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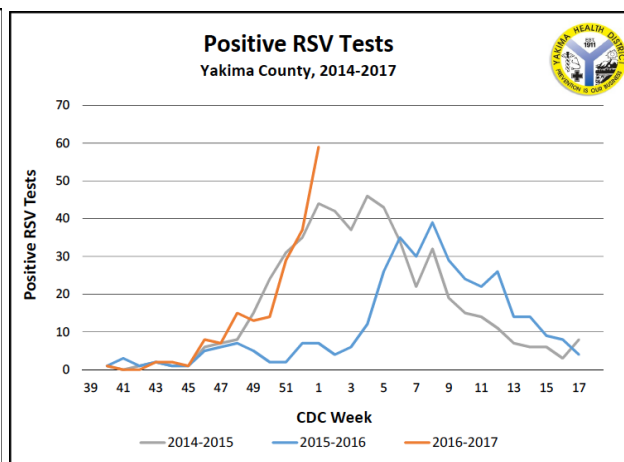
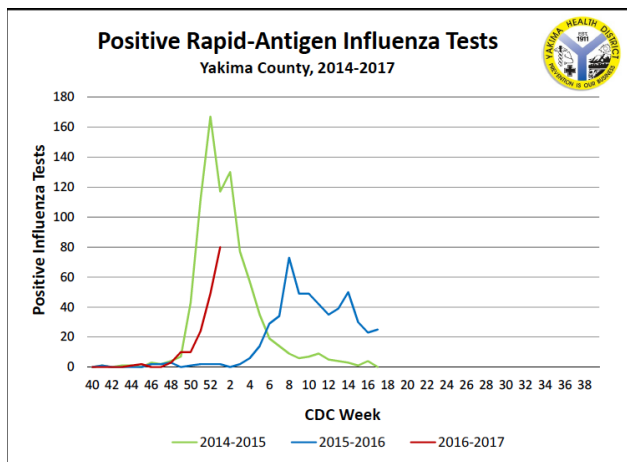
HEALTH CARE PROVIDER ADVISORY INCREASED INFLUENZA ACTIVITY JANUARY 13, 2017

Actions Requested

- Be aware that transmission of influenza and other respiratory illnesses is increasing in the region.
- Emergency rooms report increasing numbers of visits for influenza-like illness.
- Please make all available efforts to manage low-acuity patients in outpatient settings, including when providing telephone triage messages to patients.
- Expand office hours, staffing and outpatient clinic capacity to accommodate an increase in patients where possible.
- Use prompt antiviral drug treatment for influenza infection in high-risk patients to minimize complications and need for hospitalization.
- Ensure all healthcare workers are vaccinated against influenza.
- Continue to provide influenza immunization to patients. Current information indicates that the vaccine is a good match with the circulating strain of influenza A-H3N2.

Background

Hospitalizations for influenza in western Washington have increased sharply since mid-December leading to patient overflow and care capacity problems for both emergency and inpatient care. A similar trend may be unfolding locally with at least one hospital reporting capacity problems. The vast majority of influenza cases are type A(H3N2). The lineage of circulating strains has a >90% match with the strains used in this year's vaccine.



For a brief clinical summary of influenza for health care providers, see:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-111-SeasonalFluMessagesHCP.pdf>

See weekly updates on local, state and national respiratory virus surveillance at:

<http://www.yakimacounty.us/365/RSV-Flu-Stats>

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-100-FluUpdate.pdf>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>