

## First Influenza-Associated Pediatric Death Identified: Influenza Activity Decreasing

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health has confirmed the first pediatric influenza-associated death for the 2016-2017 season. The fatality, a four year old girl, occurred during the last week of February. Testing was positive for influenza A H3N2, the dominant strain circulating this season. This death serves as a harsh reminder that influenza contributes to significant morbidity and mortality every year. Children younger than 5 years, and especially those younger than 2 years, are at a high risk of serious [influenza complications](#), and children of any age with chronic health problems (like asthma, diabetes, and disorders of the brain or nervous system) also are at higher risk of serious complications from influenza.

Overall this season, older adults have been more likely to experience severe illness from influenza as compared to previous recent seasons. Among the 50 influenza-related deaths identified in Los Angeles County to date, 3 out of 4 (76%) were older than 65 years of age (Figure 1). The average age of local influenza-related deaths this season is 78 years old (median 83 years, range 4-102 years), substantially older than the average age among deaths of the past four years which was 62 years (median 65 years, range 0.5-99 years).

Influenza activity has decreased over the previous few weeks, but remains at elevated levels. During week 8, ending February 25, 12.0% of tests were positive for influenza among those with influenza-like-illness (ILI) presenting at our sentinel clinic sites (Table 1, Figure 2). While influenza can be unpredictable, activity will likely continue for several more weeks and can continue well into spring.

Table 1. Los Angeles County Influenza Surveillance Summary				
	2016-2017		2015-2016	
	Week 8*	YTD <sup>†</sup>	Week 8	YTD
Positive Flu Tests/Total Tests (% Positive Flu Tests)	247/2,051 (12.0%)	5,422/44,953 (12.0%)	993/3,189 (31.1%)	4,142/35,896 (11.5%)
% Flu A/B	93/7	98/2	49/51	54/46
Pediatric Flu Deaths‡	1	0	0	0
Adult Flu Deaths	0	50	12	38

\*For the 2016-2017 season, week 8 extends from 2/19/2017 to 2/25/2017.

†The influenza surveillance year started August 28, 2016.

‡Confirmed influenza death is defined by a positive lab test, ILI symptoms, and clear progression from illness to death. Data is provisional and subject to change.

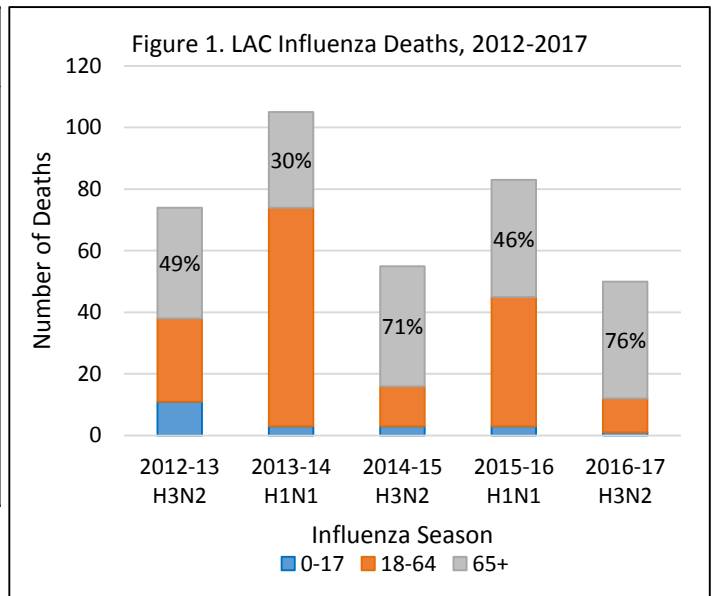


Figure 2. Influenza Percent Positive by MMWR Week, LAC 2012-2017

