WEEKLY INFLUENZA REPORT

2011-12 Influenza Season Week 49, ending December 10, 2011

(All data are preliminary and may change as more reports are received.)

Nebraska Synopsis for surveillance week December 4-10, 2011:
Influenza activity remains low in Nebraska.
o **Virologic Surveillance**: There have been three lab-confirmed (PCR) influenza cases in NE (all in Douglas County). All were typed as seasonal H3 viruses. 2 of 314 (0.64%) rapid flu tests performed by Nebraska hospital laboratories were positive, 1 A & 1 B.
o **Outpatient Illness Surveillance**: The proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI*) was 0.00%, which is below the Nebraska baseline of 2.96%.
o **Inpatient Hospitalization Surveillance**: The proportion of inpatient visits for ILI was 1.23%.
o **Pneumonia and Influenza (P&I) Mortality Surveillance**: The proportion of deaths attributed to P&I was below the epidemic threshold.
o **Influenza-associated Pediatric Mortality**: No influenza-associated pediatric deaths were Reported in Nebraska.
o **Geographic Spread of Influenza**: The geographic spread of influenza in Nebraska was reported as "sporadic".
*ILI: Influenza-like Illness is defined as a fever of ≥100° F as well as cough and/or sore throat.

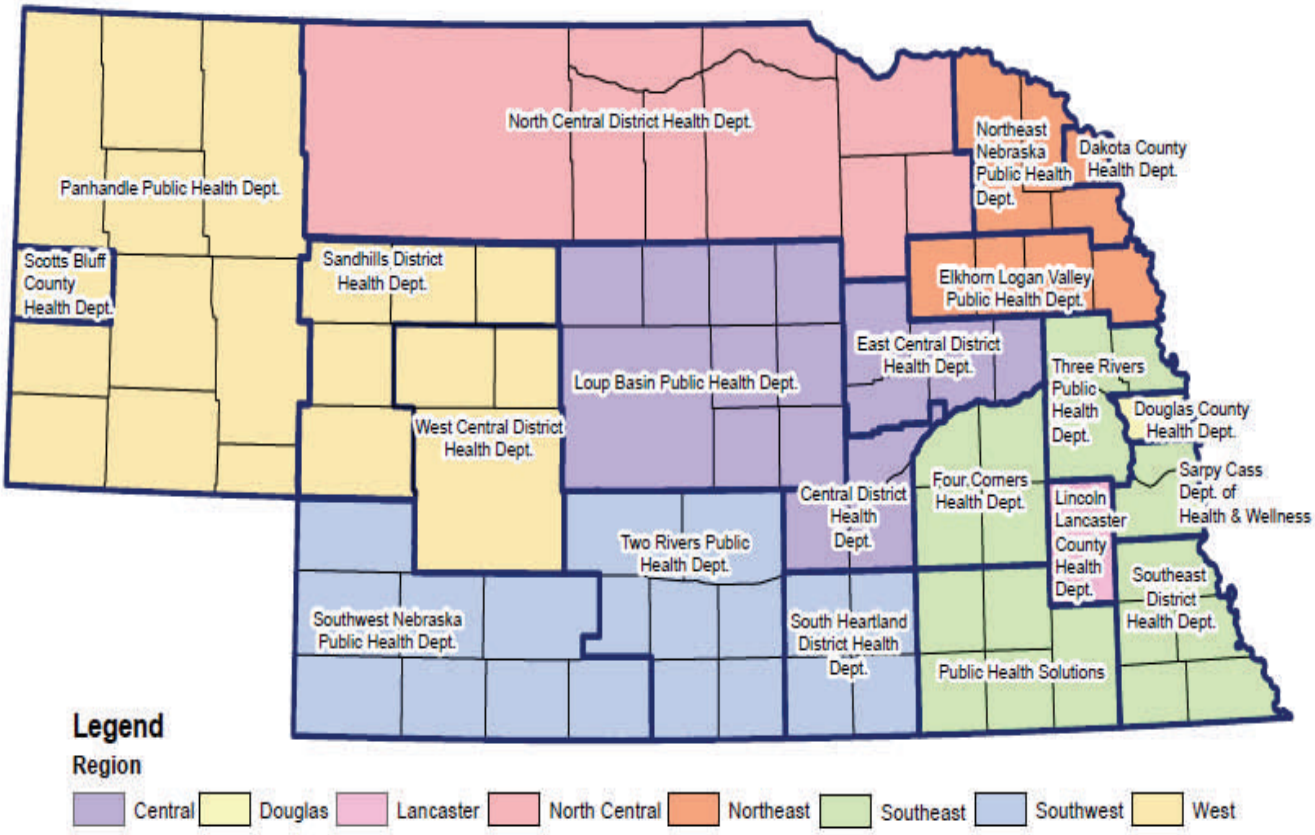
National Synopsis: Influenza activity in the United States continues to decrease. Please see http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/.

International Synopsis: Please see http://www.who.int/influenza/surveillance_monitoring/updates/en/index.html.

Regional Summary of Surveillance Components

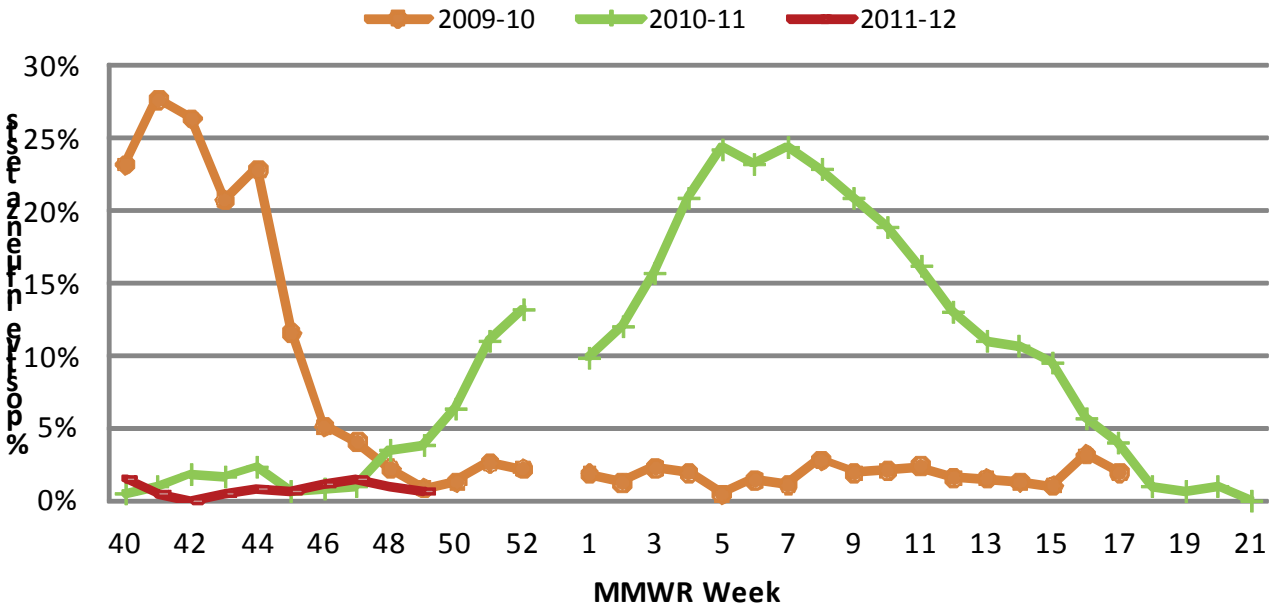
	Data for current week				Data cumulative since October 2, 2011 (week 40)			
Nebraska Surveillance Regions°	% lab positive for flu	% lab positive for RSV	% out-patient ILI	% in-patient ILI	A (H3)	A (2009 H1N1)	B	Influenza-Related Deaths
Central	0.00%	0.00%	NA	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Douglas	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.68%	3	0	0	0
Lancaster	1.39%	0.00%	NA	3.11%	0	0	0	0
North Central	0.00%	0.00%	NA	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Northeast	12.50%	0.00%	NA	0.65%	0	0	0	0
Southeast	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.88%	0	0	0	0
Southwest	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.14%	0	0	0	0
West	0.00%	6.25%	NA	0.00%	0	0	0	0

°for Nebraska Regions see map on page 2

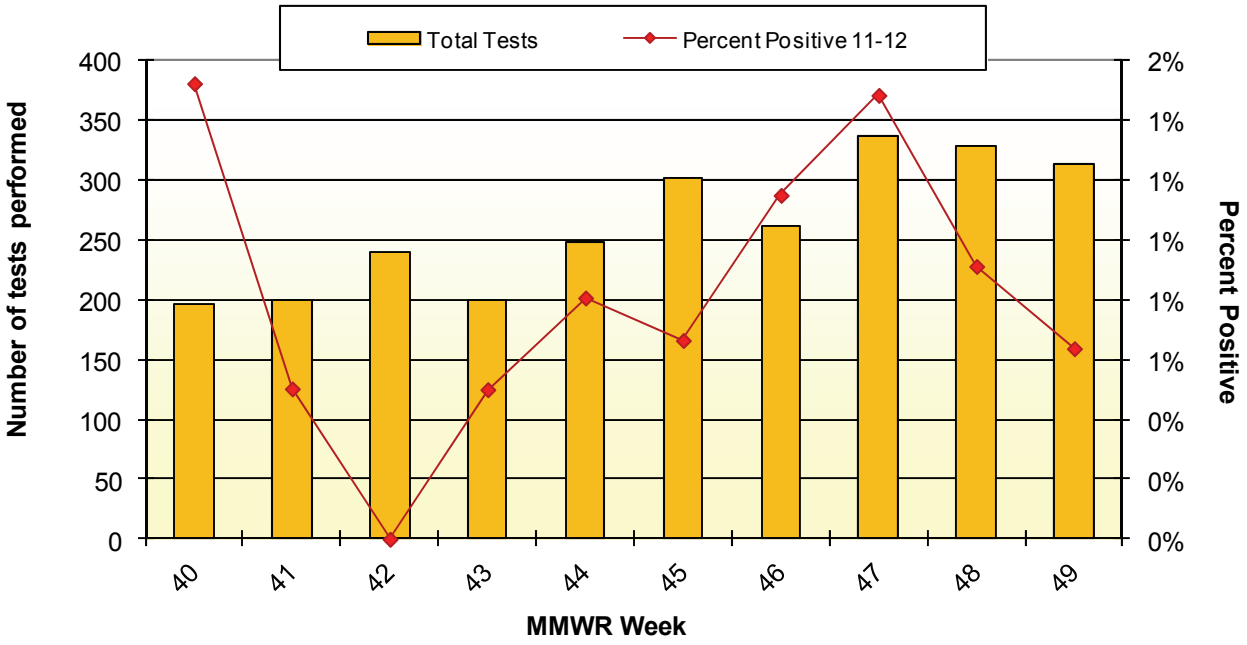


Novel Influenza A Viruses Update: Two human infections with novel influenza A viruses were detected in children from two states (Minnesota and West Virginia). One patient was infected with a novel influenza A (H1N2) virus and one patient was infected with a novel influenza A (H3N2) virus. Both patients have recovered from their illnesses. While both viruses are known to circulate in U.S. swine, there was no close contact with pigs reported preceding illness onset in either case. Both states have been investigating case contacts and sources of exposure, however, no additional confirmed cases have been detected at this time. Additional information on these cases can be found in the CDC Have You Heard posting.

Percentage of Positive Influenza Laboratory Tests by Nebraska Hospital* Laboratories



Number of Rapid Influenza Tests Performed by Nebraska Hospital Laboratories and Percent Positive

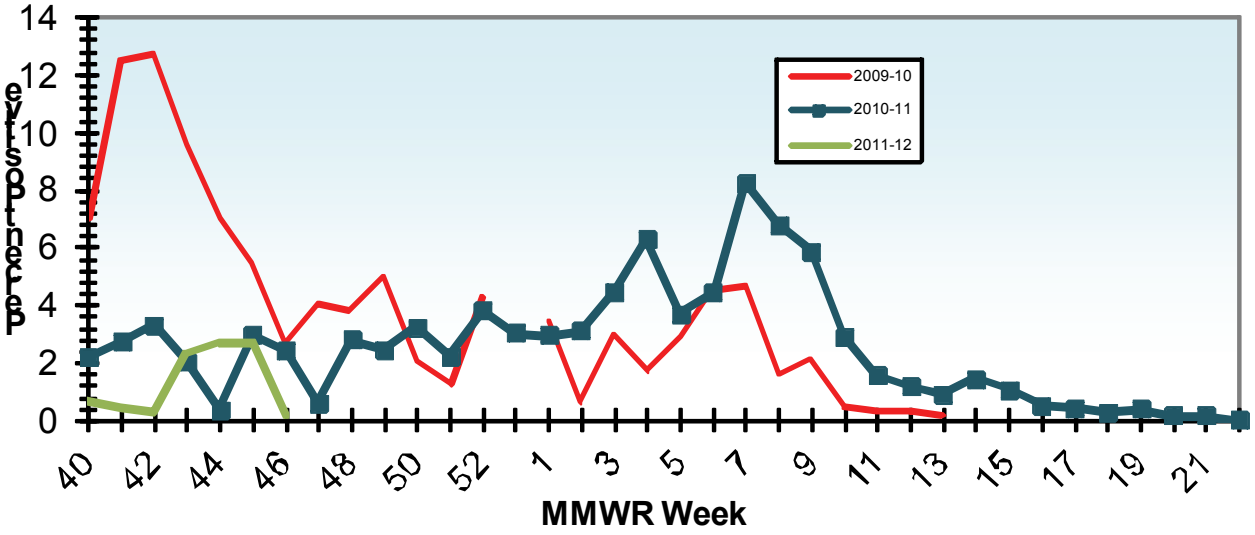


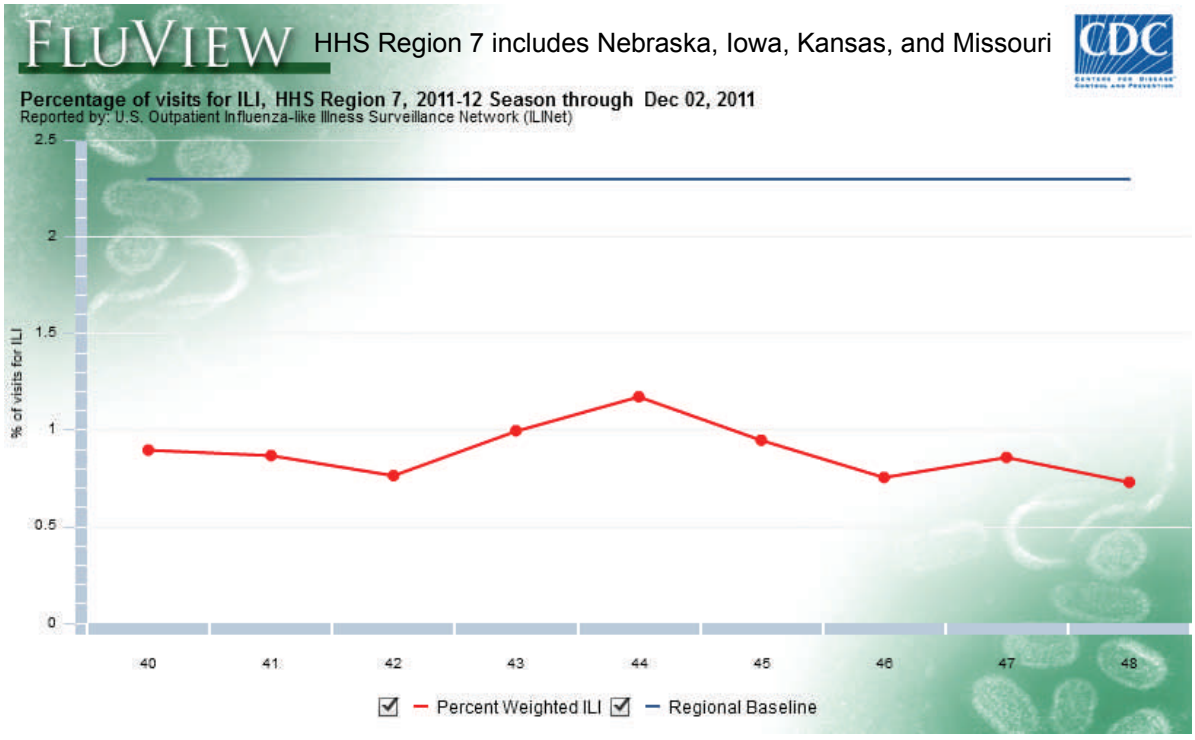
*A small number of outpatient physicians clinics are also included in this surveillance system.

Outpatient Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Surveillance: The proportion of outpatient visits for ILI was 0.00% with 6 of 17 (35%) providers reporting.

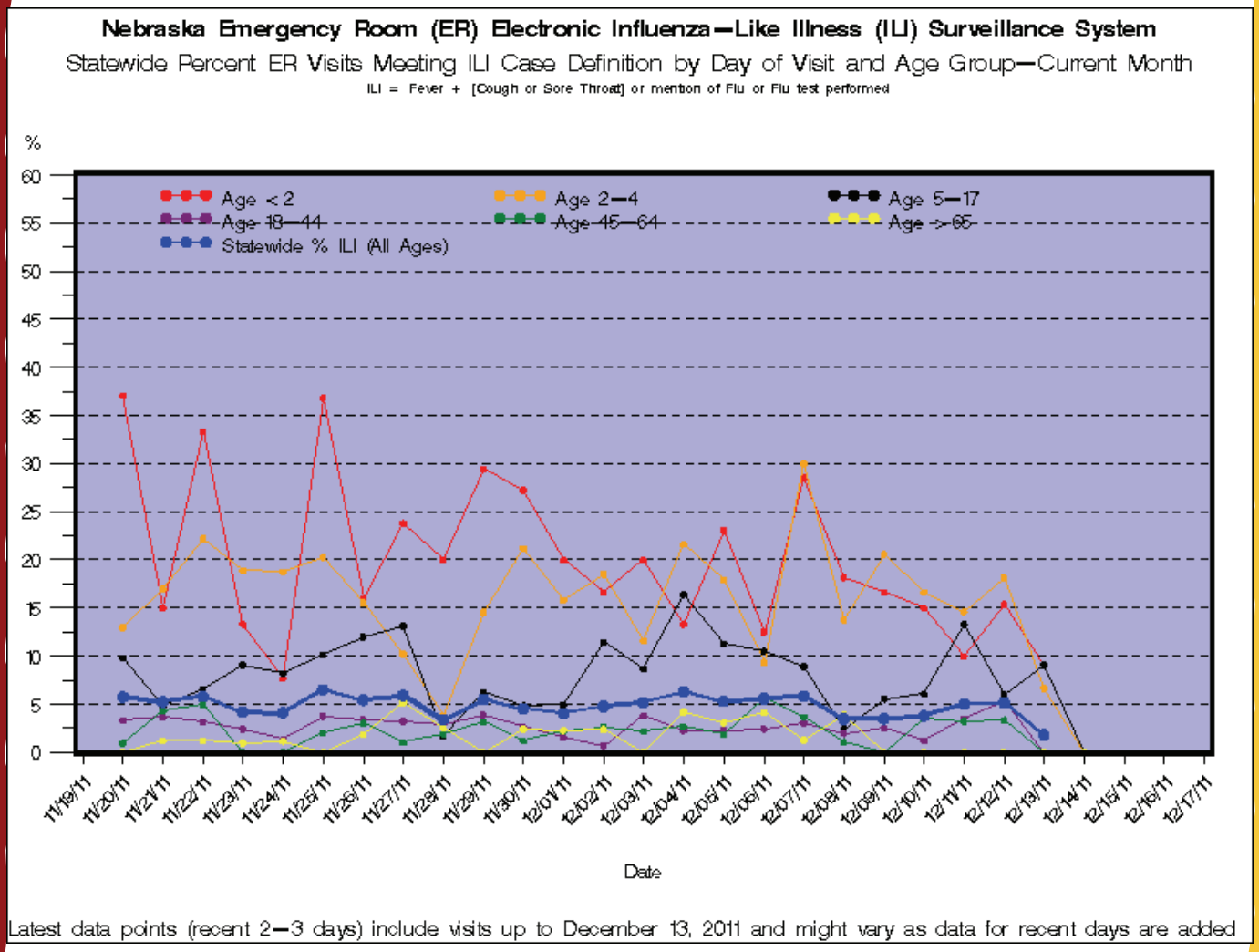
For week ending December 10, 2011							
Age 0-4	Age 5-24	Age 25-49	Age 50-64	Age over 64	Total ILI	Total patients	**% ILI**
0	0	0	0	0	0	476	**0.00%**
0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%			

Percentage of Visits for Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Reported by the US Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) - Nebraska 2009-2012



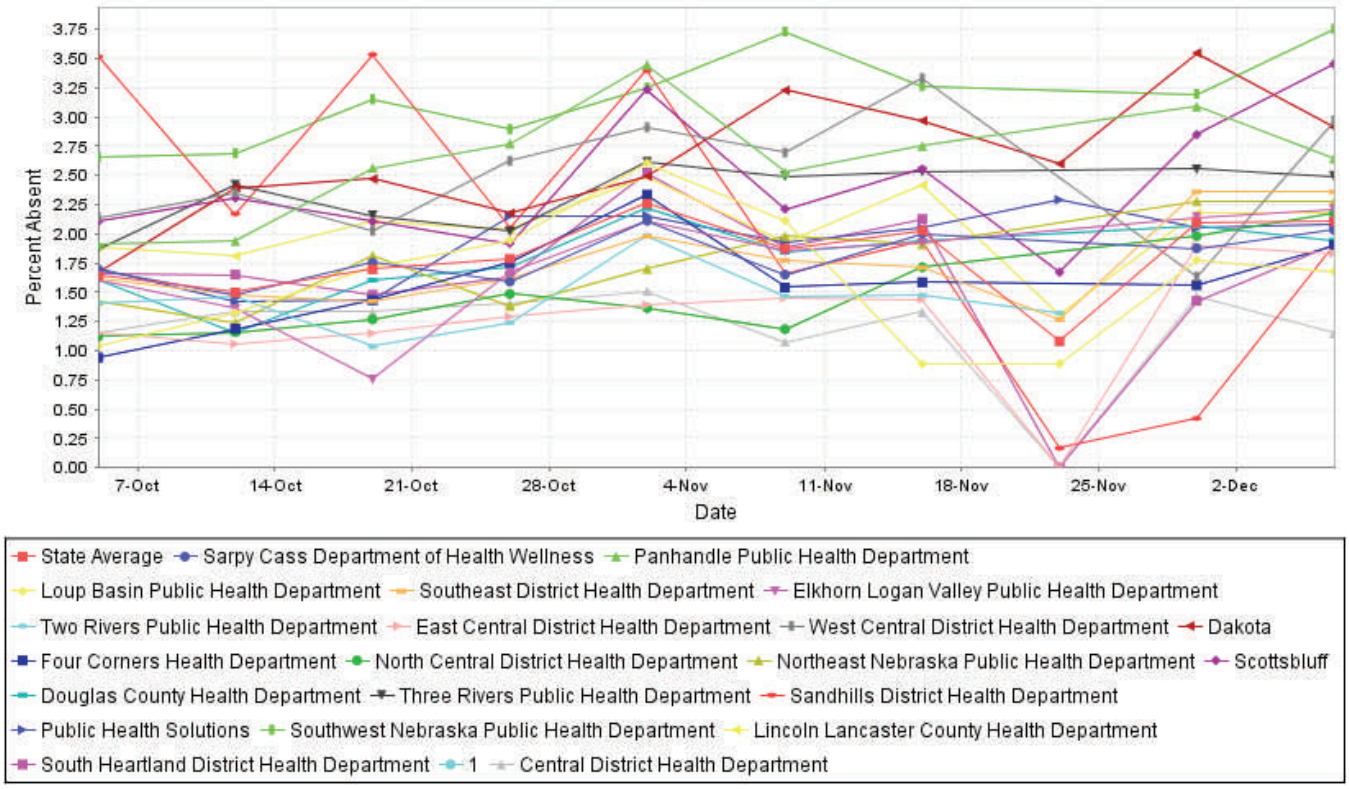


Emergency Department Syndromic Surveillance: Ten facilities currently submit data directly to DHHS from their emergency department (ED). The group that has seen the highest proportion of visits to the ED for ILI in the previous 11 days are those in the 2-4 year old age group.



	Results by Age groups (Previous 11 days)						
	<2	2–4	5–17	18–44	45–64	65+	All_Ages
ILI visits (n)	15	36	27	29	13	4	124
Total visits (N)	95	208	360	1073	568	569	2873
ILI %	15.79	17.308	7.5	2.7	2.289	0.703	4.32%

School Absenteeism Surveillance: There were no school closures due to influenza-like illness reported for the surveillance week. Absenteeism due to illness was 2.14% with 87.7% of NE schools reporting.



Prevention

Individuals have an important role in protecting themselves and their families. Everyone should take these everyday steps to protect your health and lessen the spread of this new virus:

- ⇒ **Stay informed.** Health officials will provide additional information as it becomes available.
- ⇒ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- ⇒ Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- ⇒ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- ⇒ Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- ⇒ CDC recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- ⇒ Follow public health advice regarding social distancing measures.

Background: The Office of Epidemiology in the Division of Public Health at DHHS collects, compiles and analyzes information on influenza activity year round in Nebraska and produces a weekly report from October through May. The Nebraska influenza surveillance system is a collaborative effort between DHHS and its many partners in the state including, local health departments, public health and clinical laboratories, vital statistics offices, healthcare providers, clinics and emergency departments. Information in five categories is collected from different data sources that allow DHHS to:

- Find out when and where influenza activity is occurring
- Track influenza-related illness
- Determine what influenza viruses are circulating
- Detect changes in influenza viruses
- Measure the impact influenza is having on deaths in the United States

Viral Surveillance: On a weekly basis, NE laboratories submit data (number of rapid influenza tests performed and number of positive) to an on-line database or via electronic laboratory reporting (ELR). Laboratories submit specimens to the NPHL for PCR testing and sub-typing of the influenza virus. NPHL submits specimens to the CDC to determine the strain of influenza circulating during the current season which in turn assists with the determination of the following year's influenza vaccine.

Outpatient Illness Surveillance: On a weekly basis, a select group of Nebraska physicians participate in the Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet). The sentinel providers report data to CDC on the total number of office visits and the number of those patients with influenza-like illness (ILI), by age group.

Emergency Department (ED) Syndromic Surveillance: NE is receiving data from select ED's on a daily basis to determine the rate of influenza-like illness being seen in those hospitals.

Hospital Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Admissions Surveillance: On a weekly basis, Infection Preventionists from NE hospitals submit ILI admission data to their local health department (LHD) to be entered into an on-line database.

School Surveillance: On a weekly basis, schools submit the number of absent students and staff due to illness to the LHD in their jurisdiction. The LHD's enter this data into an on-line website for data tabulation. Schools also report any unusual absences and outbreaks to the LHD.

Mortality: Lincoln and Omaha participate in the 122-Cities Mortality Reporting System by reporting the number of death certificates received and the number of those for which pneumonia or influenza was listed as the underlying or contributing cause of death by age group. It is required to report all influenza-associated pediatric deaths to a public health authority. Nebraska has recently begun to utilize the electronic death registration system (EDRS) for surveillance of influenza related deaths.