

**IN THIS ISSUE: Influenza: 2017-18 Season Updates, National Vaccine Week, and 2016-17 Season Summary****INFLUENZA: 2017-18 SEASON UPDATES, VACCINE WEEK, AND THE 2016-17 SEASON****UPDATES FOR THE 2017-18 INFLUENZA SEASON**

The 2017-18 influenza ("flu") season began on Sunday, October 1<sup>st</sup>. Updates for this flu season are provided below.

**Highlights from ACIP's Recommendations for the 2017-18 Flu Season**

In August the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) released their recommendations for the 2017-18 flu season. The full report is available at [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/rr6602a1.htm?cid=rr6602a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/rr6602a1.htm?cid=rr6602a1_w). The Washoe County Health District (WCHD) encourages all providers to read the full report as it discusses specific changes to labeling, recent licensures, and age indications, among others. However, a few highlights from their recommendations are listed below.

- Routine annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged  $\geq 6$  months who do not have contraindications.
- The flu vaccine has been updated. Vaccine viruses included in the 2017–18 U.S. trivalent influenza vaccines will be an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09–like virus, an A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus, and a B/Brisbane/60/2008–like virus (Victoria lineage). Quadrivalent influenza vaccines will contain these three viruses and an additional influenza B vaccine virus, a B/Phuket/3073/2013–like virus (Yamagata lineage).
- Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4) is not recommended for use during the 2017–18 season due to concerns about its effectiveness against (H1N1)pdm09 viruses during the 2013–14 and 2015–16 seasons.
- Vaccination should be offered by the end of October, if possible. Vaccination should be offered as long as influenza viruses are circulating and unexpired vaccine is available.
- Emphasis should be placed on vaccination of high-risk groups and their contacts and caregivers.
- Pregnant women may receive any licensed, recommended, and age-appropriate flu vaccine.

**Weekly Flu Reports**

WCHD puts together weekly flu reports that summarize flu activity in Washoe County. These reports include information about influenza-like illness (ILI) activity, influenza test results, numbers of cases and hospitalizations, pneumonia and influenza mortality, and regional and national flu activity. These reports are posted weekly and are made available to the public at <http://tinyurl.com/WashoeFlu>. These weekly reports are

also emailed to physicians, public health practitioners, infection preventionists, daycare operators, and others in our community. If you would like to be added to the email list serve, please email the following information to [epicenter@washoecounty.us](mailto:epicenter@washoecounty.us): your name (first and last), title, organization, and email address.

**Disease Reporting**

Influenza is a reportable condition in Nevada. Please report cases to WCHD at 775-328-2447 (24/7) or 775-328-3764 (Fax). Case reporting forms are available at <https://www.washoecounty.us/health/programs-and-services/communicable-diseases-and-epidemiology/disease-reporting.php>. Suspected or confirmed outbreaks of flu must be reported as soon as possible.

**NATIONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE WEEK**

This week (December 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>) is National Influenza Vaccine Week. Please take advantage of this opportunity to encourage your patients, friends, family, and colleagues to get their flu vaccine if they have not already done so. It can take up to two weeks for protection to develop after vaccination, so it is important for your unvaccinated patients to do so now to reduce their risk of flu. As of last Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, a total of 670 cases of flu had been reported among Washoe County residents with 79 hospitalizations and 2 deaths. Only 29% of hospitalized patients with flu had received their flu vaccine. During the week ending December 2, 2017, 142 of 6,708 patients who sought medical care at 11 sentinel providers had influenza like illness, which accounted for 2.1%. During this season, 56 of 782 (7.2%) registered deaths were due to pneumonia or influenza.

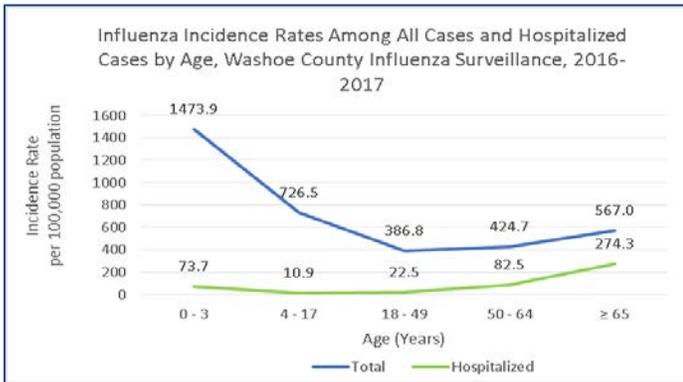
Last flu season Nevada had the worst flu vaccine coverage in the nation with only an estimated 36% of people 6 months and older getting their flu vaccine (<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/reportshtml/reporti1617/reporti/index.html>). For additional resources, please visit <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/resource-center/nivw/>.

**SUMMARY OF THE 2016-17 INFLUENZA SEASON**

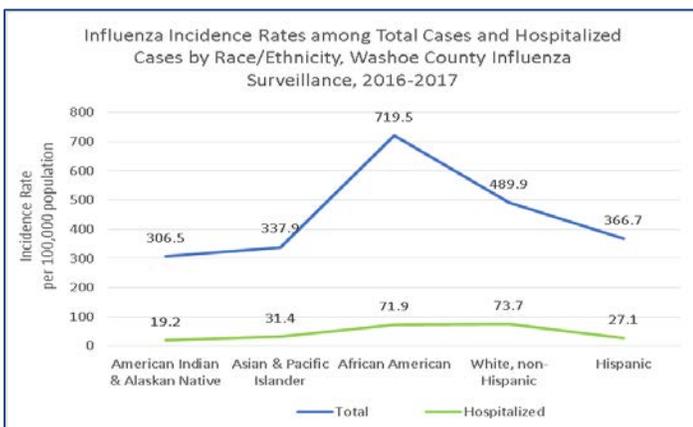
During the 2016-17 influenza season there were a total of 2,408 flu cases reported to WCHD. Among these cases, 312 (13%) were hospitalized for >24 hours. Hospitalizations were reported as early as CDC Week 42 (week ending October 22, 2016) and continued to be reported for the duration of influenza season (through Week 20, ending May 20, 2017). Hospitalizations

peaked during Week 1 (week ending January 7, 2017) with a total of 42 hospitalizations.

Incidence rates among both total cases and hospitalized cases were greater among young children (0-3 years), school aged children (4-17 years), and the elderly (65+ years). However, incidence among hospitalized cases was greatest in the elderly population (274.3 per 100,000) while incidence among total cases was greatest in the youngest population (1473.9 per 100,000).



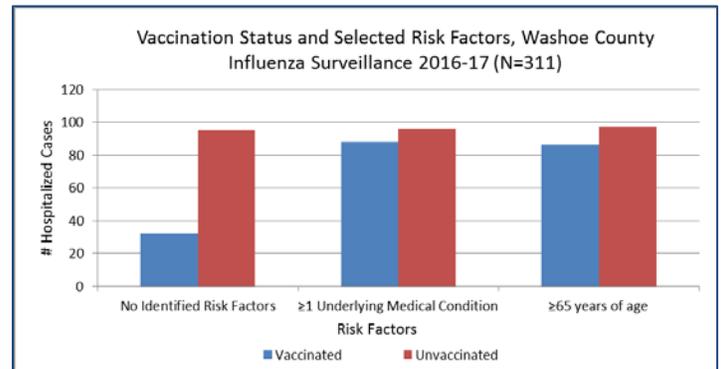
Incidence rates also varied by race and ethnicity. Among all cases, African Americans had the highest incidence rate (719.5 per 100,000), more than double the incidence of other minority ethnic groups. Non-Hispanic whites had the second highest incidence (489.9 per 100,000). Among hospitalized cases, incidence was highest among non-Hispanic whites (73.7 per 100,000) followed closely by African Americans (71.9 per 100,000).



Vaccination status was ascertained for 311 hospitalized cases. One hundred and twenty (39%) hospitalized cases had a documented history of current seasonal flu vaccine at least one week prior to illness onset. Eighty-eight (73%) hospitalized immunized cases had at least one underlying medical condition and 86 (72%) were aged 65 years or older.

A total of 191 hospitalized cases (61%) did not have a documented history of a current seasonal flu vaccine at least one week prior to illness onset (henceforth referred to as “unimmunized”). Seven (4%) were too young to receive vaccine. Of the remaining 184 unimmunized cases, 95 (52%) had a least one documented underlying medical

condition that contributes to an increased risk for flu-related complications. In addition, 97 (53%) of these unvaccinated hospitalized cases were aged 65 years or older. Six of the eight cases who died from influenza (75%) were unimmunized.



Vaccination is particularly important for persons at increased risk for flu-related complications. While the number of flu-associated hospitalizations in our community that may have been prevented by immunization cannot be calculated, these data demonstrate that many vulnerable patients who should have been recommended for immunization did not receive a timely vaccination. Providers are encouraged to vaccinate their patients, especially those patients who are at increased risk for complications from influenza as well as those people who live with or care for persons at higher risk for influenza-related complications (including health care providers).

## Recommendations for HCPs

WCHD recommends that healthcare providers (HCPs) in Washoe County take the following actions:

1. Ensure you and your colleagues are vaccinated. It is especially important for HCPs to be vaccinated as you may be serving individuals at high risk for flu-related complications.
2. Encourage your patients to get vaccinated. Vaccination is especially important for those persons at a higher risk for flu-related complications.
3. Monitor influenza activity in Washoe County. WCHD flu reports are posted weekly at <http://tinyurl.com/WashoeFlu>. You can also sign up to receive weekly emails from WCHD.
4. Practice appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette to protect yourself and patients from the flu.
5. Provide antiviral treatment when indicated. For additional guidance please see <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/summary-clinicians.htm>.
6. Report cases of flu to WCHD at 775-328-2447 (24/7) and 775-328-3764 (Fax).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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