

Thomas Jefferson Health District 2009 H1N1 Influenza Update - 12/1/09

Epidemiology:

Thomas Jefferson Health District

- The 2009 H1N1 influenza virus is still circulating and causing illness; however, the number of persons becoming ill has decreased compared to late October – early November.
- Absences in schools in TJHD averaged 6% this past week compared to 4% for the Commonwealth. The absentee average has decreased steadily in TJHD since the end of October. Eighteen influenza-like illness (ILI) outbreaks in schools in TJHD have been reported since August 2009, 14 of which were confirmed to be caused by 2009 H1N1 influenza.
- Since the start of the pandemic, there have been four deaths among adults confirmed to be infected with 2009 H1N1 influenza who live in TJHD. Additionally, there has been one pediatric flu-related death; however, 2009 H1N1 influenza was not confirmed in that case.
- While influenza is unpredictable, high levels of flu activity may continue for several weeks even though the number of persons infected each week is decreasing at this time. It is also possible that other waves of influenza activity may occur – caused by either 2009 H1N1 viruses or regular seasonal flu viruses.

Virginia

- Flu activity in Virginia remains widespread.
- Visits to emergency departments and urgent care centers for influenza-like-illness (ILI) remain over baseline, but declined this week compared to last week. This is the third consecutive week of decreases after ten consecutive weeks of increases. Children and young adults up to age 24 years old continue to be the age groups most affected.
- There have been 30 deaths in Virginia associated with laboratory-confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza.

United States

- Flu activity in the U.S. decreased this week; however, 32 states still report widespread flu activity.
- Nationally, visits to doctors for influenza-like-illness (ILI) remain over baseline, but declined sharply this week compared to last week. Although ILI has declined, visits to doctors for influenza-like illness remain high.
- Flu-related hospitalizations and deaths are still high nation-wide compared to what is expected for this time of year.

Epidemiology - United States (continued)

- Hospitalization rates continue to be highest in younger populations with the highest hospitalization rate reported in children 0-4 years old. Thirty-five flu-related pediatric deaths were reported this week. Since April 2009, CDC has received reports of 234 laboratory confirmed pediatric flu-related deaths.
- Almost all of the influenza viruses identified so far continue to be the 2009 H1N1 influenza A strain; the virus remains susceptible to the antiviral drugs oseltamivir and zanamivir with rare exception.

Vaccination:

- 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine supplies are increasing daily but are still limited.
- In Virginia, vaccination efforts are still focused on CDC target groups:
 - Children and young adults up to age 24
 - Pregnant women
 - Persons with underlying medical conditions
 - Healthcare workers and emergency services personnel
 - Persons who live with/care for infants younger than 6 months old
- The Virginia Department of Health hopes to have sufficient supplies to make 2009 H1N1 flu vaccine available to the general public by mid-December.
- As of November 25, over 51.8 million doses of 2009 H1N1 vaccine were shipped to vaccine providers in the U.S. and 1,445,100 doses were shipped to vaccine providers in Virginia.
- As of November 30, TJHD's local health departments have administered 18,067 doses of 2009 H1N1 vaccine, 12,585 of which were administered at school based clinics.
- TJHD is alerted each day about how much vaccine will be shipped to its local health departments and schedules clinics for the following days based on that allotment.