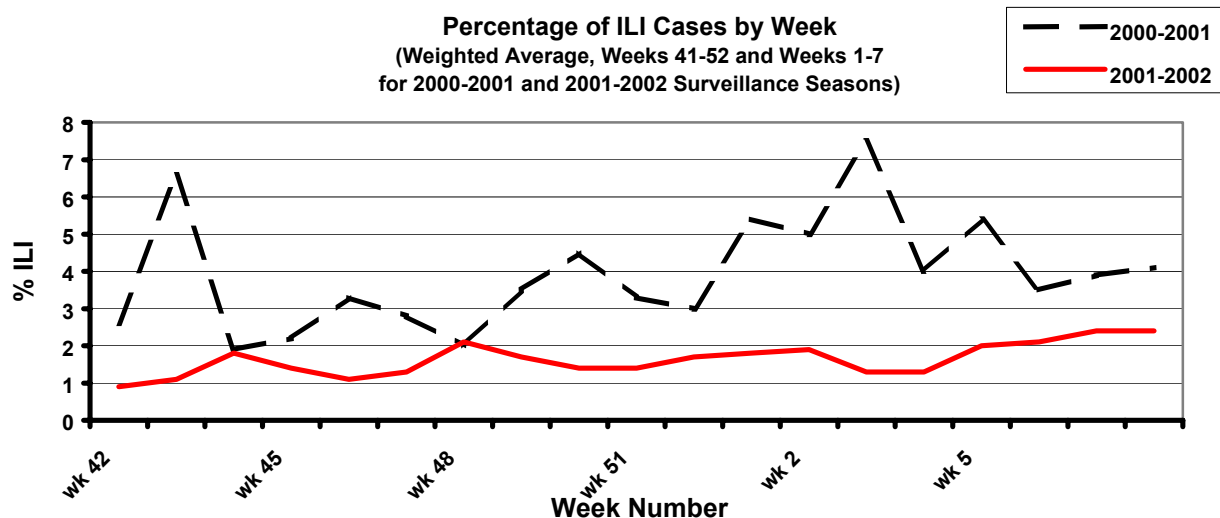


Date: February 22, 2002
To: Health Care Provider
From: Linh Nguyen, MPH, Epidemiologist
Subject: Influenza Report for Week 7 (February 10-16, 2002)

Criteria for inclusion as a case of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) are fever $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ (37.8°C) and cough or sore throat. Health care providers wishing to participate in the ongoing Clark County Health District (CCHD) Influenza Surveillance Program should contact Linh Nguyen, Surveillance Coordinator, at (702) 383-1378.

Two hundred and thirty-six cases of ILI were reported during week 7. The weighted average over the twelve reporting sites was 2.4%. Nationwide, the baseline for overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for ILI was 1.9%. The percentage of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza (P&I) in Las Vegas was 6.4%. The national P&I mortality for week 7 is not available at this time. The percentages of ILI cases in Clark County for weeks 41-52 and weeks 1-7 for the 2000-2001 season, as compared to the 2001-2002 season, are presented in the following figure.



Influenza A viruses can infect animals such as birds, pigs, whales, seals and horses, in addition to humans. Avian influenza viruses are not generally transmitted directly to humans. Usually, another animal species such as swine is infected by birds, and the avian viruses can then be transmitted to people by the infected swine. However, the “Avian Flu A(H5N1)” outbreak in Hong Kong in 1997 demonstrated that sometimes an avian influenza virus can infect humans directly. In this outbreak, eighteen people were hospitalized, six of whom died, because of infection with an influenza virus that was previously seen only in birds. Studies found that H5N1 flu can spread from poultry to people but not easily from person to person. No new infections with H5N1 in humans have been found since health officials in Hong Kong ordered all chickens in the area (over one million) to be slaughtered. According to the CDC, many experts believe that when both avian and human influenza viruses simultaneously infect other animals (e.g. pigs), new influenza viruses can emerge. These viruses can affect humans and were the causes of the last two pandemics: the “Asian Flu A(H2N2)” in 1957-58 and the “Hong Kong Flu A(H3N2)” in 1968-69.

This newsletter is also posted on the Clark County Health District webpage for health care practitioners. See http://www.cchd.org/physician/physician_only.htm for this and other health and bioterrorism related information. Each year from October through May, the Centers for Disease Control provide weekly updates on U.S. influenza activity. The information is online at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>