

# Influenza and Other Respiratory Viruses Weekly Report

California Influenza Surveillance Program



**Highlights** (Week 43: October 20, 2019 – October 26, 2019)

## Statewide Activity



### Regions with Elevated Activity



- ▶ **Deaths:** 3\* since Sept. 29, 2019
- ▶ **Outbreaks:** 0 since Sept. 29, 2019
- ▶ **Laboratory:** 2.6% flu positive
- ▶ **Outpatient ILI:** Above expected levels
- ▶ **Hospitalizations:** Within expected levels

\*Influenza-coded deaths from death certificates  
*Click on images and links for more information*

## Key messages:

- While at low levels, influenza is circulating in California.
- Now is the time to get vaccinated.
- Protect yourself and your family.
- Anyone over the age of 6 months needs a flu shot.
- Stay heart healthy. Flu vaccination helps prevent heart attacks among people with existing heart disease.

**Note:** This report includes data from many sources of influenza surveillance and it should be viewed as a preliminary “snapshot” of influenza activity for each surveillance week. Because data are preliminary, the information may be updated in later reports as additional data are received. These data should not be considered population-based or representative of all California public health jurisdictions.

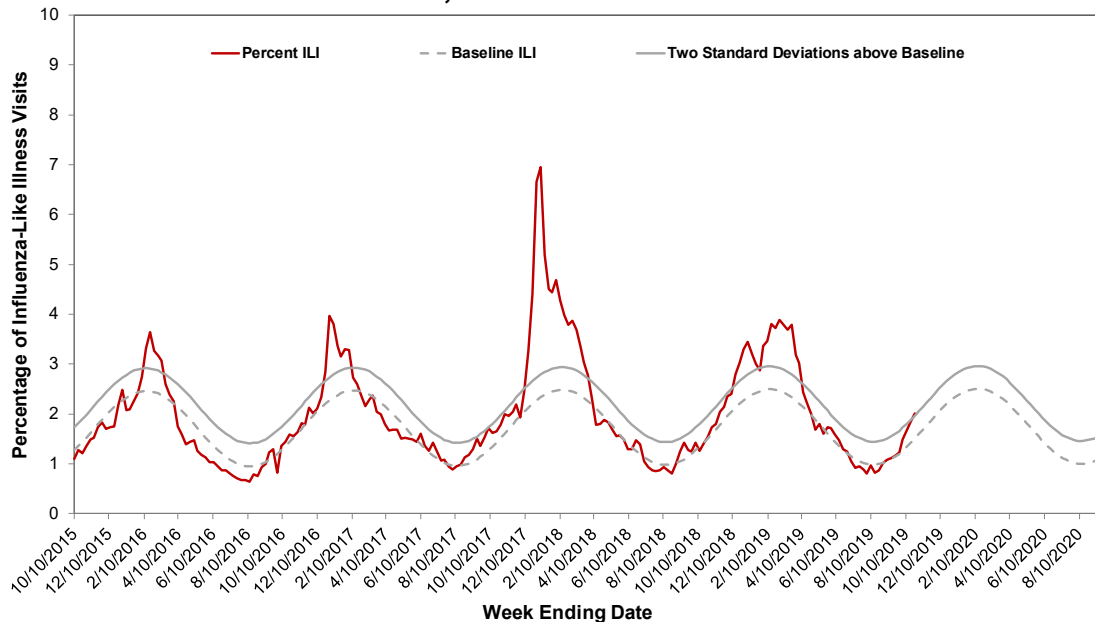
## A. Outpatient, Inpatient, and Death Data

### 1. Influenza Sentinel Providers

Sentinel providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) situated throughout California report on a weekly basis the number of patients seen with influenza-like illness (ILI) and the total number of patients seen for any reason. ILI is defined as any illness with fever ( $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$  or  $37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) AND cough and/or sore throat (in the absence of a known cause other than influenza).

A total of 87 enrolled sentinel providers have reported data for Week 43. Based on available data, the percentage of visits for ILI during Week 43 was 2.0% compared to Week 42 (1.8%) and is above expected levels for this time of year (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Percentage of Influenza-like Illness Visits Among Patients Seen by California Sentinel Providers, 2015–2020**



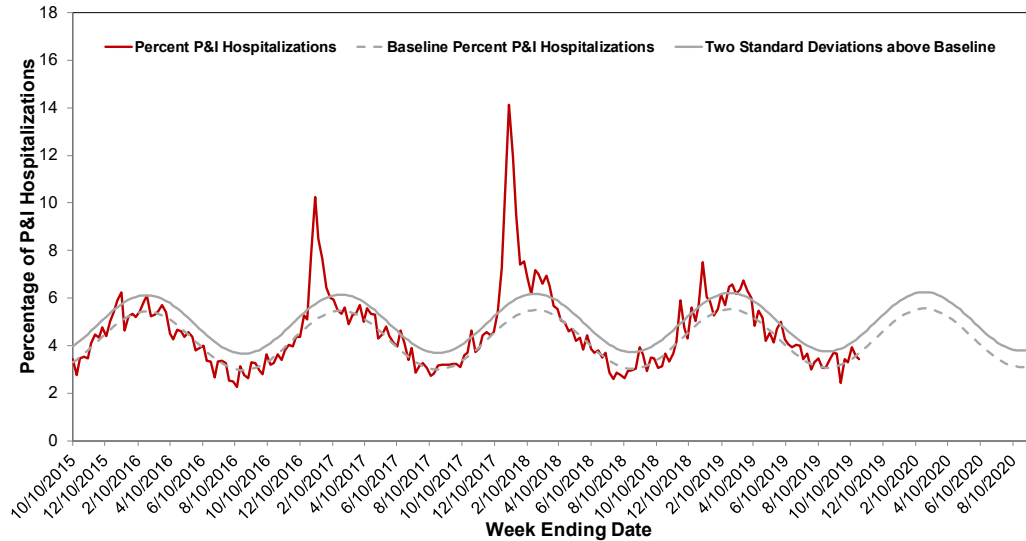
The seasonal baseline was calculated using a regression model applied to data from the previous five years. Two standard deviations above the seasonal baseline is the point at which the observed percentage of ILI is significantly higher than would be expected at that time of year.

### 2. Kaiser Permanente Hospitalization Data

Inpatients at Kaiser Permanente facilities with an admission diagnosis including the keywords “flu,” “influenza,” “pneumonia,” or variants of the keywords are defined as pneumonia and influenza (P&I)-related admissions. The number of P&I admissions is divided by the total number of hospital admissions occurring in the same time period to estimate the percentage of P&I admissions. Admissions for pregnancy, labor and delivery, birth, and outpatient procedures are excluded from the denominator.

The percentage of admissions for pneumonia and influenza (P&I) in Kaiser Permanente facilities in northern California during Week 43 was 3.4% compared to Week 42 (3.6%) and is within expected levels for this time of the year (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Percentage of P&I Admissions in Kaiser Permanente Northern California Hospitals, 2015–2020**

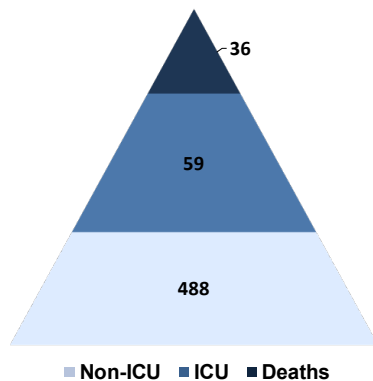


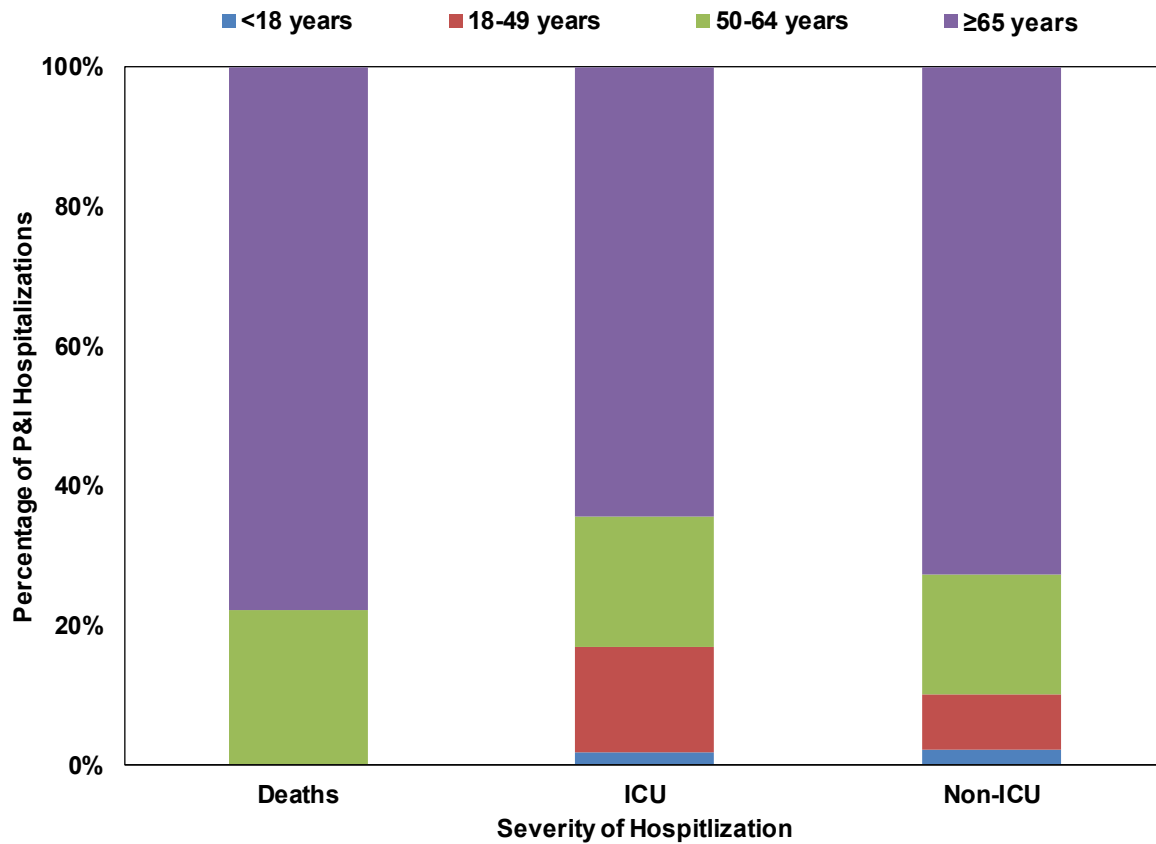
The seasonal baseline was calculated using a regression model applied to data from the previous five years. Two standard deviations above the seasonal baseline and is the point at which the observed percentage of pneumonia and influenza hospitalizations in Kaiser Permanente hospitals in Northern California is significantly higher than would be expected at that time of the year.

The majority of admissions for pneumonia and influenza did not result in intensive care unit (ICU) admission or death; however, 59 ICU admissions and 36 deaths have occurred among persons with P&I admission diagnoses (Figure 3a). The majority of P&I admissions occurred among persons  $\geq 65$  years of age across all severity categories, especially among deaths (Figure 3b). Please note that pneumonia and influenza admissions serve as a proxy for influenza activity, but do not necessarily represent influenza infections.

**Figure 3. Number (a) and age group distribution (b) of non-ICU, ICU, and Deaths associated with P&I Admissions in Kaiser Permanente Northern California Hospitals, 2019–2020 Season to Date**

(a)





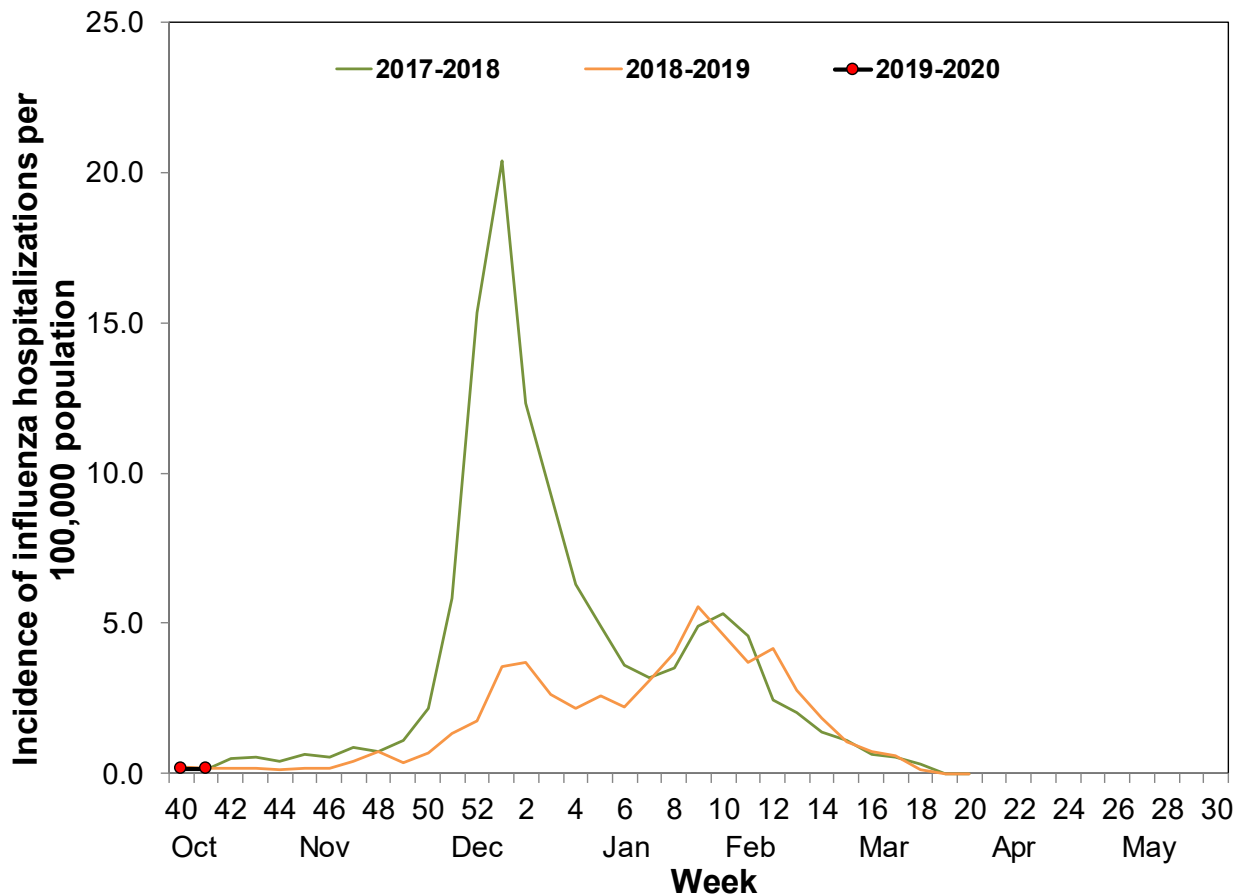
(b)

### 3. Influenza-Associated Hospitalizations, California Emerging Infections Program

The California Emerging Infections Program (CEIP), Influenza Surveillance Network (FluSurv-NET) conducts population-based surveillance for laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated hospitalizations among patients of all ages in Alameda, Contra Costa, and San Francisco counties.

The incidence of influenza-associated hospitalizations per 100,000 population was the same in week 41 (0.14) compared to Week 40 (0.14) (Figure 4). Data for the most recent two weeks are not presented because results are still being collected and are likely to change.

**Figure 4. Incidence of Influenza Hospitalizations in CEIP Counties, 2017–2020**

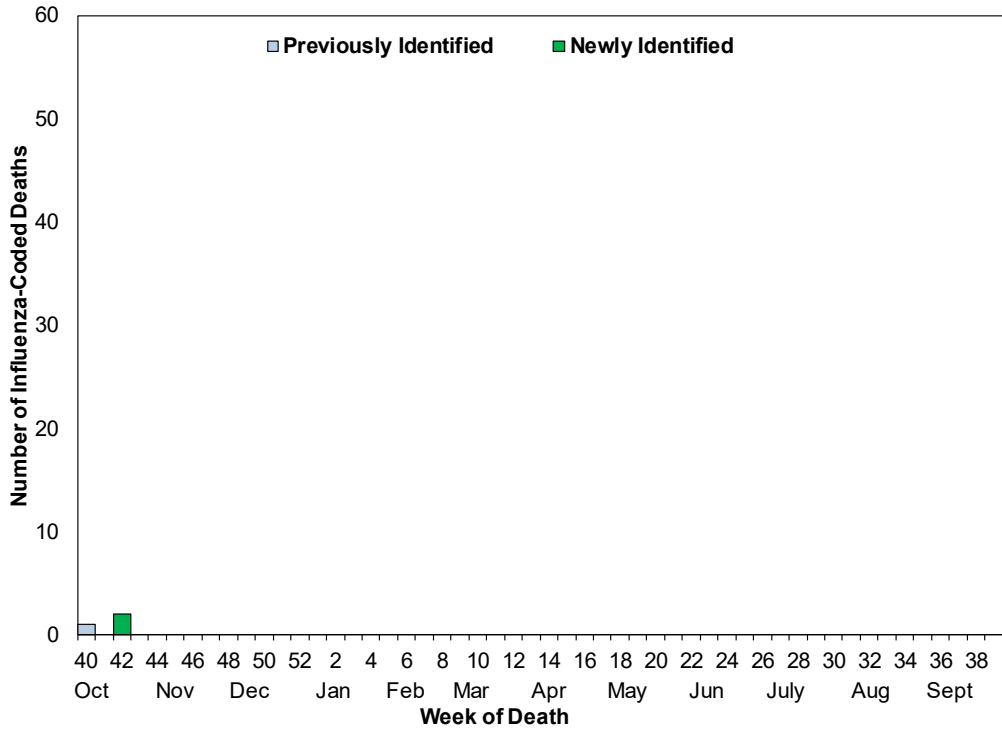


**4. Influenza Mortality Surveillance from Death Certificates**

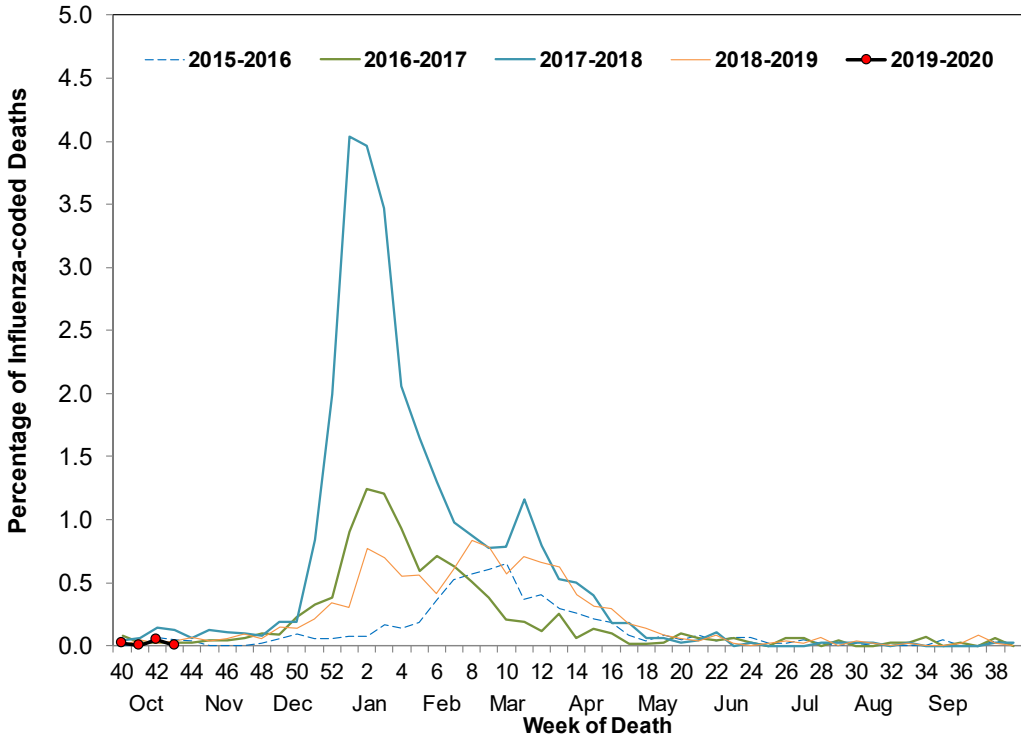
Deaths occurring in California among residents who had influenza noted in any cause of death field on the death certificate (text or coded) are defined as influenza-coded deaths. The percentage of influenza-coded deaths is calculated by dividing the number of influenza-coded deaths by the total number of all cause deaths during the same period. Influenza-coded deaths are not necessarily laboratory-confirmed and are an underestimate of all influenza-associated deaths.

During Week 43, two new influenza-coded deaths were identified. To date during the 2019–2020 influenza season, three influenza-coded deaths have been identified (Figure 5). The percentage of deaths coded as influenza during Week 43 was 0.0% compared to 0.1% during Week 42 (Figure 6).

**Figure 5. Number of Influenza-coded Deaths Identified from Death Certificates by Week of Death, 2019–2020 Season**



**Figure 6. Percentage of Influenza-coded Deaths Occurring in California among California Residents, 2015–2020**



## 5. Laboratory-Confirmed Severe Influenza-associated Pediatric Deaths

Influenza-associated deaths in children <18 years of age are nationally notifiable. The weekly influenza report includes confirmed deaths formally reported to CDPH through October 26, 2019 (Week 43).

No laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated fatalities in children <18 years of age were reported to CDPH during Week 43. To date, CDPH has received no reports of laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated deaths among persons <18 years of age during the 2019–2020 influenza season.

### **B. Laboratory Update – Influenza**

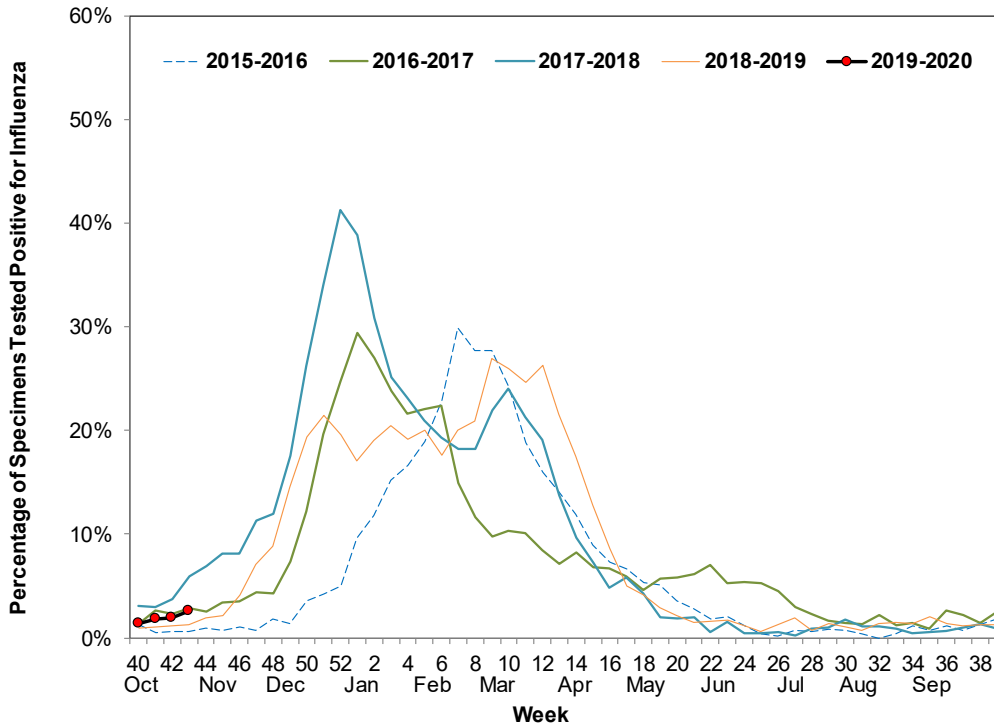
#### 1. Respiratory Laboratory Network (RLN) and Clinical Sentinel Laboratory Surveillance Results

Laboratory surveillance for influenza and other respiratory viruses involves the use of data from clinical sentinel laboratories (hospital, academic, and private laboratories) and public health laboratories in the Respiratory Laboratory Network located throughout California. These laboratories report the number of laboratory-confirmed influenza and other respiratory virus detections and isolations on a weekly basis.

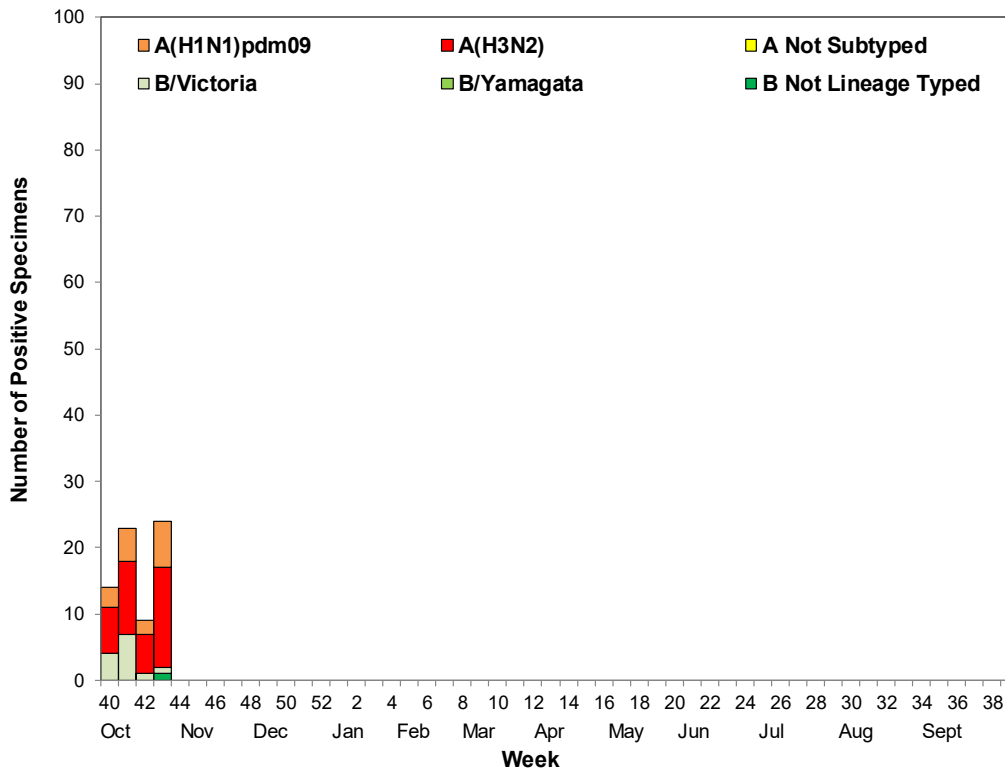
The overall percentage of influenza detections in clinical sentinel laboratories in Week 43 (2.6%) was higher than Week 42 (2.0%) (Figure 7). Additional details, including influenza typing and subtyping information from public health laboratories can be found in Figures 7 and 8 and Tables 1 and 2.

Neither the RLN nor CDPH-VRDL has identified any influenza viruses by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) that are suggestive of a novel influenza virus.

**Figure 7. Percentage of Influenza Detections at Clinical Sentinel Laboratories, 2015–2020**



**Figure 8. Number of Influenza Detections by Type and Subtype Detected in the Respiratory Laboratory Network, 2019–2020**





**Table 1. Respiratory Specimens Testing Positive for Influenza — Clinical Sentinel Laboratories, Current Week and Season to Date**

	<b>Current Week Number</b>	<b>Current Week Percent</b>	<b>Season to Date Number</b>	<b>Season to Date Percent</b>
<b>Number of Specimens Tested</b>	2,127		8,447	
<b>Influenza Positive</b>	56	2.6	166	2.0
<b>A</b>	24	42.9*	97	58.4*
<b>B</b>	32	57.1*	69	41.6*

\* Percent of specimens positive for influenza

**Table 2. Respiratory Specimens Testing Positive for Influenza by Influenza Type and Subtype — Respiratory Laboratory Network, Current Week and Season to Date**

	<b>Current Week Number</b>	<b>Current Week Percent</b>	<b>Season to Date Number</b>	<b>Season to Date Percent</b>
<b>Influenza Positive</b>	24		70	
<b>A</b>	22	91.7*	56	80.0*
<b>A (H1)pdm09</b>	7	31.8†	17	30.4†
<b>A (H3)</b>	15	68.2†	39	69.6†
<b>A, not subtyped</b>	0	0.0†	0	0.0†
<b>B</b>	2	8.3*	14	20.0*
<b>B Victoria</b>	1	50.0‡	13	92.9‡
<b>B Yamagata</b>	0	0.0‡	0	0.0‡
<b>B, not lineage typed</b>	1	50.0‡	1	7.1‡

\* Percent of specimens positive for influenza

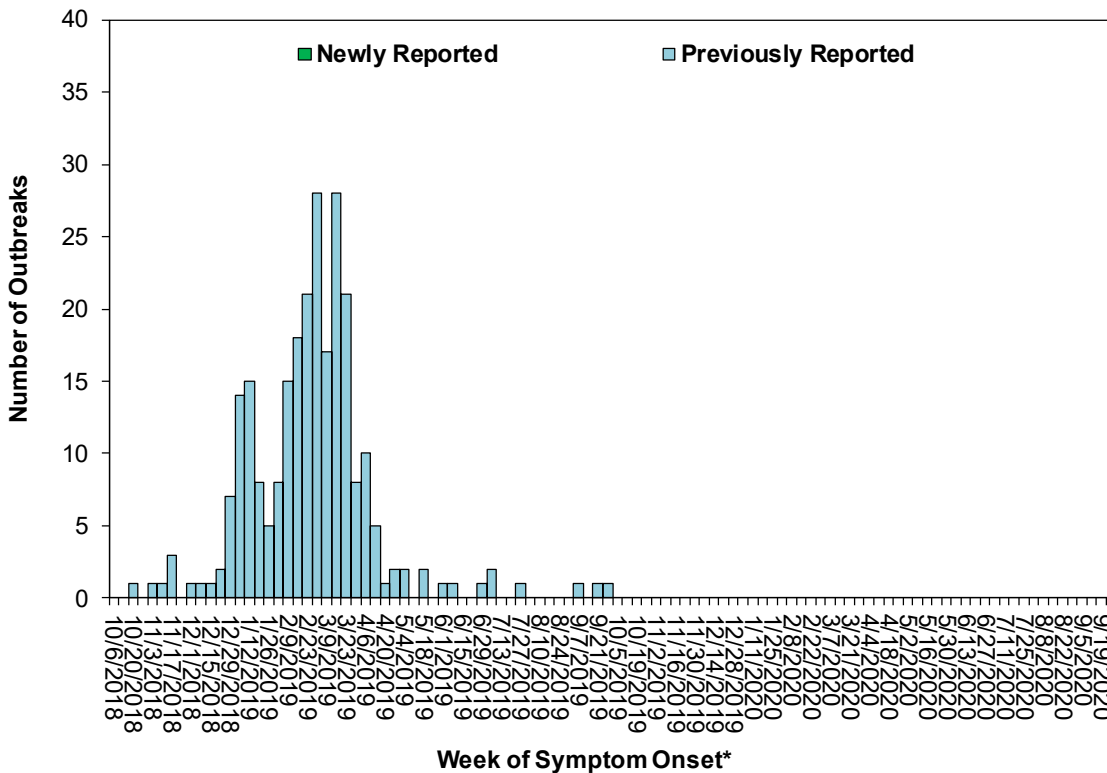
† Percent of influenza A positives

‡ Percent of influenza B positives

#### **D. Influenza-Associated Outbreaks**

No laboratory-confirmed influenza outbreaks were reported to CDPH during Week 43. To date, no laboratory-confirmed influenza outbreaks have been reported to CDPH for the 2019–2020 season.

**Figure 9. Number of Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza-Associated Outbreaks by Week of First Onset, 2018–2020**



\*Earliest date associated with the outbreak was used for outbreaks without reported date of first patient's symptom onset.

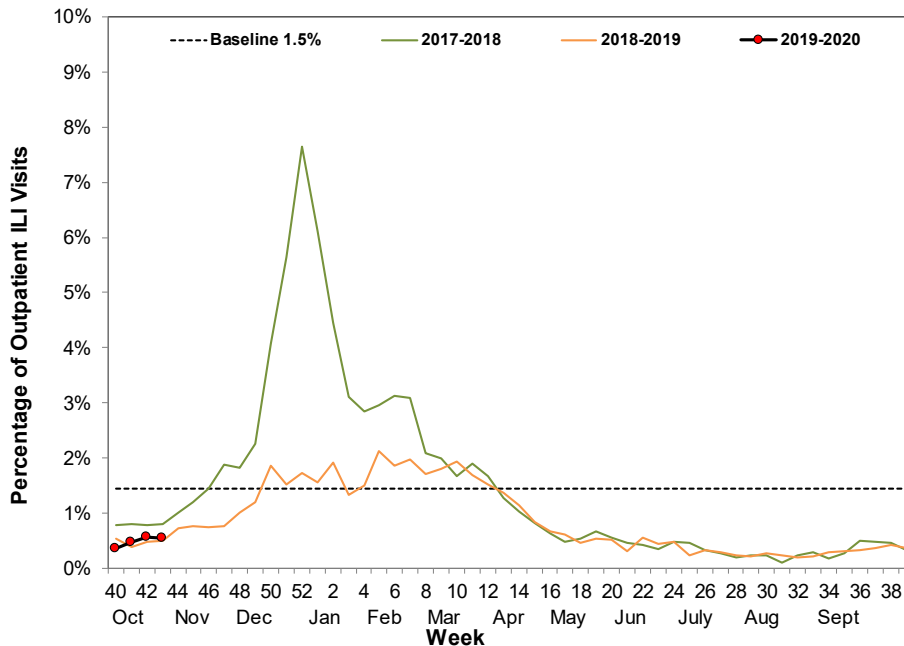
### E. California Border Region Influenza Surveillance Network Data

The border influenza surveillance network is comprised of outpatient provider sentinel sites whose geographical coverage extends approximately 100 kilometers (60 miles) north of the California-Baja California border and includes Imperial and San Diego Counties, as well as some parts of Riverside County.

#### 1. Syndromic Surveillance Update

A total of 13 border region sentinel providers reported data during Week 43. The total number of patients screened by all sentinel sites for ILI during Week 43 was 12,233. Outpatient ILI activity was 0.5% in Week 43. ILI activity for the California border region during Week 43 was lower when compared to activity for the same week during the 2017-2018 season and higher for the 2018–2019 season (Figure 10). All influenza syndromic data summarized for the border region represent a subset of CDC influenza sentinel providers in California.

**Figure 10. Percentage of Influenza-like Illness Visits among Patients Seen by Sentinel Providers – California Border Region, 2017–2020**



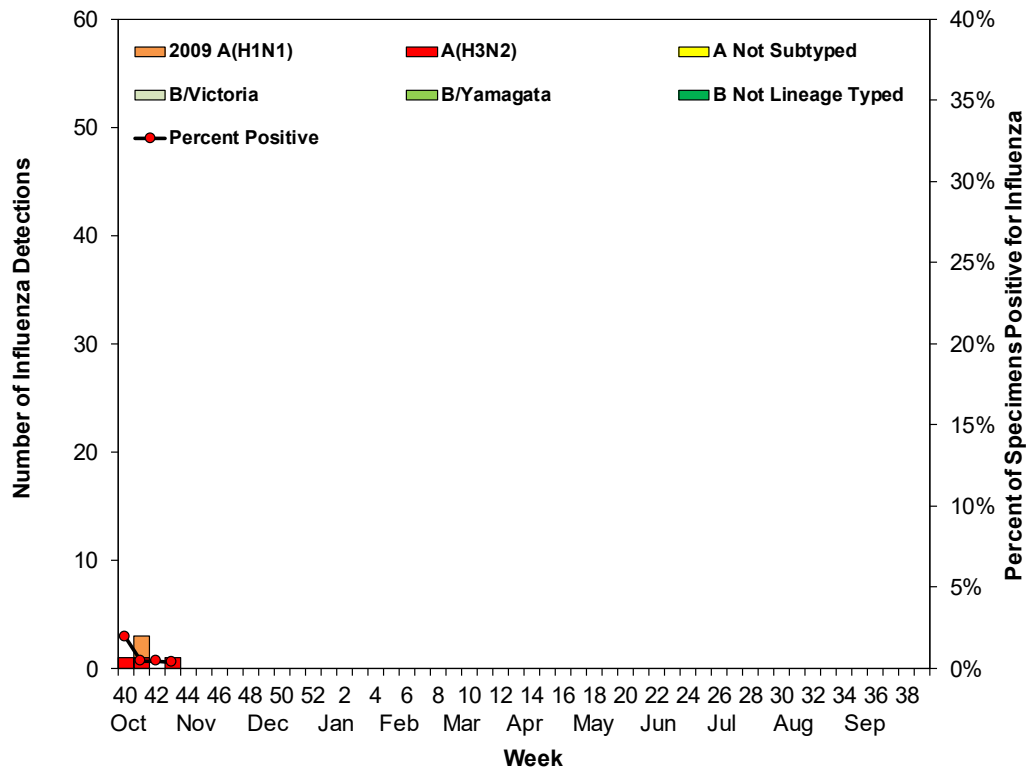
## 2. Virologic Surveillance Update

During Week 43, 271 respiratory specimens were tested from border region sentinel clinical laboratories; of these, one (0.4%) tested positive for influenza (1 [100.0%] influenza B). Cumulatively this season, a total of 938 respiratory specimens were tested from border region sentinel clinical laboratories; of these, seven (0.7%) tested positive for influenza (5 [71.4%] influenza A; 2 [28.6%] influenza B).

During Week 43, one influenza positive specimen was detected at border region RLN laboratories; of which, one (100.0%) was influenza A. Of the specimen that tested positive for influenza A at RLN laboratories, one (100.0%) was subtyped as A (H3). Cumulatively this season, a total of five influenza positive specimens have been detected at border region RLN laboratories; of which, five (100.0%) were influenza A. Of the five specimens that tested positive for influenza A at RLN laboratories, two (40.0%) were subtyped as A (H1)pdm09 and three (60.0%) were subtyped as A (H3).

Laboratory data summarized in Figure 11 include data from border region influenza clinical sentinel laboratories (percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza) as well as data from border region RLN laboratories (influenza type and subtype/lineage type).

**Figure 11. Number of Influenza Detections by Type and Subtype Detected in Respiratory Laboratory Network Laboratories and the Percentage of Specimens Testing Positive at Clinical Sentinel Laboratories — California Border Region, 2019–2020**



## F. Other Respiratory Viruses

### 1. Laboratory-Confirmed Severe Respiratory Syncytial Virus Case Reports

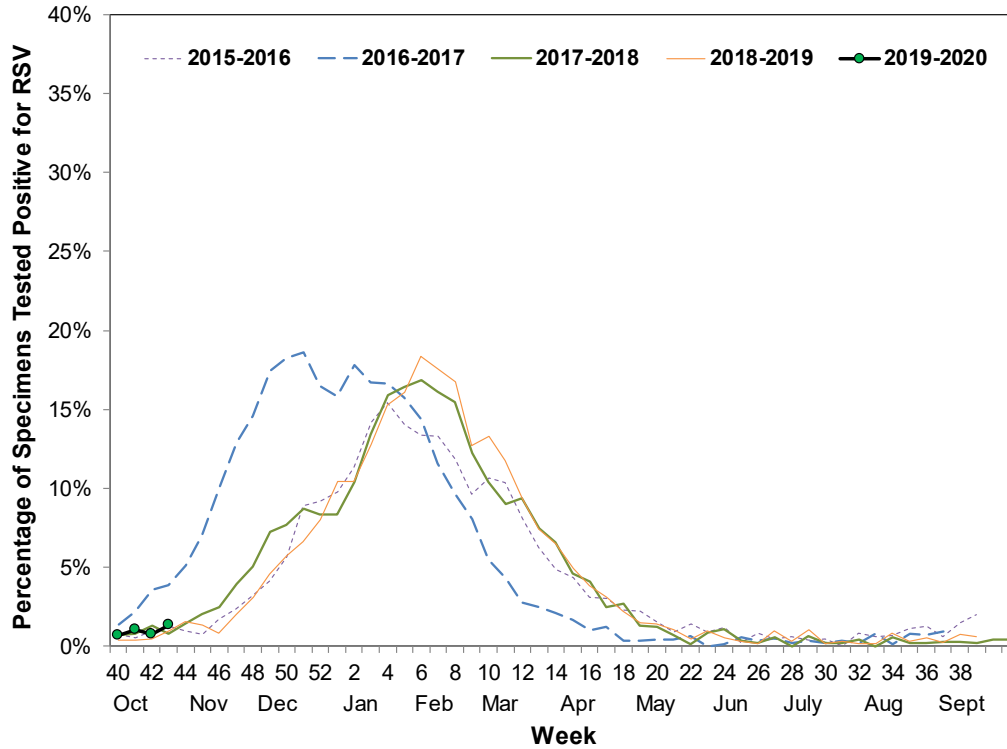
Currently, as mandated under Section 2500 of the California Code of Regulations, deaths among children aged 0–4 years with laboratory-confirmed respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are reportable to CDPH. The weekly influenza report includes confirmed deaths formally reported to CDPH through October 26, 2019 (Week 43).

No laboratory-confirmed RSV-associated deaths among children <5 years of age were reported to CDPH during Week 43. To date, CDPH has received no reports of laboratory-confirmed RSV-associated deaths among children <5 years of age during the 2019–2020 influenza season.

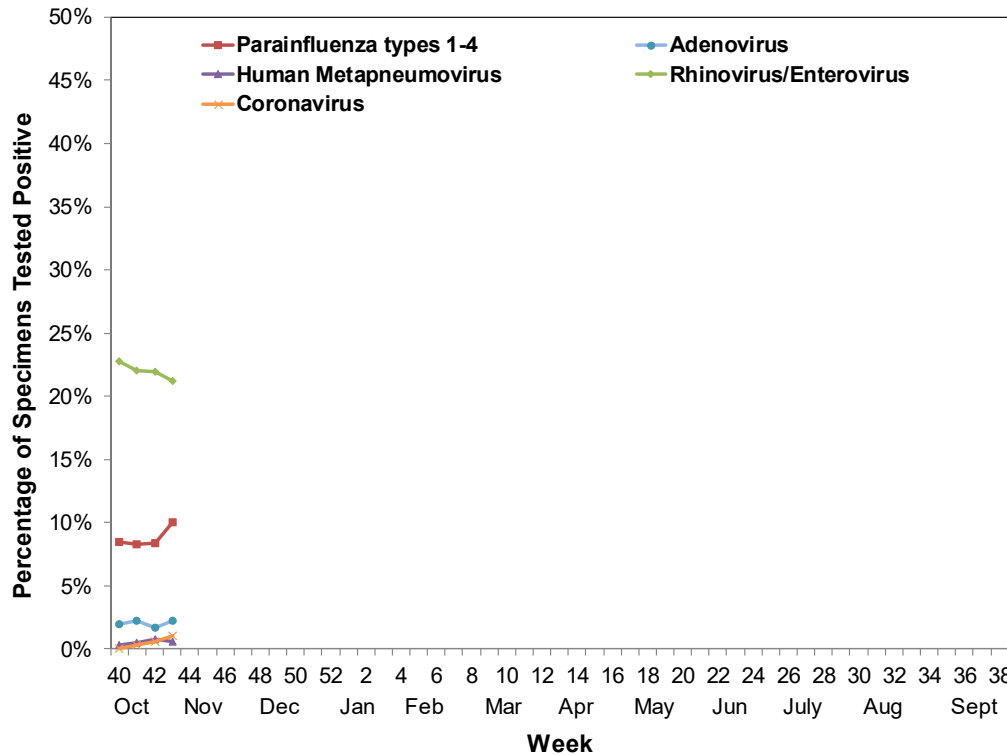
### 2. Other Respiratory Virus Laboratory Update

During Week 43, 2,056 specimens were tested for RSV and 28 (1.4%) were positive, which is higher than Week 42 (0.7%) (Figure 12). During Week 43, coronavirus, parainfluenza, and adenovirus activity increased; and rhinovirus/enterovirus and human metapneumovirus virus activity decreased. (Figure 13).

**Figure 12. Percentage of RSV Detections at Clinical Sentinel Laboratories, 2015–2020**



**Figure 13. Percentage of Other Respiratory Pathogen Detections at Clinical Sentinel Laboratories, 2019–2020**



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### **Activity Levels:**

**No Activity:** No laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza and no reported increase in the number of cases of ILI.

**Sporadic:** Small numbers of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases or a single laboratory-confirmed influenza outbreak has been reported, but there is no increase in cases of ILI.

**Local:** Outbreaks of influenza or increases in ILI cases and recent laboratory-confirmed influenza in a single region of the state.

**Regional:** Outbreaks of influenza or increases in ILI and recent laboratory confirmed influenza in at least two but less than half the regions of the state with recent laboratory evidence of influenza in those regions.

**Widespread:** Outbreaks of influenza or increases in ILI cases and recent laboratory-confirmed influenza in at least half the regions of the state with recent laboratory evidence of influenza in the state.

### **California Regions:**

**Northern:** Alpine, Amador, Butte, Colusa, Del Norte, El Dorado, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, Yolo, and Yuba counties

**Bay Area:** Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Solano, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and Sonoma counties

**Central Valley:** Calaveras, Fresno, Inyo, Kings, Mono, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, San Benito, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Tuolumne counties

**Upper Southern:** Kern, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties

**Lower Southern:** Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties

For questions regarding influenza surveillance and reporting in California, please email [InfluenzaSurveillance@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:InfluenzaSurveillance@cdph.ca.gov). This account is monitored daily by several epidemiologists.

To obtain additional information regarding influenza, please visit the [CDPH influenza website](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx) (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx>).

A copy of the case report form for reporting any laboratory-confirmed influenza case that was either admitted to the ICU or died can be downloaded from the [CDPH influenza website](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx) (<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/Influenza.aspx>).

For information about national influenza activity, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [FluView](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm) (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/index.htm>) and [FluView Interactive](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluviewinteractive.htm) (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluviewinteractive.htm>) websites.

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