

Influenza season update

Between 3 January 2022 and 18 September 2022 (week 37), 295 cases of influenza have been detected from pneumonia surveillance (public hospitals) sentinel sites. Of which 144 (49%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 74 (25%) influenza A(H3N2), 8 (3%) influenza A (subtype inconclusive), 5 (2%) influenza A (pending results), 36 (12%) influenza B (Victoria), 8 (3%) influenza B (lineage inconclusive and 20 (7%) influenza B (pending results) (Figure 7).

The 2022 influenza season began in week 17 (week starting 25 April 2022) when the detection rate among patients in pneumonia surveillance breached the epidemic threshold as determined by the Moving Epidemic Method (MEM) and in week 37, the impact was low (Figure 8). The 2022 seasonal wave so far has been of low impact, with a seasonal peak in week 25 (week starting 20 June 2022), however, the detection

rate has shown an increase in recent weeks. The majority of cases were children under 5 years old (128/295, 43%) (Figure 9). Moreover, most cases were enrolled from Gauteng Province (70/295, 24%) and followed by Western Cape Province sentinel sites (68/295, 23%) (Figure 10).

In the majority of otherwise healthy young persons, influenza is an uncomplicated infection, however in rare circumstances healthy individuals may present with severe influenza illness or complications. Complications of influenza, for example, pneumonia, are more common in pregnancy, in persons over the age of 65, in those with other medical conditions such as heart and lung disease and diabetes, as well as amongst immunocompromised individuals. Clinicians are reminded to encourage patients at increased risk of developing influenza illness and complications to vaccinate against influenza.

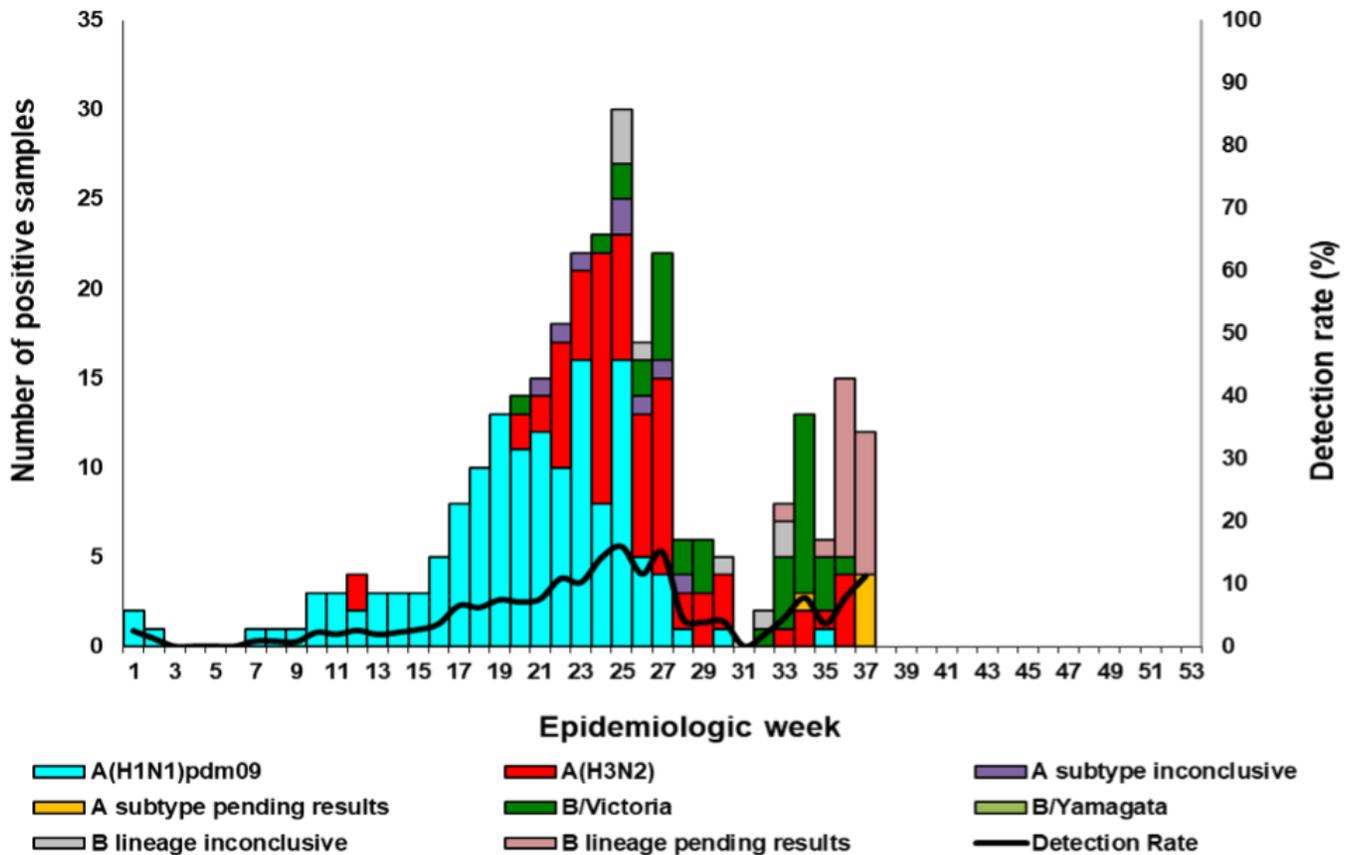


Figure 7. Number of influenza-positive cases by influenza subtype and lineage and detection rate by week, pneumonia surveillance public hospitals, 03/01/2022 – 18/09/2022

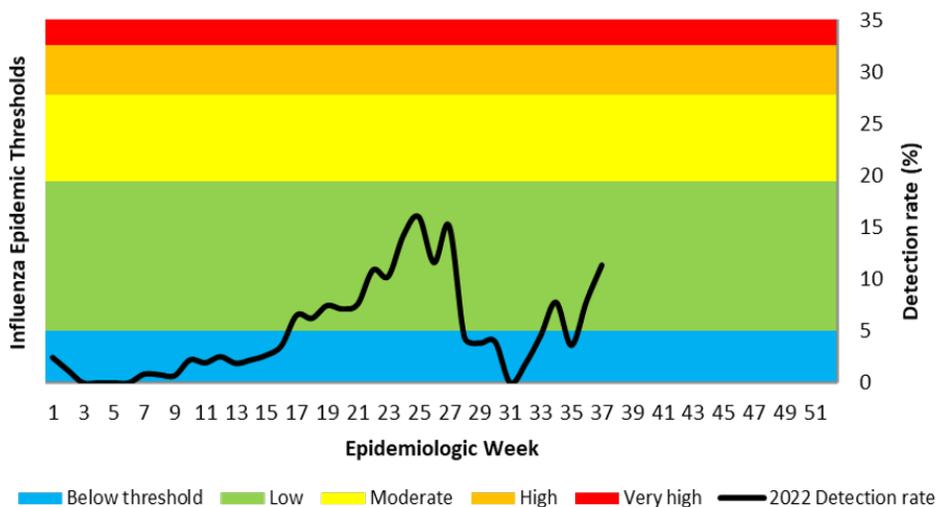


Figure 8. Influenza percentage detections and epidemic thresholds among cases of all ages, pneumonia surveillance public hospitals, 03/01/2022 – 18/09/2022

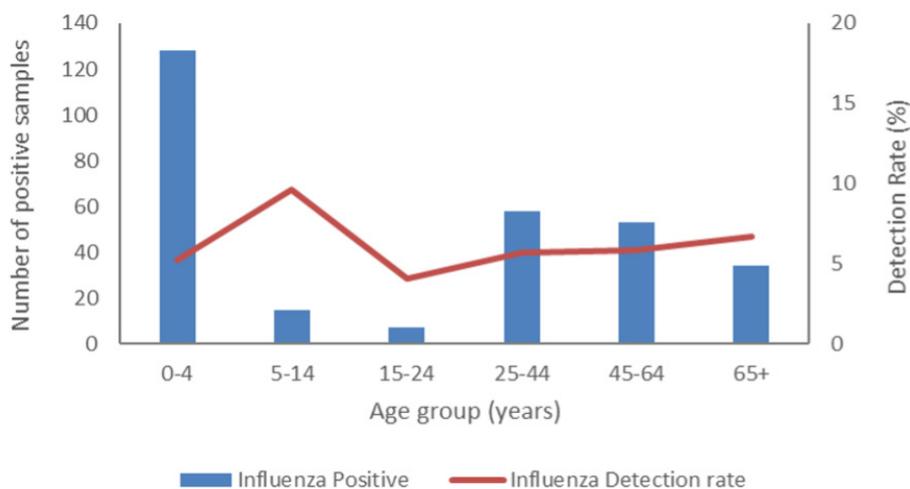


Figure 9. Number of patients testing positive for influenza by age group and detection rate, pneumonia surveillance public hospitals, 03/01/2022 – 18/09/2022

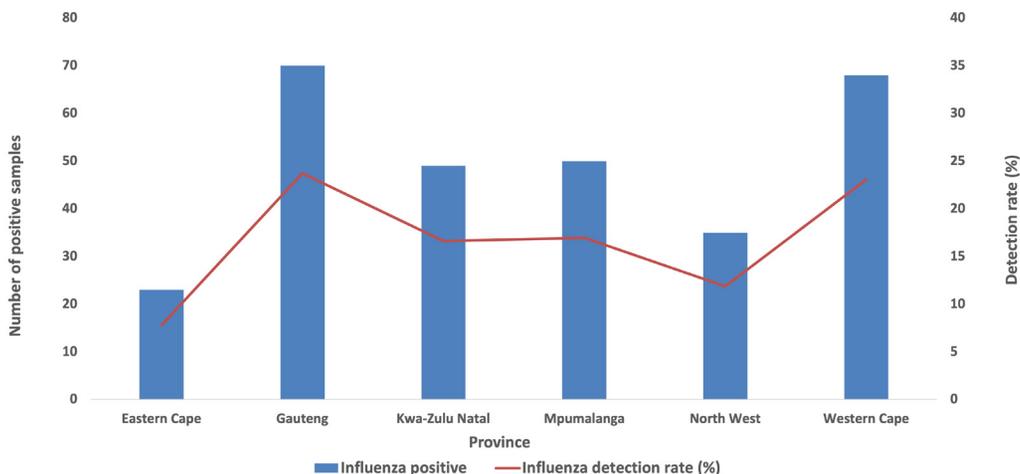


Figure 10. Number of patients (all ages) testing positive for influenza by province and detection rate by week, pneumonia surveillance public hospitals, 03/01/2022 – 18/09/2022

Source: Centre for Respiratory Diseases and Meningitis, NICD-NHLS, thulisam@nicd.ac.za