



Ontario Influenza Bulletin | 2012-2013

SURVEILLANCE WEEKS 38 and 39 (September 16, 2012 – September 29, 2012)

This issue of the Ontario Influenza Bulletin provides information on the surveillance period from September 16, 2012 to September 29, 2012 (weeks 38 and 39). Unless otherwise specified, **the data presented are for weeks 38 and 39**; data extraction and analysis for this issue of the Bulletin occurred on Wednesday October 3, 2012. In order to enable our readers to better assess influenza activity in Ontario, we have combined various sources of information in the following table. **Please note that Public Health Ontario is now publishing abbreviated versions of the Ontario Influenza Bulletin on alternating weeks until November 2012. [Influenza Activity Maps](#) are available on the weeks that the Bulletin is not published.**

Assessment of Influenza and Other Respiratory Virus Activity in Ontario

Measure of Activity	Assessment of measure compared to previous assessment period (Lower, Similar, Higher)	Reasoning behind assessment
Laboratory Confirmed Influenza Cases*	Higher	Three new influenza cases were reported by health units in weeks 38 and 39, which is higher than the number reported in weeks 36 and 37 (0). The percent positivity for influenza in Ontario was slightly higher in weeks 38 and 39 at 0.59% compared to 0.52% for weeks 36 and 37 (Table 1).**
Respiratory virus activity	Enterovirus/rhinovirus activity is higher	Among all circulating respiratory viruses (Table 1), enterovirus/rhinovirus had the highest percent positivity in weeks 38 and 39 at 18.39%, which is higher than weeks 36 and 37 at 17.80%.
Institutional Respiratory Infection Outbreaks	Higher	Twenty-two (22) new institutional respiratory infection outbreaks were reported in weeks 38 and 39. This is higher than the number of new institutional respiratory infection outbreaks reported in weeks 36 and 37 (13) (Figure 1).
Influenza Activity Levels Reported by Health Units	Higher	For week 39, one health unit in the Central East region reported 'sporadic' level influenza activity. Health units in all other regions reported no influenza activity or did not report (Figure 2).
Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) Consultation Rate reported by Sentinels	Higher	The provincial ILI consultation rate increased from 17.00/1,000 patient visits in week 38 to 19.95/1,000 patient visits in week 39. This rate is higher than the average consultation rate for week 39 based on previous years (Figure 3).
OVERALL ASSESSMENT FOR VIRUS ACTIVITY	Influenza activity in Ontario was higher compared to the previous weeks.	Overall, the indicators show that influenza activity during weeks 38 and 39 was higher compared to weeks 36 and 37.

*This is the number of cases by **reported** date from iPHIS and should be interpreted with caution as there is a lag between the onset of illness and reporting to public health.

**Positivity reflects positive specimens reported to Public Health Ontario by the Centre for Immunization and Respiratory Infectious Diseases (CIRID).

Highlights of current respiratory virus activity for weeks 38 and 39 compared to weeks 36 and 37

- Enterovirus/rhinovirus had the highest percent positivity for weeks 38 and 39 at 18.39% (Table 1). Parainfluenza virus had the second highest percent positivity among specimens submitted for testing in weeks 38 and 39. Percent positivity for parainfluenza virus decreased from 2.94% for weeks 36 and 37 to 2.30% for weeks 38 and 39.
- In weeks 38 and 39, a total of 22 new institutional respiratory infection outbreaks were reported, including one combined outbreak, four outbreaks of enterovirus/rhinovirus and 17 outbreaks with no organism reported (Figure 1). For the 2012-2013 season to date, 53 institutional respiratory infection outbreaks have been reported.

Table 1. Number of respiratory specimens tested by all methods for influenza and other respiratory viruses and percent positivity, Ontario: Weeks 38 and 39

Detected viruses	Number and percent positive specimens			Total number of specimens tested		
	Week 38 n (%)	Week 39 n (%)	Cumulative n (%)	Week 38 n	Week 39 n	Cumulative n
Influenza A (all)	2 (0.59)	2 (0.4)	11 (0.58)	341	506	1881
Influenza B	0 (0)	1 (0.2)	1 (0.05)	341	506	1881
Parainfluenza virus	9 (3.01)	8 (1.82)	48 (2.92)	299	439	1646
Adenovirus	1 (0.33)	1 (0.23)	7 (0.43)	299	439	1646
Respiratory syncytial virus	0 (0)	3 (0.68)	4 (0.24)	316	444	1682
Enterovirus/rhinovirus	47 (15.72)	74 (20.61)	213 (15.98)	299	359	1333
Human metapneumovirus	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0.1)	147	290	1011
Coronavirus	3 (2.04)	4 (1.9)	9 (1.29)	147	210	698

Source: Centre for Immunization and Respiratory Infectious Diseases, Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). These data have been obtained from the Respiratory Virus Detection tables of Public Health Agency of Canada from 16 labs in Ontario and do not include data from late reports to PHAC for the current season: Weeks 38 & 39, 2012. Please note that the last version received from PHAC as of 12:00 PM on October 4, 2012 was used.

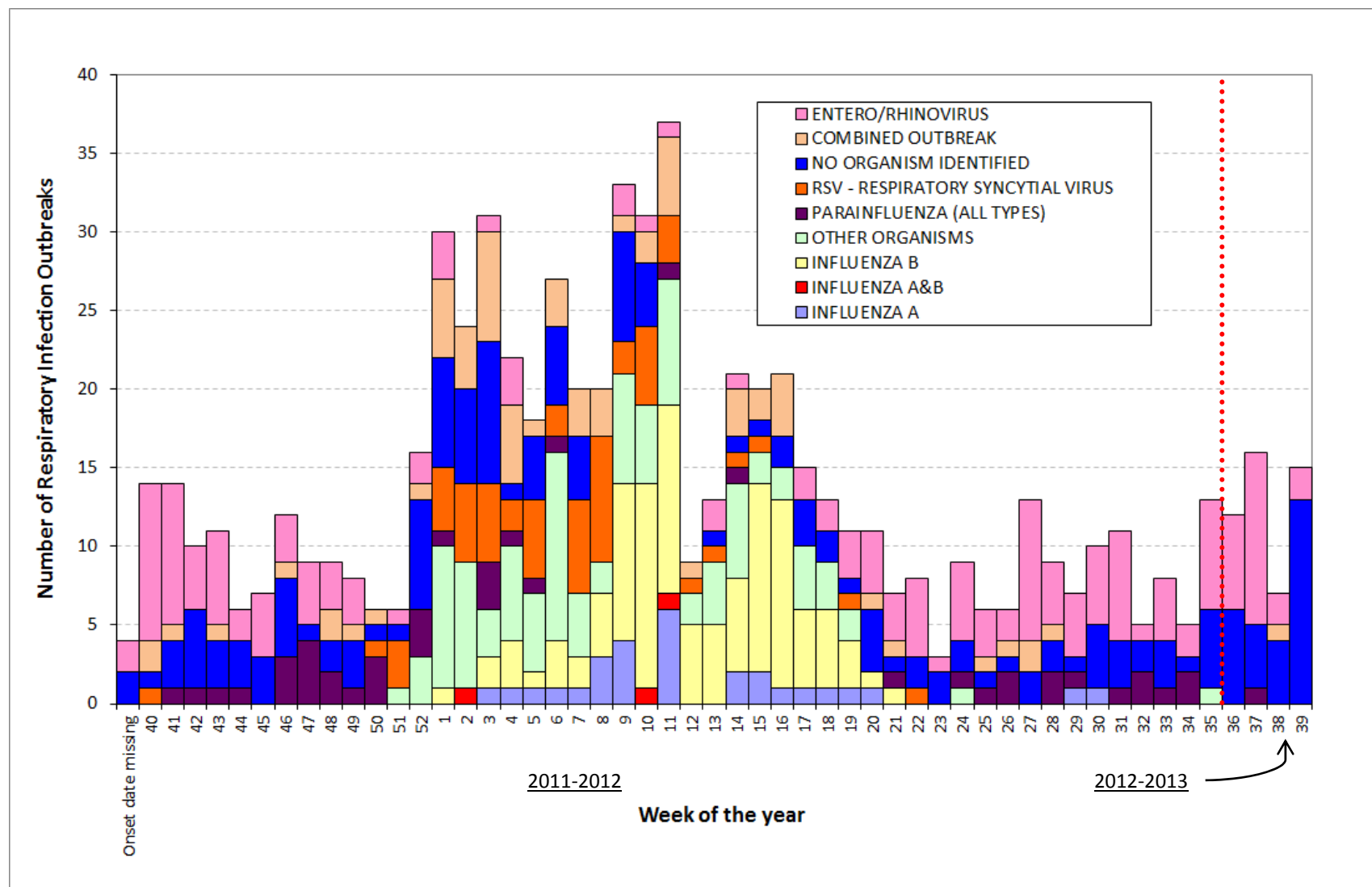
Note: Cumulative numbers include reports from week 35, as reporting by PHAC includes week 35 as part of the 2012-2013 season.

Note: Total numbers reported include late reports from previous weeks; therefore totals may not be equal to the sum of the weekly numbers.

Note: Cumulative numbers for the season to date are available through FluWatch: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/>

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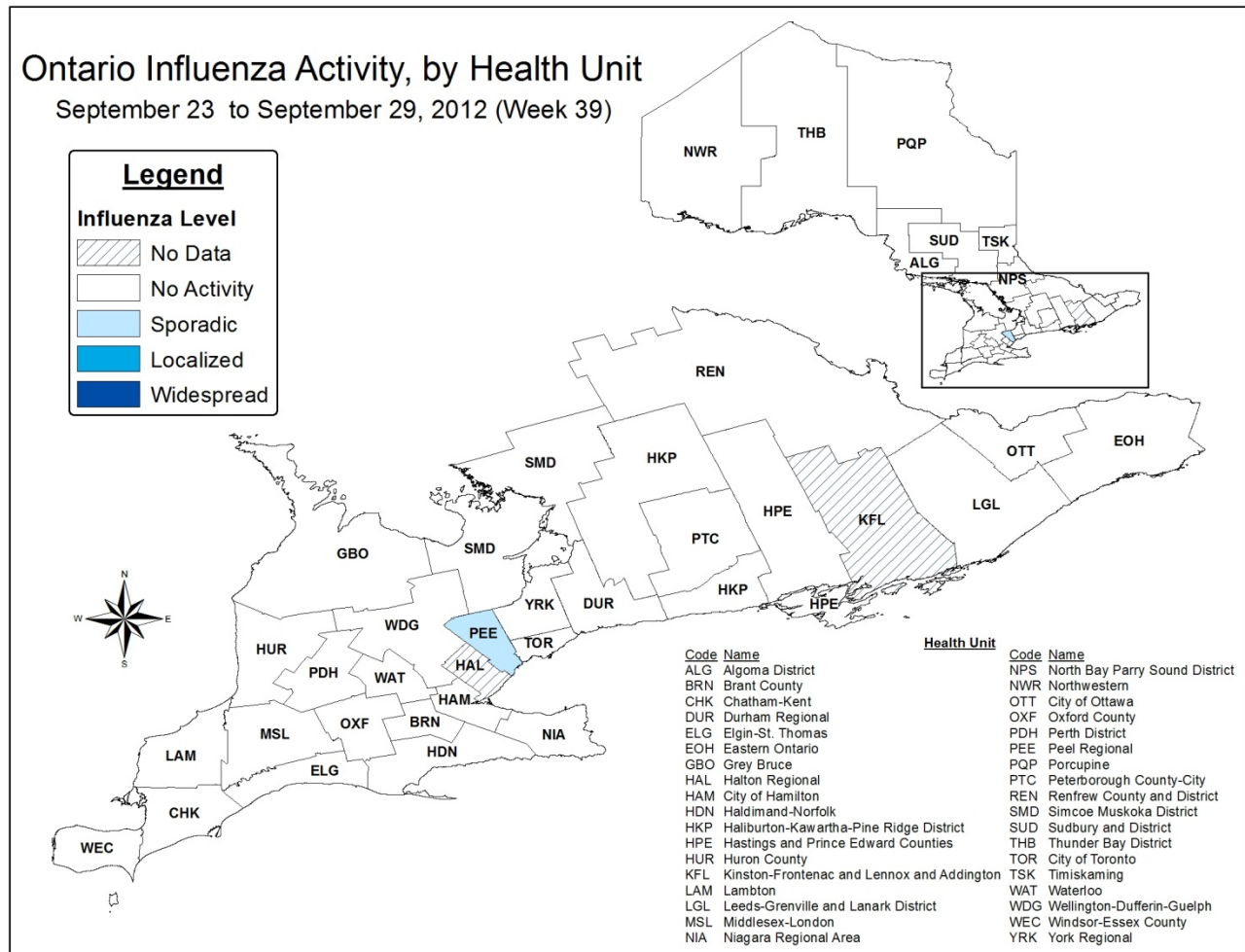
Figure 1: Institutional respiratory infection outbreaks in Ontario by onset of illness in the first case: Total outbreaks up to and including week 39 of the 2012-2013 season by causative organism



Source: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS) database, extracted by Public Health Ontario [2012/10/03]

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Figure 2: Influenza activity* levels in Ontario by health unit for week 39, 2012

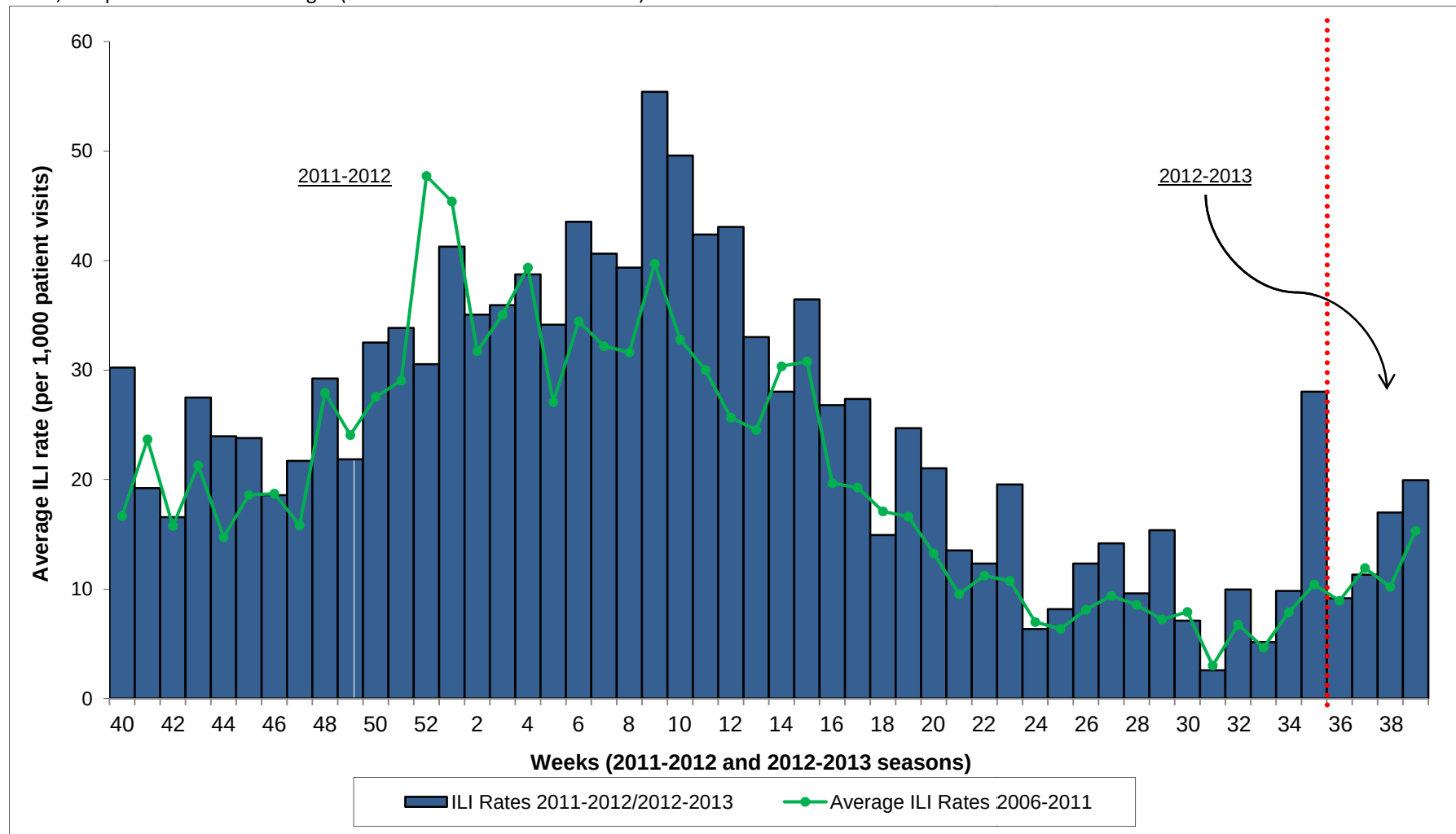


Source: Public Health Ontario [Provincial Influenza Activity Report (Appendix C) Database]

* Influenza activity levels are assigned by local public health units and reported to Public Health Ontario by the Tuesday following the end of the surveillance week at 4 pm. Activity levels are assigned based on laboratory confirmations, ILI reports from various sources, and laboratory confirmed institutional respiratory infection outbreaks. Please click here for [detailed definitions for the 2012-2013 season](#).

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Figure 3: Average ILI consultation rate (per 1,000 patient visits) reported by sentinels* in Ontario up to week 39 of the 2012-2013 surveillance season, by report week, compared to Ontario average[†] (2006-2007 to 2011-2012 seasons)



Source: Public Health Agency of Canada

* Sentinel information is reported to Public Health Agency of Canada; 51 sentinels reported in week 39.

[†] Ontario average ILI rates include data from the 2006-2007 to the 2011-2012 seasons, excluding ILI rates during the time period of the influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 pandemic in Ontario (April 2009 to January 2010) due to the incomparability of those rates to a regular influenza season.