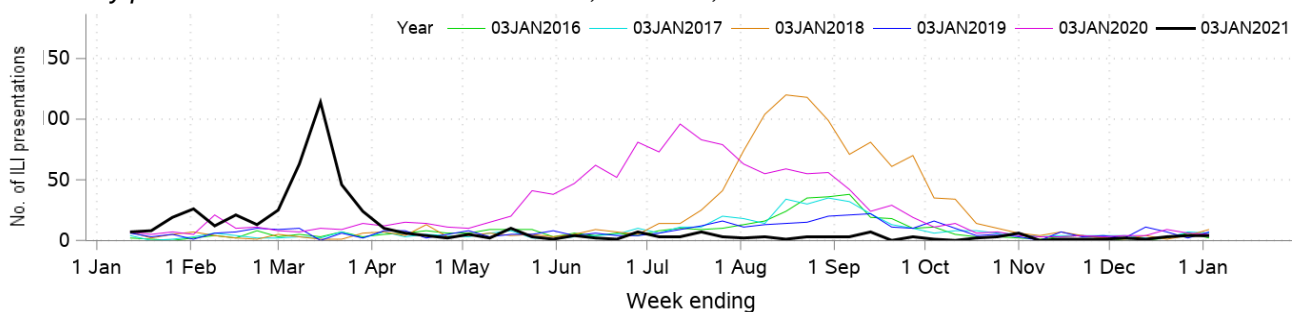
Outbreak type	2020	2019	2018
Influenza	1	45	7
Influenza like illness	18	12	15

1.3 Presentations to Emergency Departments located within SESLHD – PHREDSS

- For the period 30 December 2019 to 3 January 2021

Diagnosis / Category	Compared to usual yearly range	Comment
Influenza-like illness (ILI) presentations	Below	0.7x lower than average
Pneumonia presentations	Below	0.7 x lower than average
Pneumonia and ILI admissions	Below	0.6x lower than average
Pneumonia and ILI critical care admissions	Below	0.6x lower than average
Bronchiolitis presentations	Below	0.5x lower than average
Respiratory, fever and unspecified infection presentations	Above	1.4x higher than average

Weekly presentations with influenza-like illness, SESLHD, 2016-2020



2. NSW influenza surveillance

- There has been very limited influenza transmission in NSW since March 2020. The total number of influenza notifications in 2020 was 93% lower than in 2019 while the number of influenza tests performed has been above the average of the previous 5 years.
- Pneumonia presentations to NSW emergency departments have been below the average since April 2020.
- No influenza deaths have been reported in NSW since April 2020. The number of influenza-related deaths identified via coroner’s reports and death registrations from 01 January to 27 December 2020 is <4% of the number for the same period in 2019 (12 deaths in 2020 compared with 334 in 2019). Two-thirds were in people aged 65 years and over.

[Latest NSW influenza data](#)

3. National influenza surveillance data

- Following a high start to the 2020 inter-seasonal period, influenza and influenza-like illness (ILI) activity levels were lower than average across all systems. At the national level, notifications of laboratory confirmed influenza substantially decreased in mid-March and remained low to the end of the 2020 season.
- Children younger than 10 years of age had the highest influenza notification rate, while the notification rate among those aged 65 years or older was lower compared to other age groups
- The majority of nationally reported laboratory-confirmed influenza cases were influenza A (87.1%)
- The rate of influenza associated deaths is the lowest reported in the last 5 years and is a 50% decrease from the 5 year mean.

[Australian Influenza Surveillance Report](#)

4. Worldwide influenza surveillance (based on data up to 20 December 2020)

- Globally, despite continued or even increased testing for influenza in some countries, influenza activity was reported at lower levels than expected

[Latest WHO influenza update](#)

5. Novel avian and swine influenza virus surveillance (26 November 2019 to 9 December 2020)

The overall public health risk from currently known influenza viruses at the human-animal interface has not changed, and the likelihood of sustained human-to-human transmission of these viruses remains low.

Virus	Avian A (H9N2)	Swine A (H1N1)v	Swine A (H1N2)v	Avian A(H5N6)	Avian A(H5N1)
Total	7	3	2	1	1
Countries	China(6), Senegal (1)	China(1), Germany (1), Netherlands (1)	Brazil (1), Canada(1)	China(1)	Laos

[Latest WHO information](#)