Virus WAtch

WEEK ENDING 21ST SEPTEMBER 2014

KEY POINTS

INFLUENZA AND INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESSES (ILI)

Summary: Influenza and non-influenza respiratory virus activity continues to decline.

- Most indicators of influenza activity, including notifications, detections of influenza virus, proportion of positive laboratory tests for influenza, and influenza-associated hospitalisations decreased this week.
- Influenza A/H1N1, influenza A/H3N2 and influenza B viruses continue to co-circulate.
- Detections of non-influenza respiratory viruses continued to decline this week.

GASTROENTERITIS

- Gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel general practitioners (GPs) remain stable this week. Presentations to sentinel emergency departments (EDs) increased but remain below baseline.

VARICELLA AND VIRAL RASHES

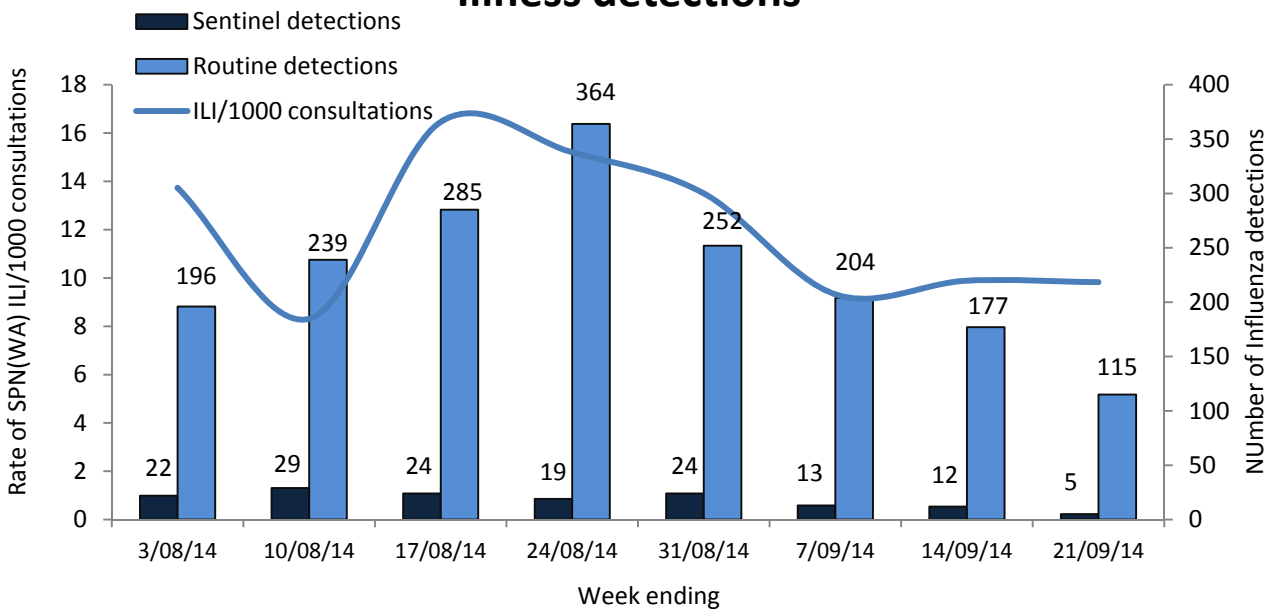
- Shingles and chickenpox presentations to sentinel general practitioners (GPs) increased above baseline levels.
- Three cases of mumps were reported to the Department of Health this week – follow-up information is pending.
- No confirmed cases of measles or rubella were reported.

Current and archived issues of Virus Watch http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/487/3/virus_watch.pm

Virus WAtch is a weekly electronic publication by the Communicable Disease Control Directorate (CDCD) and key collaborators. It provides a brief summary of General Practice and Hospital Emergency Department sentinel surveillance data on influenza-like illness, gastroenteritis and varicella-zoster disease, together with relevant laboratory information, to alert health care workers in WA to important circulating viruses. General Practice data are collected by members of the Sentinel Practitioners Network of Western Australia - SPN(WA). Emergency Department data are provided by the Emergency Department Information System (EDIS), which incorporates data from the following hospitals: Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Fremantle Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital, Bunbury Hospital, Armadale Hospital, Joondalup Health Campus, Swan District Hospital and Rockingham General Hospital . Viral laboratory data are obtained from PathWest laboratories at QEII Medical Centre and Princess Margaret Hospital for Children, as well as via notification data sent by all WA laboratories to CDCD, WA Department of Health. All figures and data were accurate at time of publication, but subject to change.

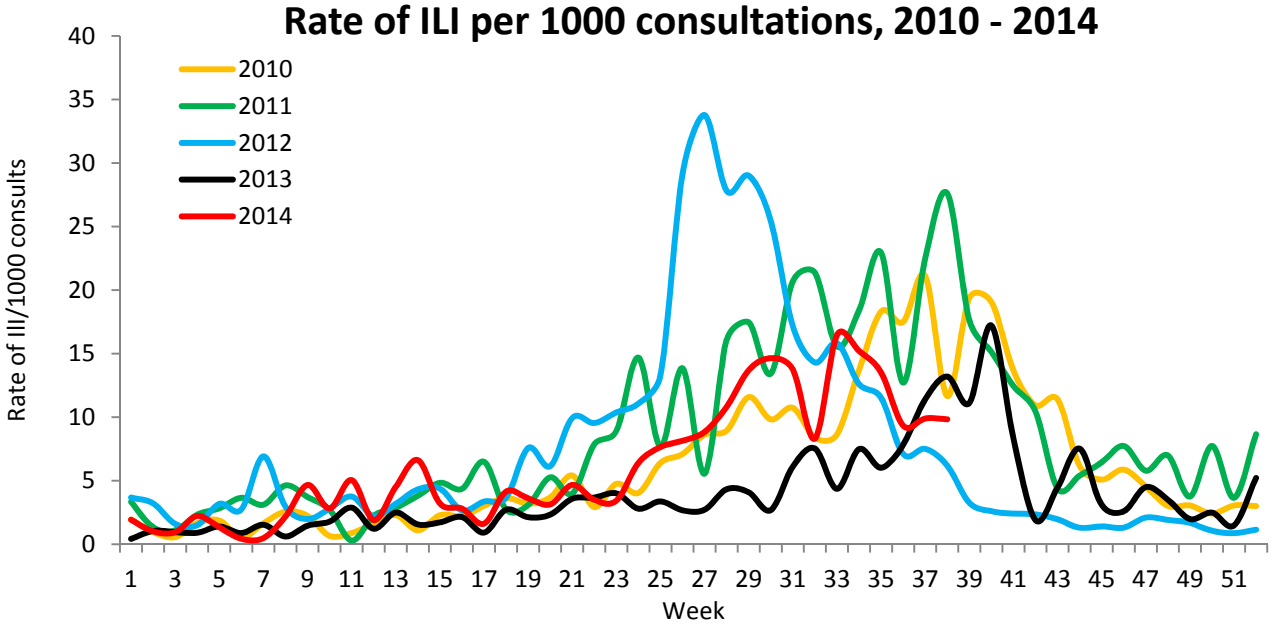
Influenza and Influenza-like Illnesses

Sentinel and Routine Influenza and Influenza-like-Illness detections



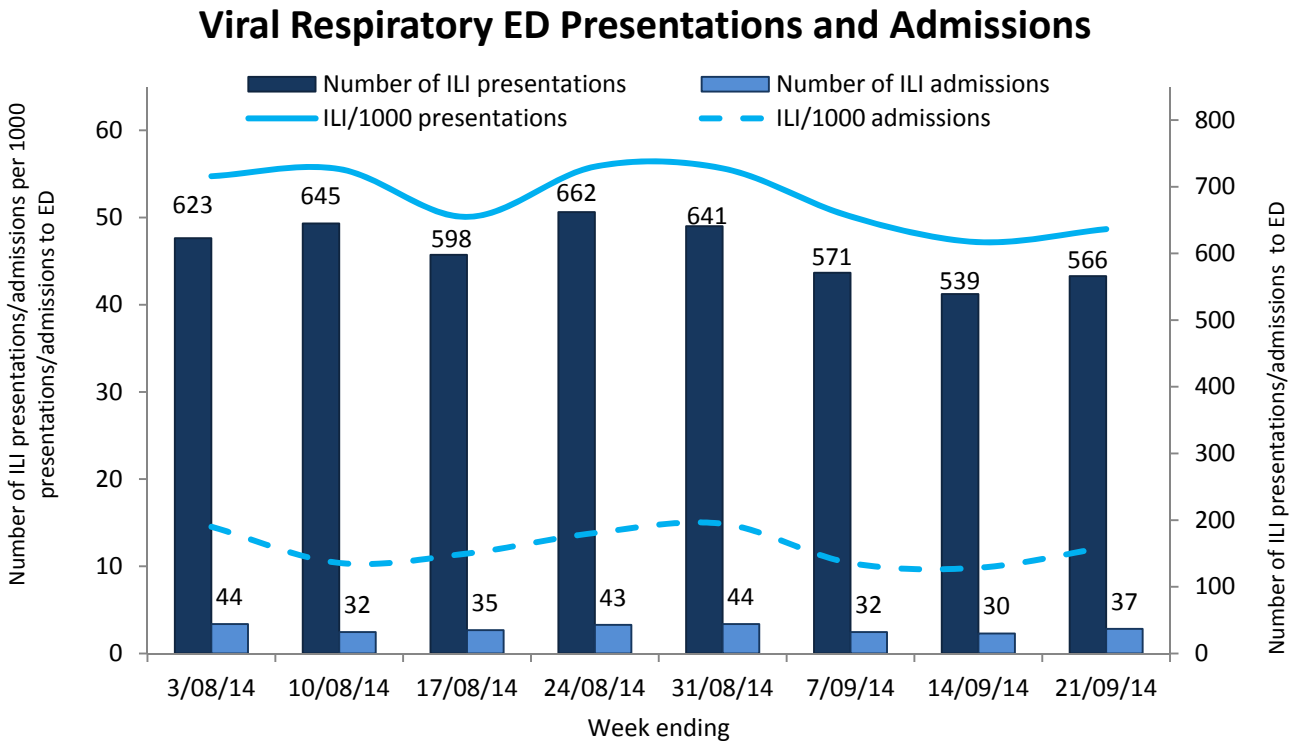
Routine and sentinel detections of influenza virus continue to decrease. Of 583 routinely collected specimens, 115 (20%) tested positive. Of 47 specimens collected at sentinel GP sites, 5 (11%) tested positive for influenza virus. The rate of ILI seen at sentinel GPs was similar to last week.

Sentinel Practitioner Network of WA - GP surveillance
Rate of ILI per 1000 consultations, 2010 - 2014

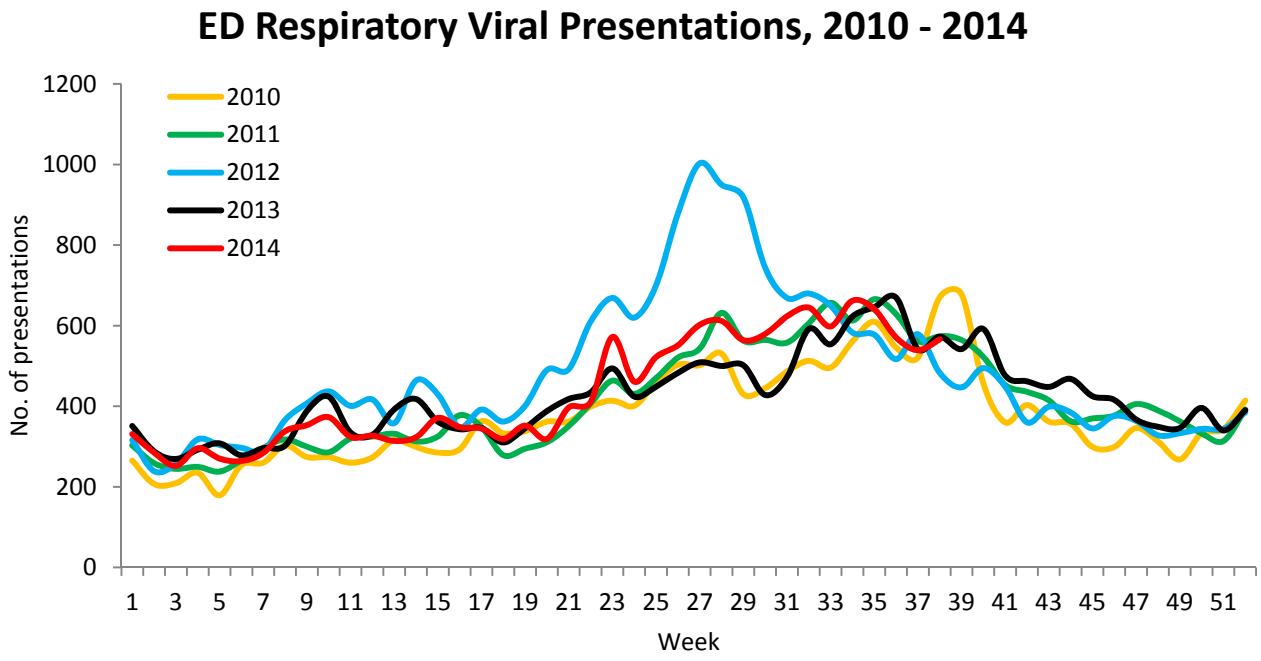


The rate of ILI presentations to SPN(WA) GPs remains around 10 cases per 1000 consultations, and is in the mid-range of figures seen at this time in recent seasons.

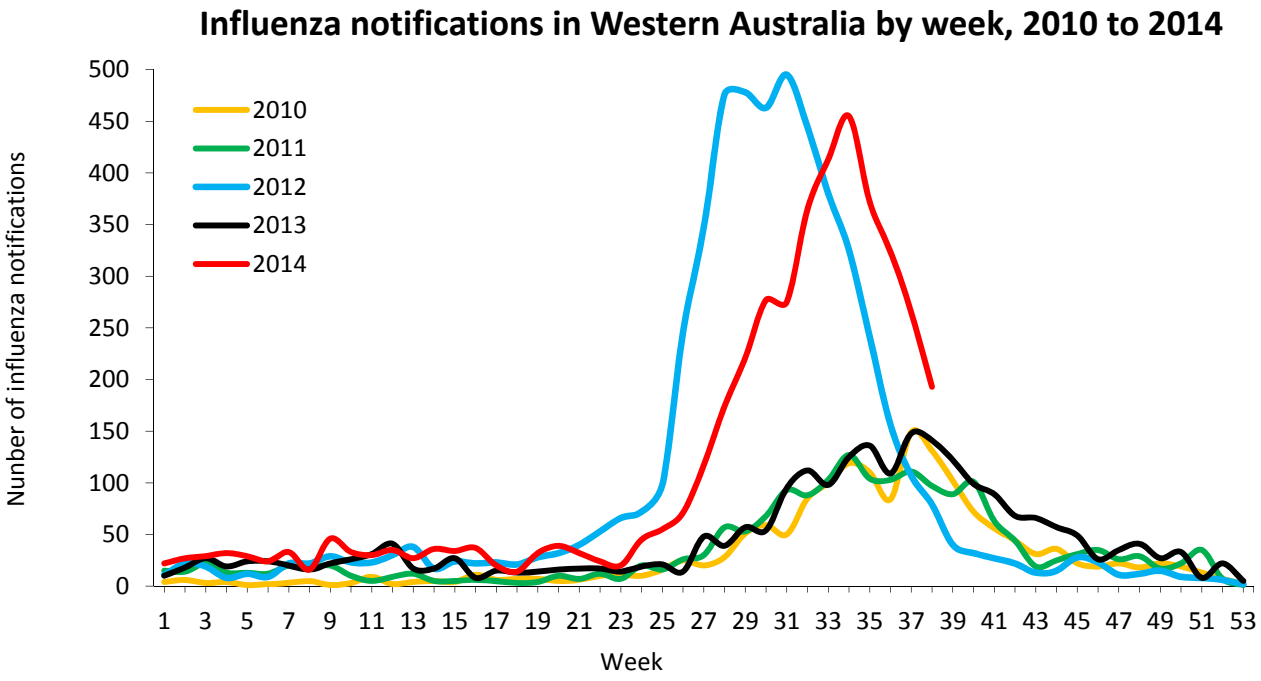
The following is a summary of current Emergency Department sentinel surveillance (EDSS) data for respiratory viral presentations.



ED presentations and admissions for viral respiratory illness increased slightly this week.

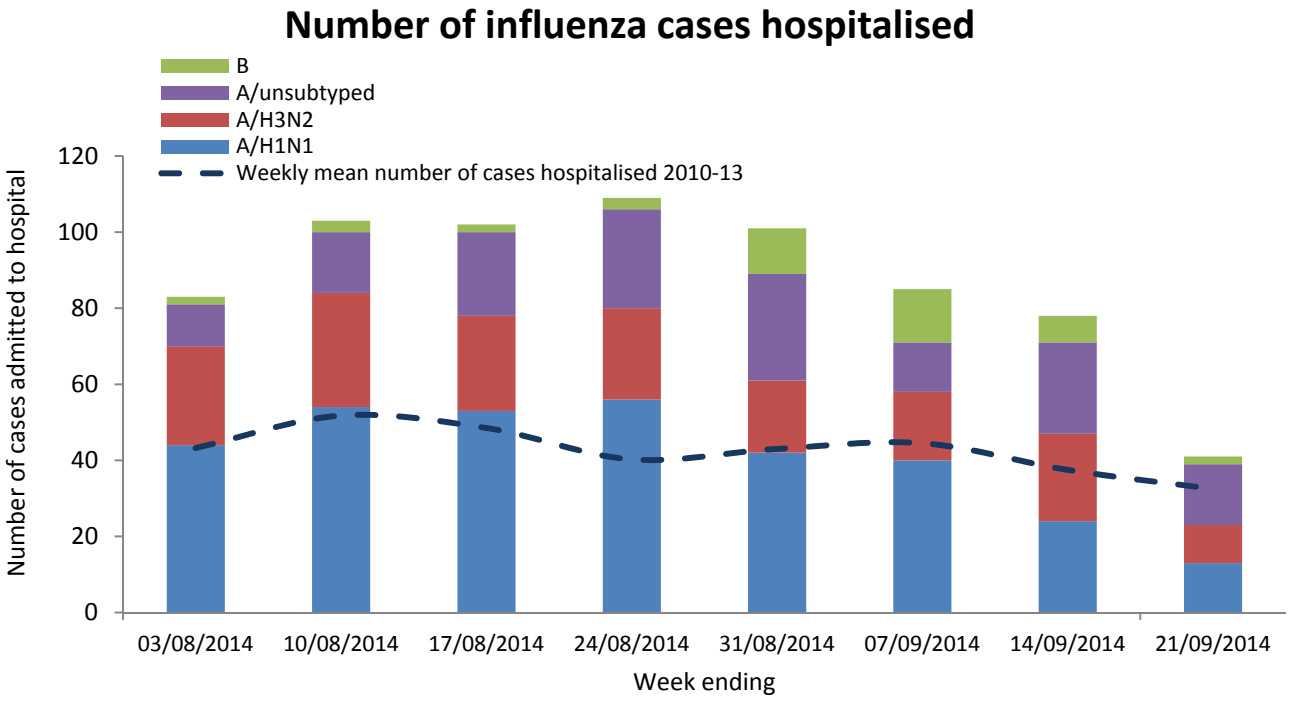


The number of respiratory viral presentations to sentinel EDs increased this week, but remains in the mid-range of values for this time period in recent years.



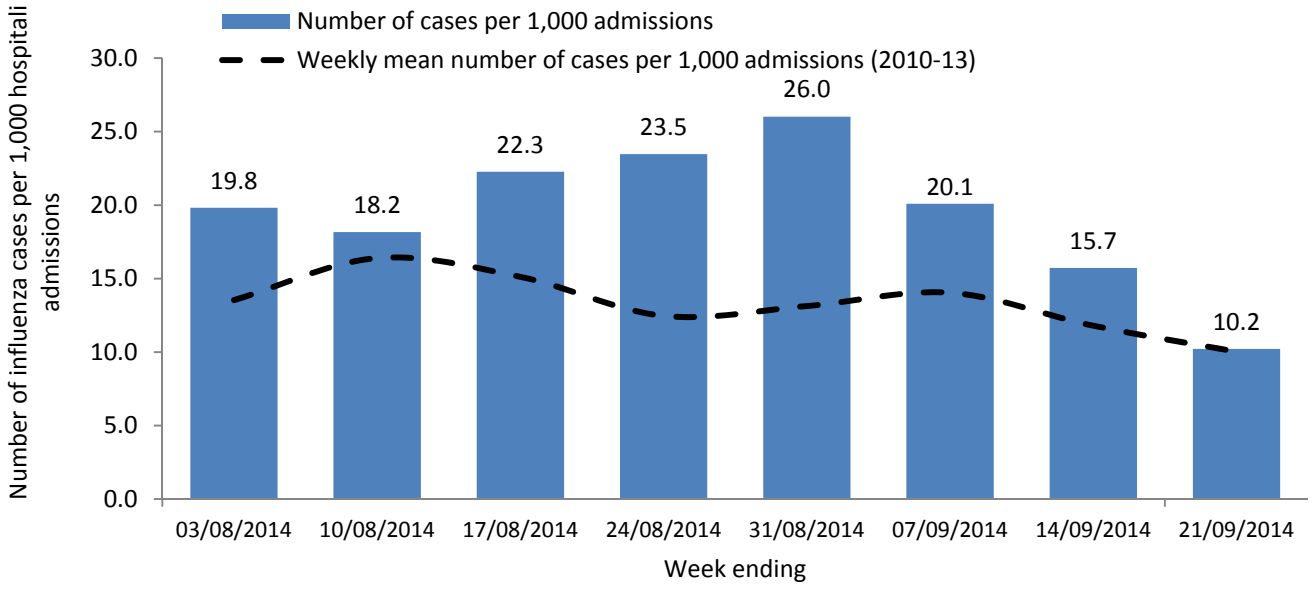
Notifications of confirmed influenza infections to the Department of Health continue to decline; 193 cases of influenza were reported in the previous week.

The graph is a summary of all influenza notifications received by the DoH, Western Australia to the end of the current reporting week, for which cases had date of symptom onset or specimen collection between 15/09/2014 and 21/09/2014.



There were 41 notified influenza cases hospitalised this week; 10 (24%) were influenza A/H3N2, 13 (32%) were influenza A/H1N1, 16 (39%) were influenza A/unsubtyped, and 2 (5%) were influenza B.

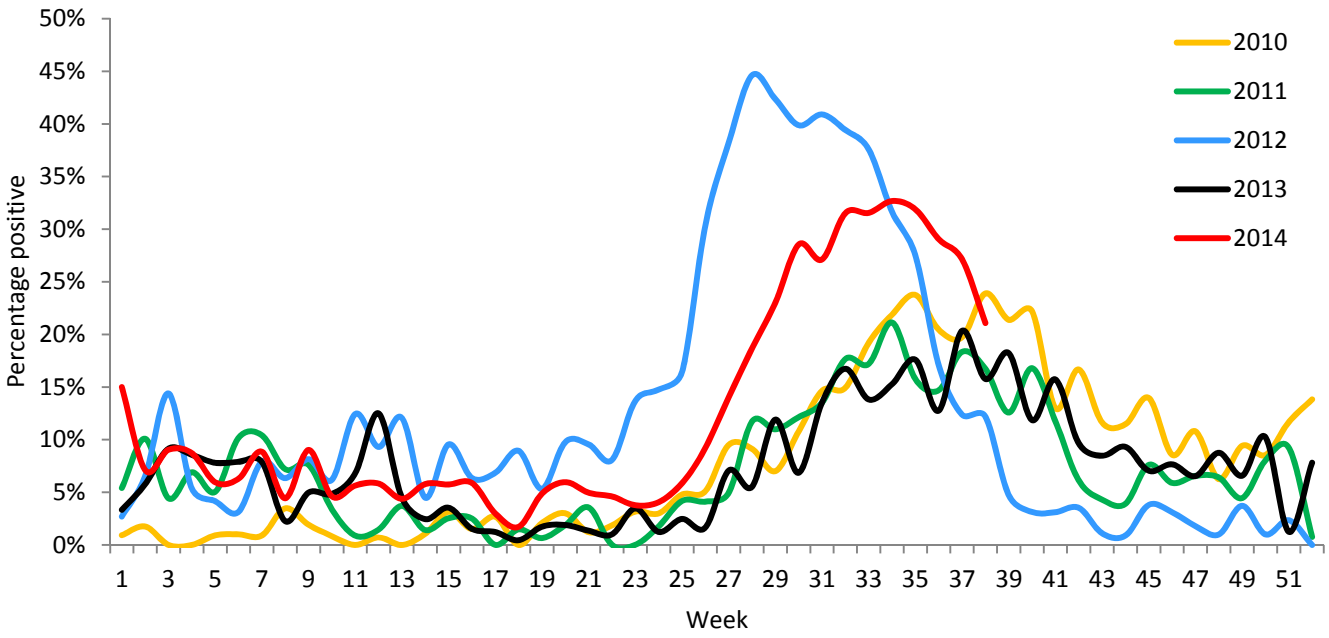
Influenza cases per 1000 hospital admissions



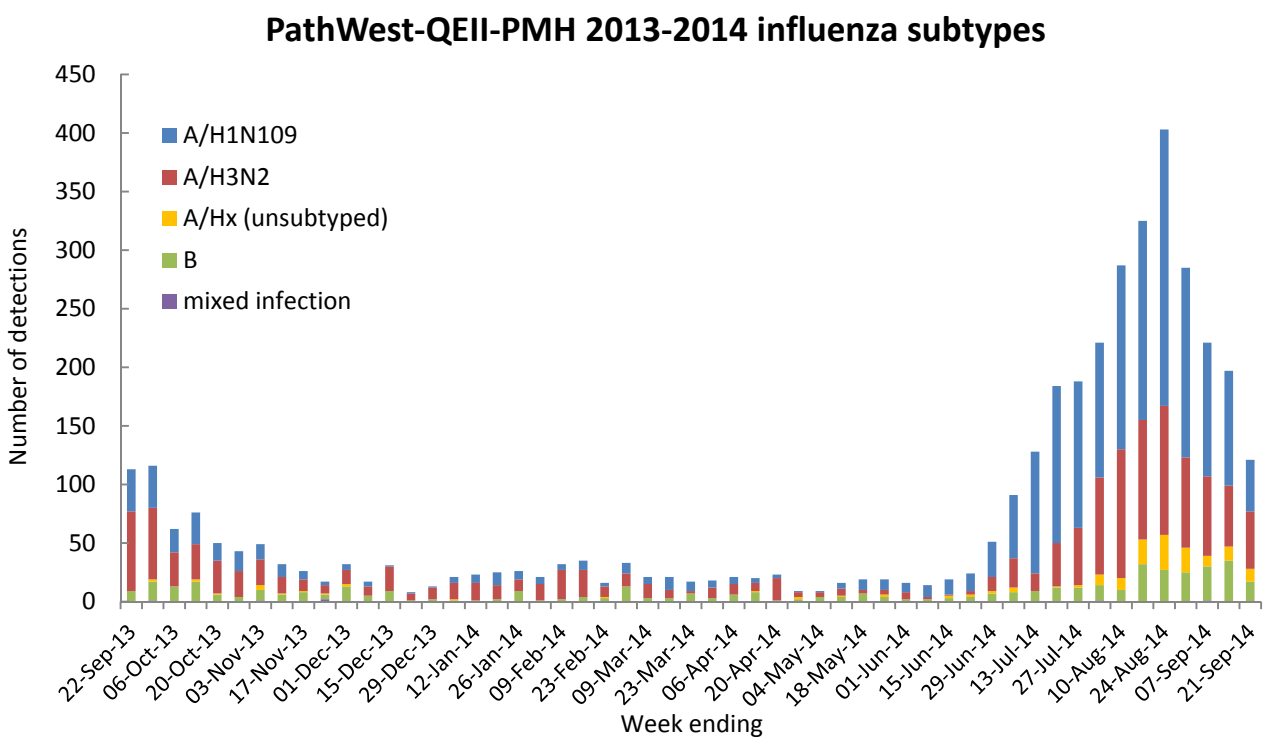
The proportion of hospital admissions notified as having laboratory-confirmed influenza decreased to 10.2 per 1,000 admissions, which is consistent with average levels for the corresponding period in recent years.

The graph is a summary of influenza notifications received by the DoH who were recorded as having a hospital admission, expressed per 1,000 admissions.

PathWest-QEII-PMH influenza percentage positive 2010 - 2014

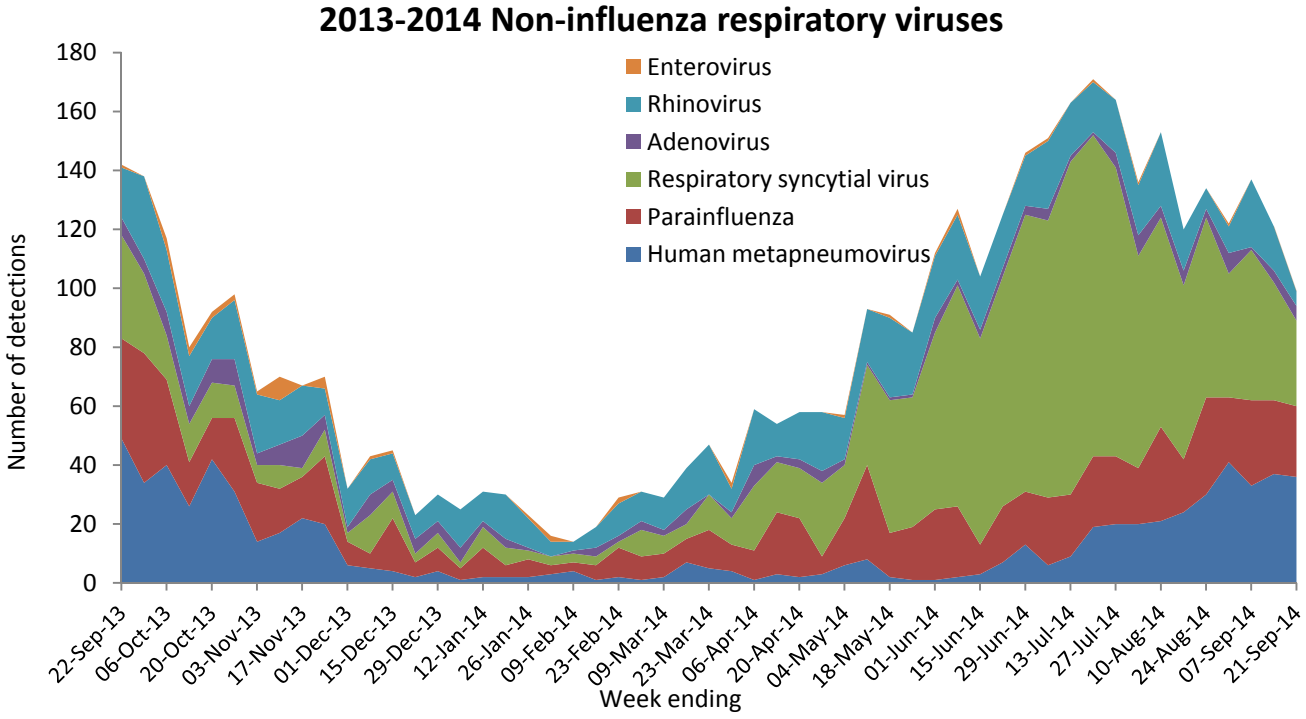


Among samples tested at PathWest-QEII-PMH this week, 22% were positive for influenza virus, which is in the mid-range of levels reported at this time during recent influenza seasons.



One hundred and twenty one influenza viruses were characterised by PathWest, QEII and PMH during this reporting week, comprising 44 (36%) influenza A/H1N1, 49 (41%) influenza A/H3N2, 11 (9%) influenza A/unsubtyped, and 17 (14%) influenza B.

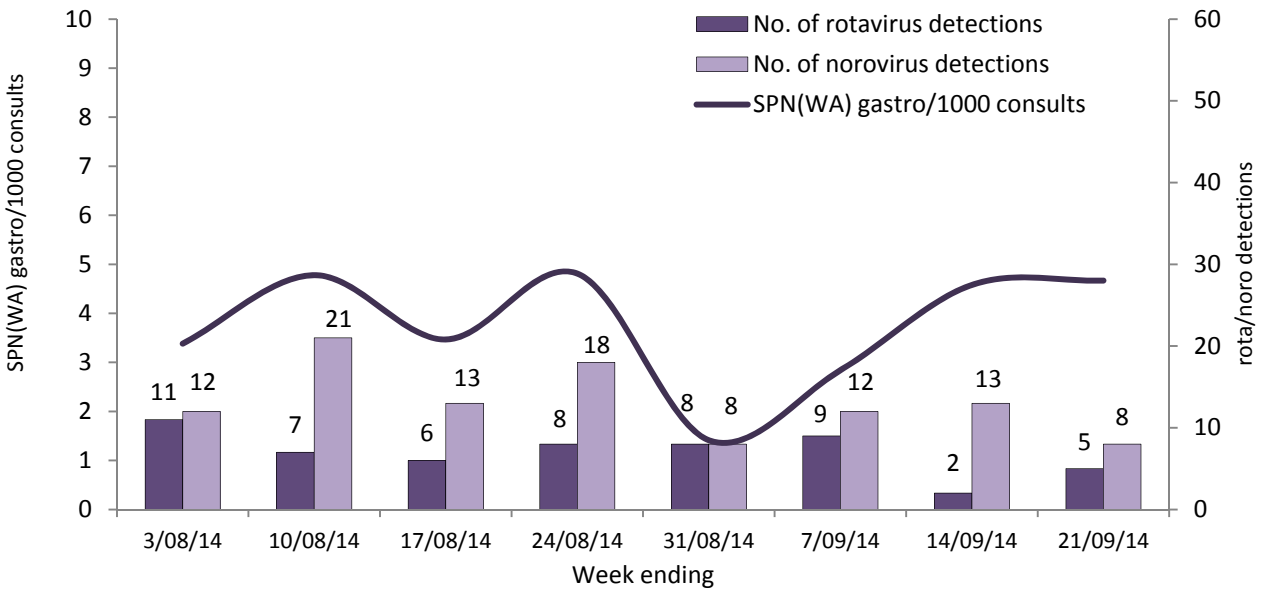
The graph is a summary of all samples that have been recorded as subtyped at PathWest QEII as of 12.01am Wednesday 24th September 2014.



Non-influenza respiratory virus activity decreased this week.

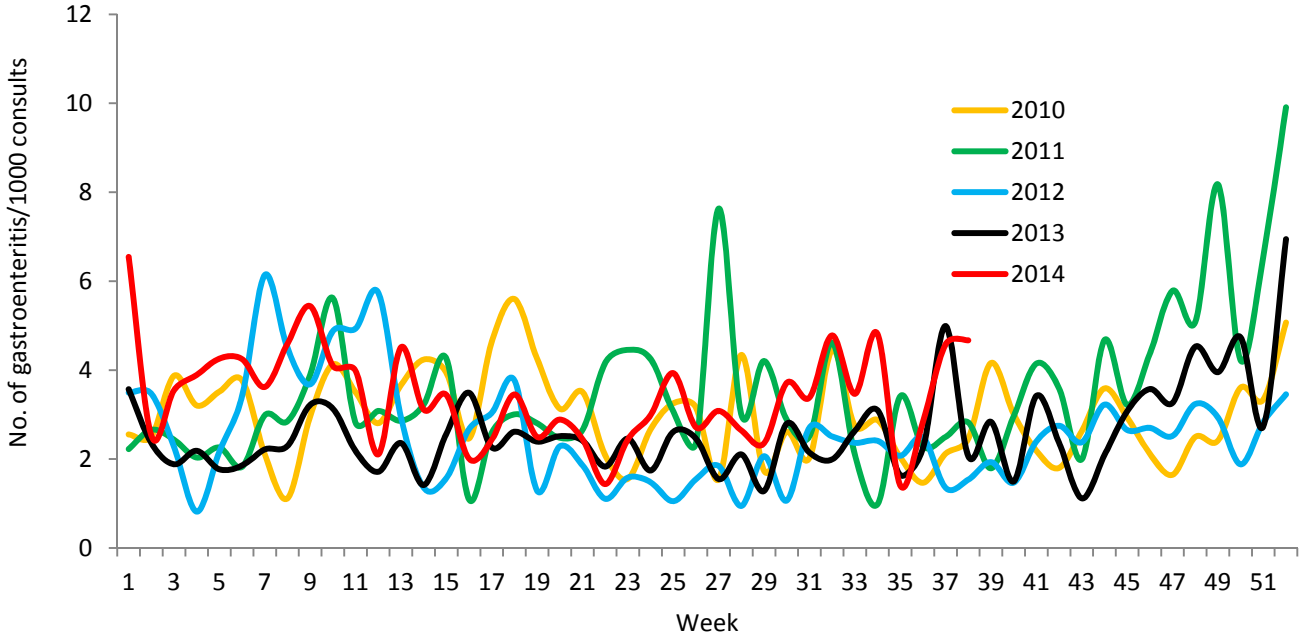
Gastroenteritis

Gastroenteritis GP Presentations



Gastroenteritis presentations to SPN(WA) GPs were similar to those of the previous week. Norovirus and rotavirus detections decreased.

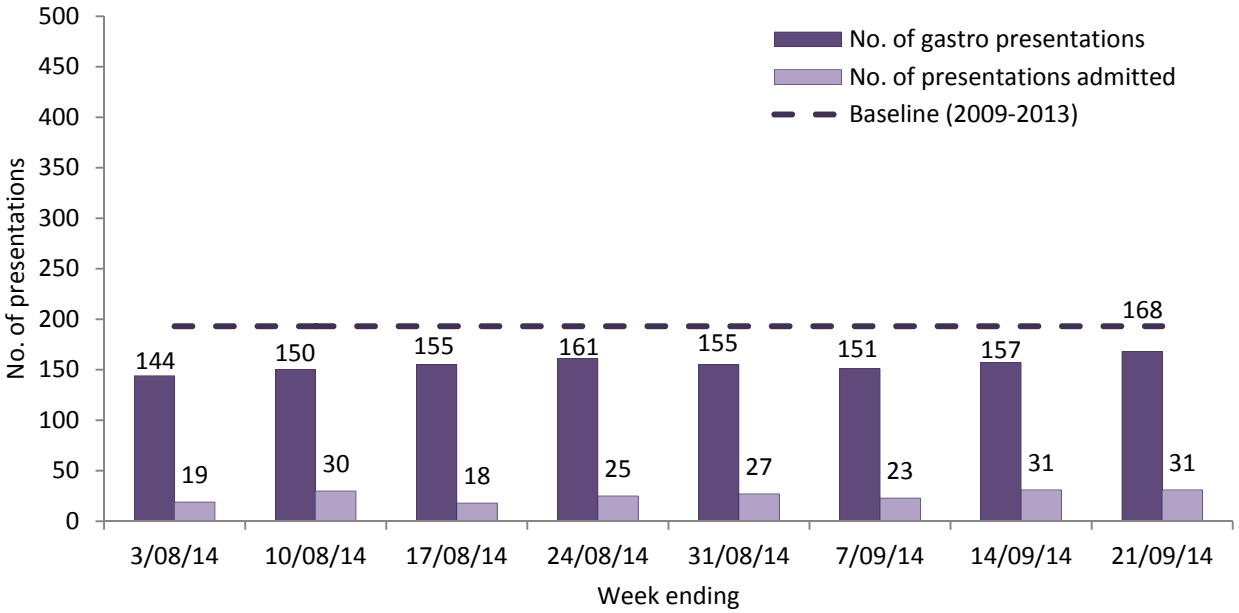
Sentinel Practitioner's Network of WA SPN(WA) - GP surveillance
Rate of gastroenteritis per 1000 consultations, 2010 - 2014



The rate of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel GPs is higher than rates seen in the same time period in recent years.

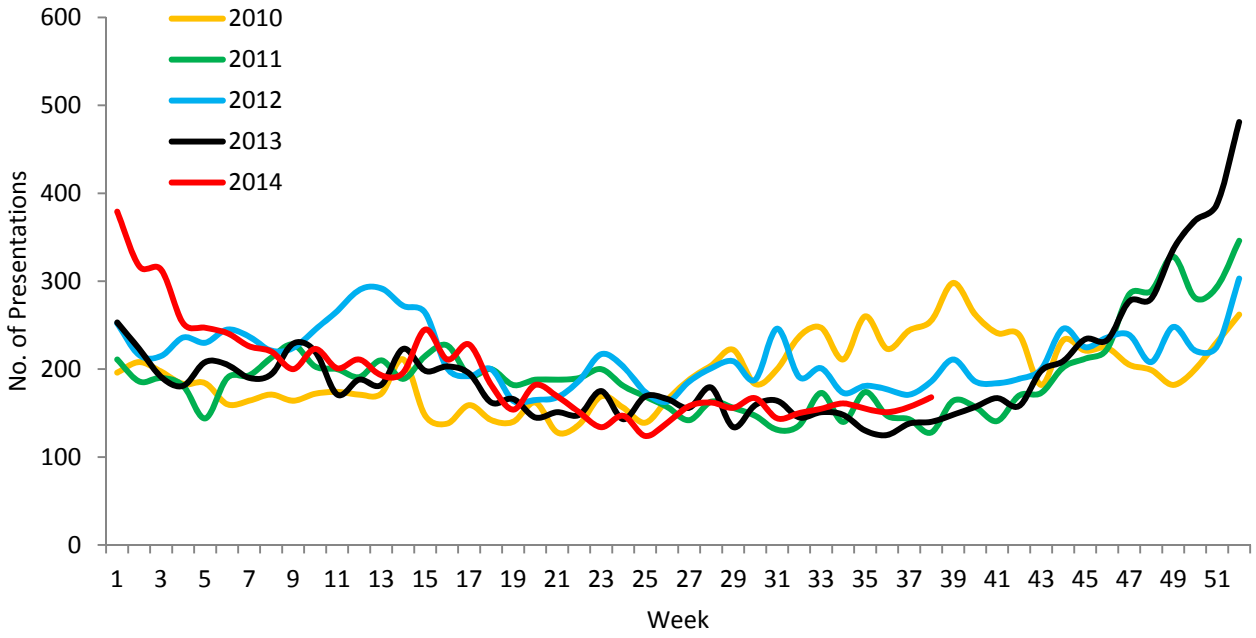
The following is a summary of current Emergency Department Sentinel Surveillance (EDSS) data for gastroenteritis presentations. Baseline levels for gastroenteritis presentations were calculated using the mean of weekly EDIS data from week 1, 2009 to week 52, 2013.

Gastroenteritis ED Presentations



Gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel EDs increased marginally this week but remain below baseline. Gastroenteritis admissions remain stable.

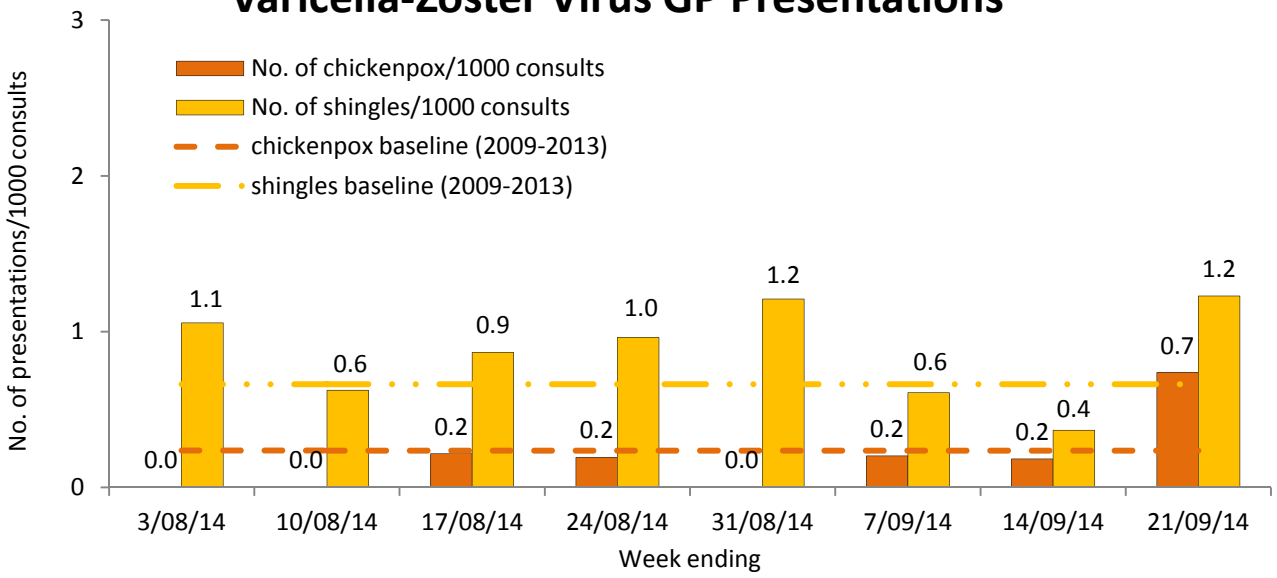
ED Gastroenteritis Presentations 2010 - 2014



The number of gastroenteritis presentations to sentinel EDs increased this week and remains in the mid-range of values experienced at the same time period in recent years.

Viral Rashes

Varicella-Zoster Virus GP Presentations

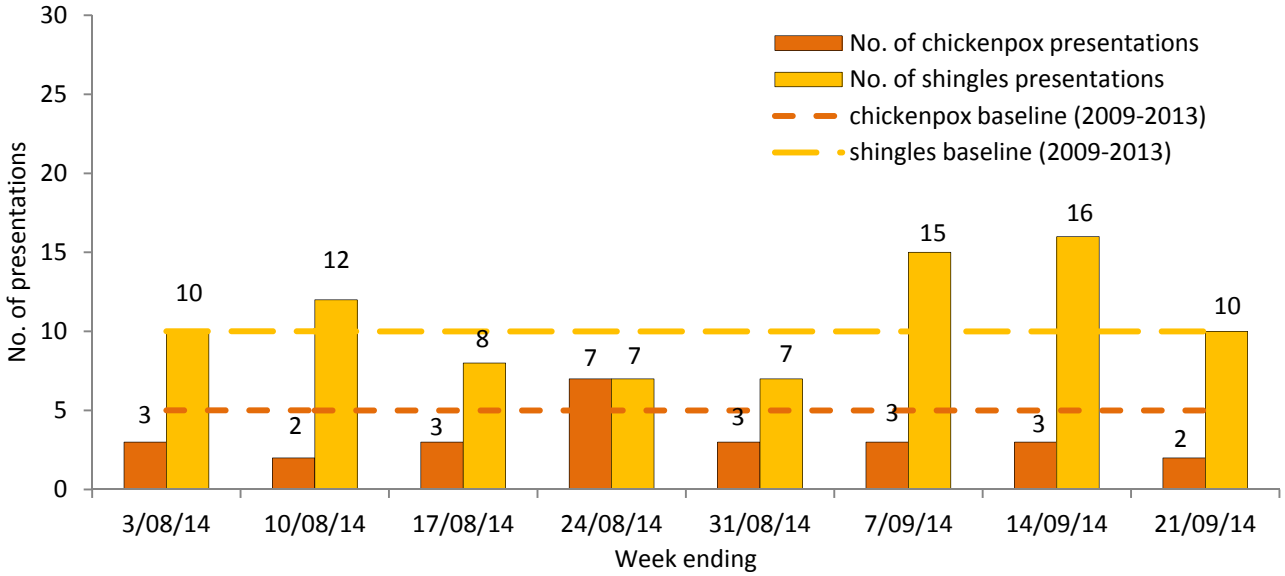


The rates of shingles and chickenpox presentations to sentinel GPs increased this week and are nearly double baseline levels. Three apparently unlinked cases of mumps were reported to the Department of Health this week. Follow-up information is pending. No cases of measles or rubella were reported.

Baseline levels for chickenpox and shingles presentations to SPN(WA) GPs per thousand consultations were calculated using the mean of weekly WA ASPREN data from week 1, 2009 to week 52, 2013.

The following is a summary of current Emergency Department sentinel surveillance (EDSS) data for varicella-zoster virus presentations. Baseline levels for varicella-zoster virus presentations were calculated using the mean of weekly EDIS data from week 1, 2009 to week 52, 2013.

Varicella-Zoster virus ED Presentations



Shingles presentations to sentinel EDs decreased to baseline level. Chickenpox presentations remained below baseline level.