

***From the office of the Medical Officer of Health, Edmonton Zone - Dr. Christopher Sikora***

*October 21, 2016*

Dear Colleagues:

Influenza virus has begun circulating in low numbers in Alberta this season. In the Southern Hemisphere this season, the influenza type A (H3N2) was predominant with co-circulation of influenza A (H1N1) pdm09 and B viruses. We would anticipate seeing these viruses circulating in Alberta.

The 2016/2017 influenza vaccines for the Northern hemisphere contain the following antigenic strains:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus
- A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus
- B/Brisbane/60/2008-like strain
- B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus (Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine only)

Immunization remains the cornerstone of influenza prevention, along with good hand washing and respiratory hygiene. Influenza vaccine is strongly recommended for those individuals at high risk for severe influenza or its complications.

**Influenza vaccine is available for your hospitalized patients** by ordering it through the hospital pharmacy. Therefore, we ask that you consider ordering vaccine, especially in the following situations:

- For inpatients if they are unlikely to access vaccine after discharge from hospital.
- For longer stay inpatients such as psychiatric patients and those individuals awaiting placement in long term care facilities.
- For those children with chronic conditions that require long or frequent admissions.

Information about the current respiratory viruses circulating in Alberta is available on the AHS website <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/services/Page13524.aspx>. This report will be updated weekly through the fall and winter.

For Public Health immunization clinic locations, dates and times, see:  
<http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/influenza.asp>

If you have any further questions, please contact the Edmonton Zone Medical Officer of Health at 780-433-3940.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Dr. Christopher Sikora  
Lead Medical Officer of Health-Edmonton Zone