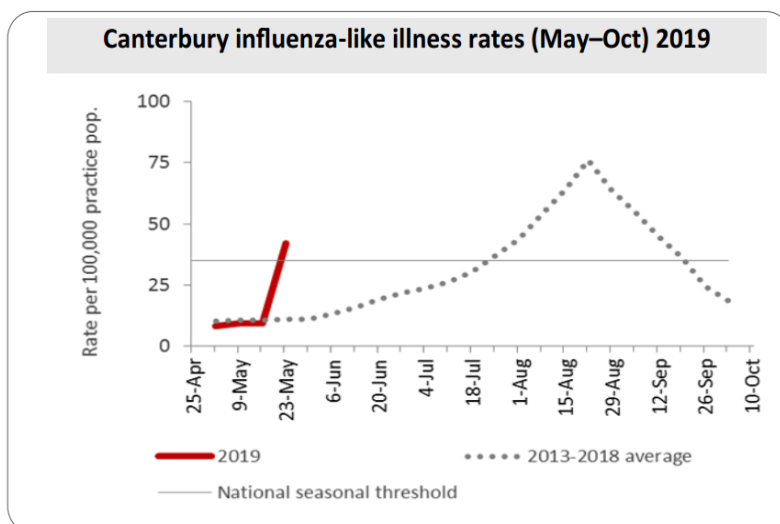


Thursday 30th May 2019 1300hrs

Important information for all GP teams, Community Pharmacists, Community Nursing and Aged Care Facilities – Please share this with everyone in your team

Current Influenza Situation

- Australia and some parts of New Zealand are experiencing a very early influenza wave this year. Early antigen studies in Australia show that the 2019 influenza vaccination being used across Australasia is a good match for those strains being detected.
- Likewise, Canterbury is experiencing uncommonly high influenza like illness notifications through the sentinel practices for May. Of those swabbed about 50% are proving positive for influenza. The predominant strain is influenza Type A H3N2.
- Influenza cases are having a significant effect on Emergency Department presentations, Hospital admissions and ICU occupancy.
- Since the beginning of 2019 there have been outbreaks in some of our aged care facilities. The H3N2 strain of virus has been linked to higher mortality rates in these residents during these outbreaks.



Influenza types

Influenza type	This week	Last week
A(H1N1)pdm09	4	5
A(untyped)	56	24
B	12	7

Current Recommendations

- Vaccination remains the most important strategy to avoid individuals becoming infected. In primary care we are seeking to vaccinate staff, our at risk funded patients (children with previous respiratory hospital admissions, all ages with chronic diseases, pregnant women or patients over 65 years of age) and unfunded patients requesting routine vaccination.
- Attached to this update is the reminder of how to best prepare your facility’s infection prevention and control for this influenza season.
- You are encouraged to implement your winter capacity plans including:
 - Vaccination programmes for both your staff and patients as mentioned above.
 - Using booking systems to allow for same day triaged appointments and/or extended hours.
 - Ensuring good signage, masks, alcohol hand-wash availability for all presenting with coughs and colds.

Kind regards,

Dr Phil Schroeder
Canterbury Primary Response Group