

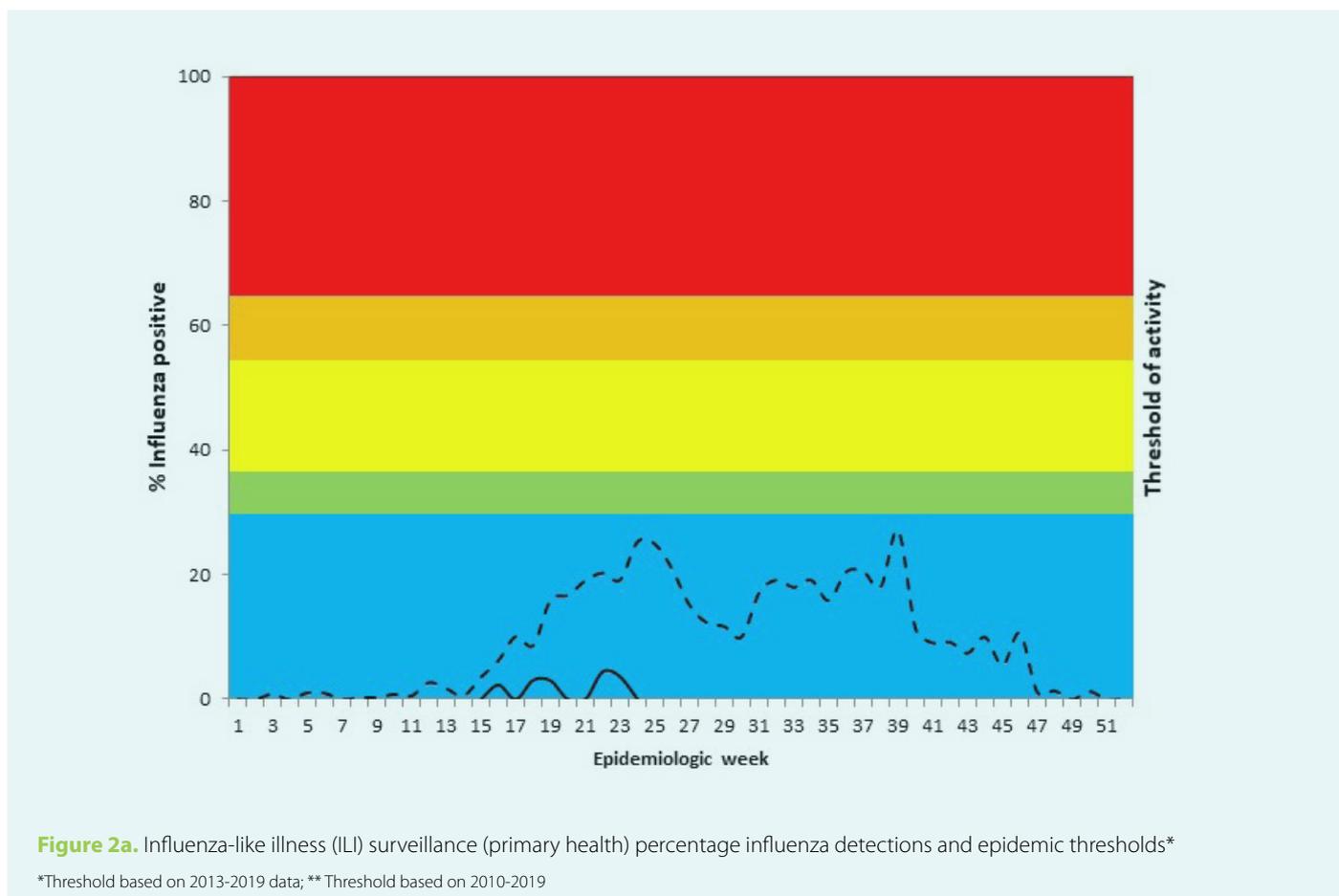
SEASONAL DISEASES

Influenza, 2021

A further 29 detections of influenza B have been made since May, bringing the total to 39 influenza B detections. Where the lineage was able to be determined, all were identified as influenza B/Victoria. In early March, one detection of influenza A H3N2 was made from the specimen of a patient in the Western Cape Province. All the detections were made from patients in one of the three active surveillance programmes who presented with pneumonia (17), influenza-like illness (14), or had other respiratory signs and symptoms (9). One of these patients, a 53-year-old female who presented with a two-day history of a cough and nasal congestion, also tested positive for SARS-CoV-2. Patients were from the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, North West and Western Cape provinces. Although the influenza detections in the sentinel sites in the past few weeks have been increasing, the detections have remained below

the 10-year mean detection rate for all three surveillance programmes (Figure 2 a-c).

With influenza circulation coinciding with an increase in COVID-19 infections, individuals at risk for severe influenza illness or complications are encouraged to vaccinate for influenza. The National Department of Health is prioritising the high-risk groups, which include individuals with underlying conditions (e.g. diabetes, cardiac and chronic lung conditions), obesity and pregnant women. Additional information on influenza and influenza vaccination can be accessed at: https://www.nicd.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Influenza-guidelines_-April-2021-final.pdf



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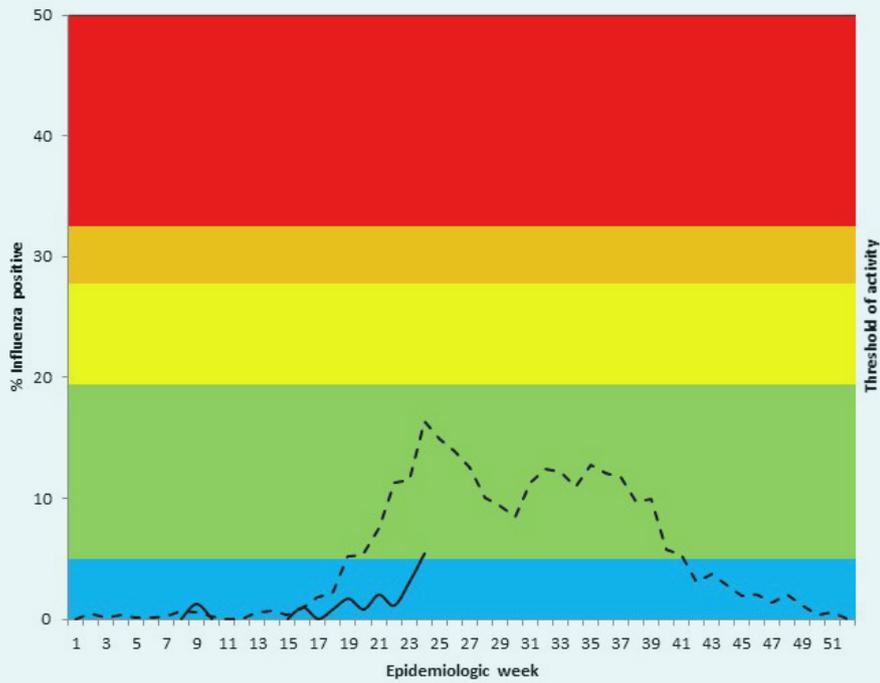


Figure 2b. Pneumonia surveillance percentage influenza detections and epidemic thresholds**

*Threshold based on 2013-2019 data; ** Threshold based on 2010-2019

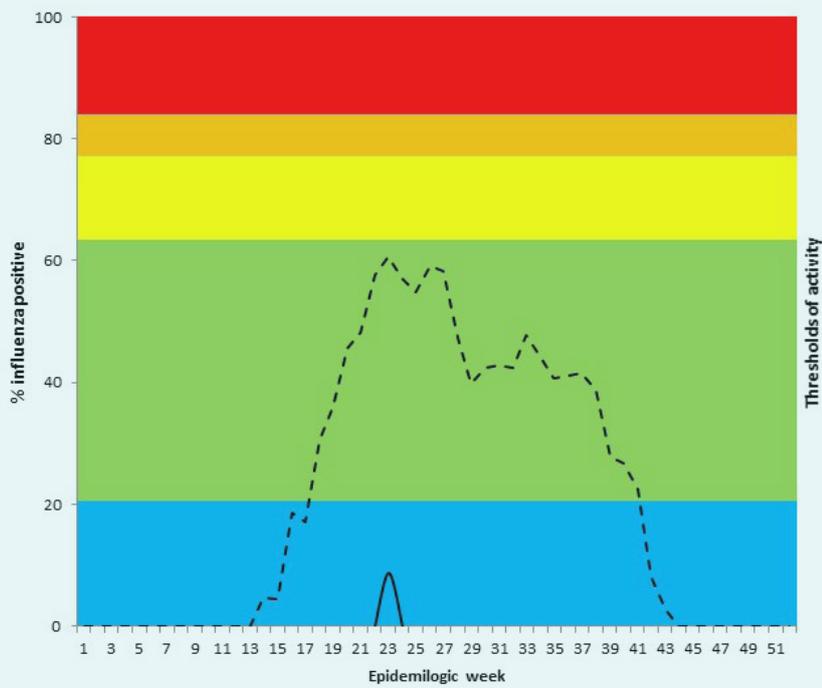


Figure 2c. ILI surveillance (Viral Watch) percentage influenza detections and epidemic thresholds**

*Threshold based on 2013-2019 data; ** Threshold based on 2010-2019