

## Highlights<sup>1</sup>

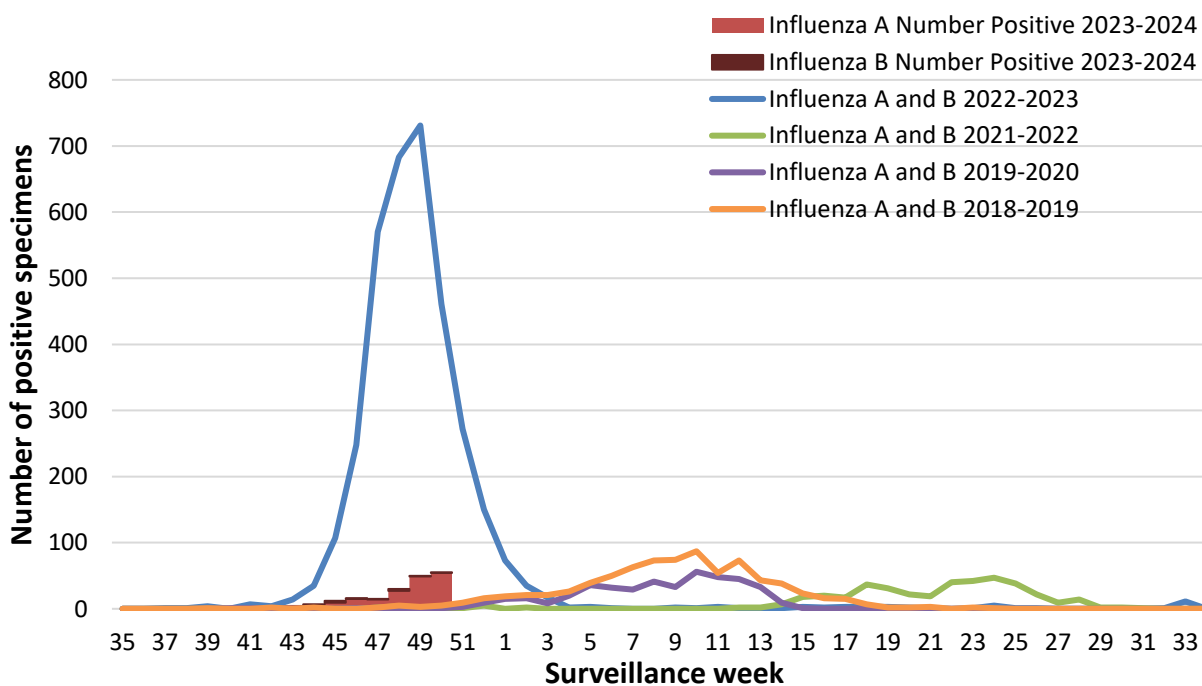
The 2023-2024 season runs from August 27, 2023 to August 24, 2024

Activity levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Localized influenza activity was reported in Northern zone. Sporadic influenza activity was reported in Eastern, Western and Central zones.</li> <li>COVID-19 PCR positives cases have been declining over the last four weeks. Activity continues to be lower than during the same time period in 2022.</li> <li>The number of RSV cases have been increasing over the last five reporting weeks.</li> </ul>
Laboratory-confirmed cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influenza:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 54 new cases of Influenza A, and 1 new case of Influenza B reported during week 50; there have been 197 cases of Influenza A and 12 cases of Influenza B reported since the start of the 2023-2024 season.</li> </ul> </li> <li>COVID-19:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 304 new cases of COVID-19 reported during week 50; there have been 5292 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the start of the 2023-2024 season.</li> </ul> </li> <li>RSV:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 117 new cases of RSV reported during week 50; there have been 468 laboratory confirmed cases of RSV since the start of the 2023-2024 season.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Severity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Influenza:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the 2023-2024 season there have been:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>41 hospitalizations (non-ICU)</li> <li>1 ICU admission</li> <li>1 death</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>COVID-19:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the 2023-2024 season there have been:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>428 hospitalizations (non-ICU)</li> <li>27 ICU admissions</li> <li>89 deaths</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Outbreaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There were 14 new long term care facility outbreaks declared in this reporting period:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 Influenza</li> <li>11 COVID-19</li> <li>3 RSV</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Syndromic surveillance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The percentage of emergency department visits for influenza like illness (ILI) was 1.2% during this reporting period.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix for data notes.

**INFLUENZA**

**Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by week (N=209), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia<sup>2</sup>**



**Table 1: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by zone, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>3</sup>**

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD			CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL
Western	4	1	5	6	6	12
Northern	23	0	23	85	2	87
Eastern	14	0	14	36	0	36
Central	13	0	13	70	4	74
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>209</b>

<sup>2</sup> There were no reported influenza cases during the 2020-2021 season.

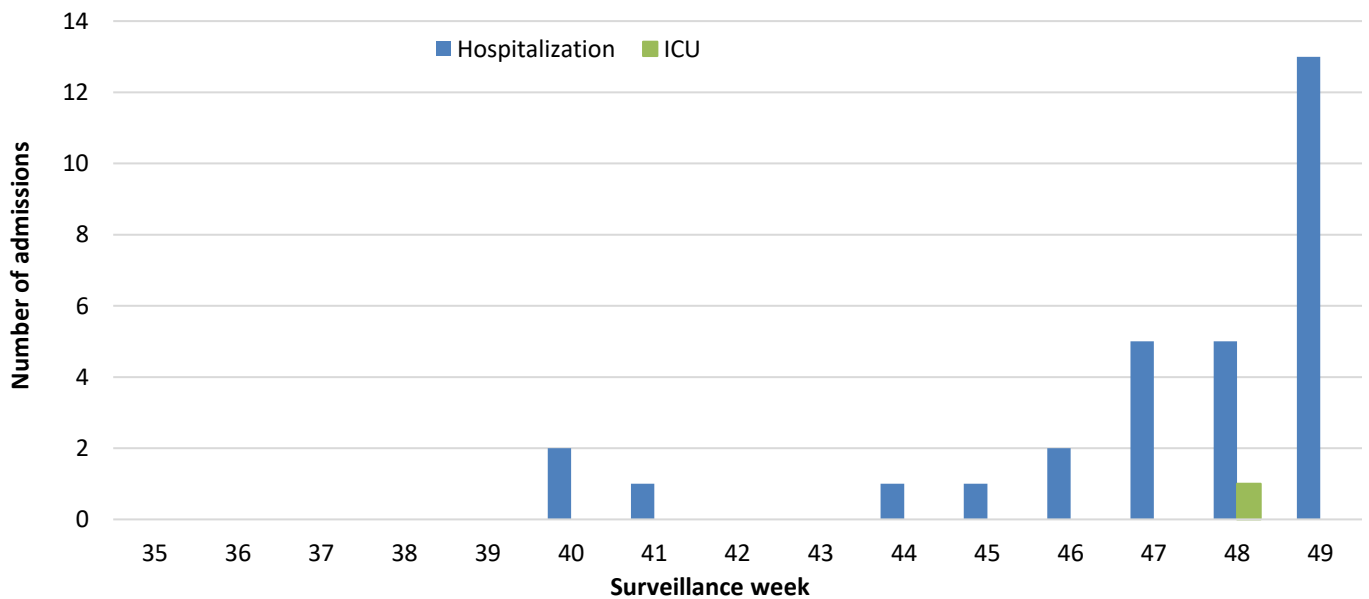
<sup>3</sup> Influenza case data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

Week 50 (December 10, 2023 to December 16, 2023)

**Table 2: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by age group, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia**

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD			CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL
0-4	9	0	9	33	5	38
5-19	6	1	7	29	4	33
20-44	12	0	12	37	0	37
45-64	12	0	12	40	0	40
65+	15	0	15	58	3	61
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>209</b>

**Figure 2. Number of influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>4</sup>**



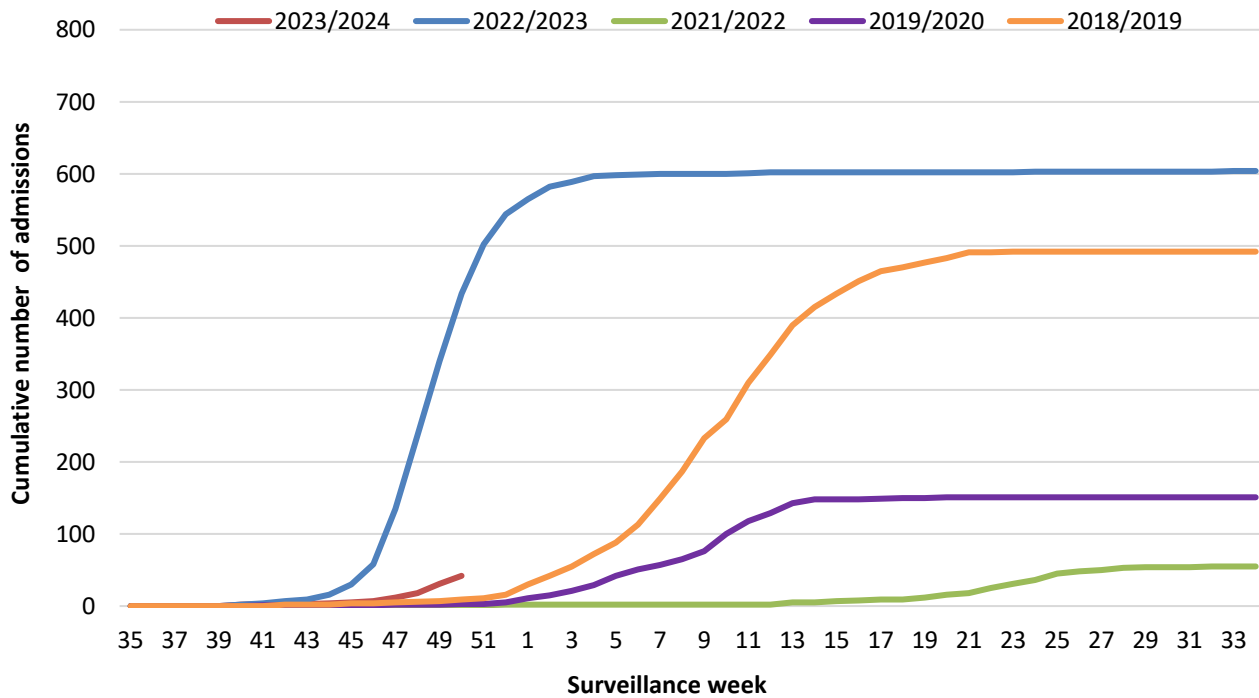
<sup>4</sup> Due to influenza outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Week 50 (December 10, 2023 to December 16, 2023)

**Table 3: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for influenza positive patients, based on most severe outcome, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>5</sup>**

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	4	0	0
5-19	4	0	0
20-44	4	0	0
45-64	9	1	0
65+	20	0	1
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

**Figure 3: Cumulative influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by week, 2023-24 season compared to prior seasons, Nova Scotia<sup>6</sup>**



<sup>5</sup> In this table, only the most severe outcome for a case is included; numbers of hospitalizations and ICU admissions could therefore decline over time, if a person counted in one of those columns moves to a more severe outcome.

<sup>6</sup> There were no reported cases of influenza during the 2020-2021 season.

COVID-19

Figure 4: Laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by week (N=5292), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous season, Nova Scotia

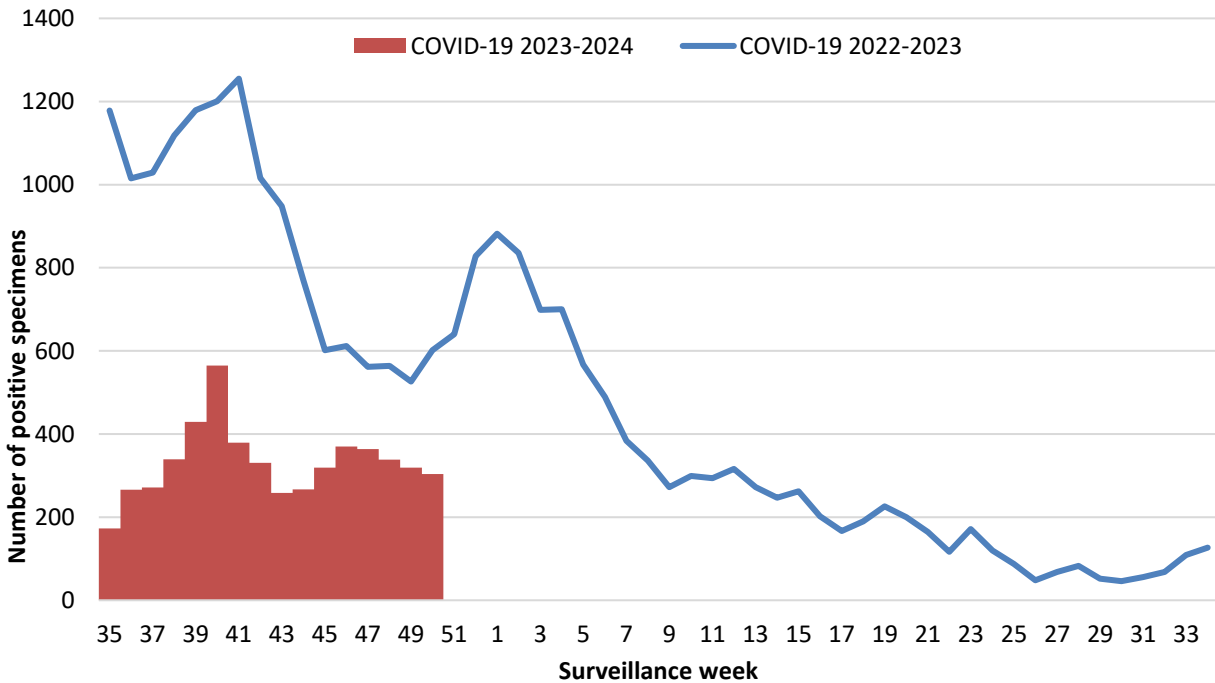


Table 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by zone, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>7</sup>

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Western	49	1193
Northern	52	1046
Eastern	68	884
Central	135	2169
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>5292</b>

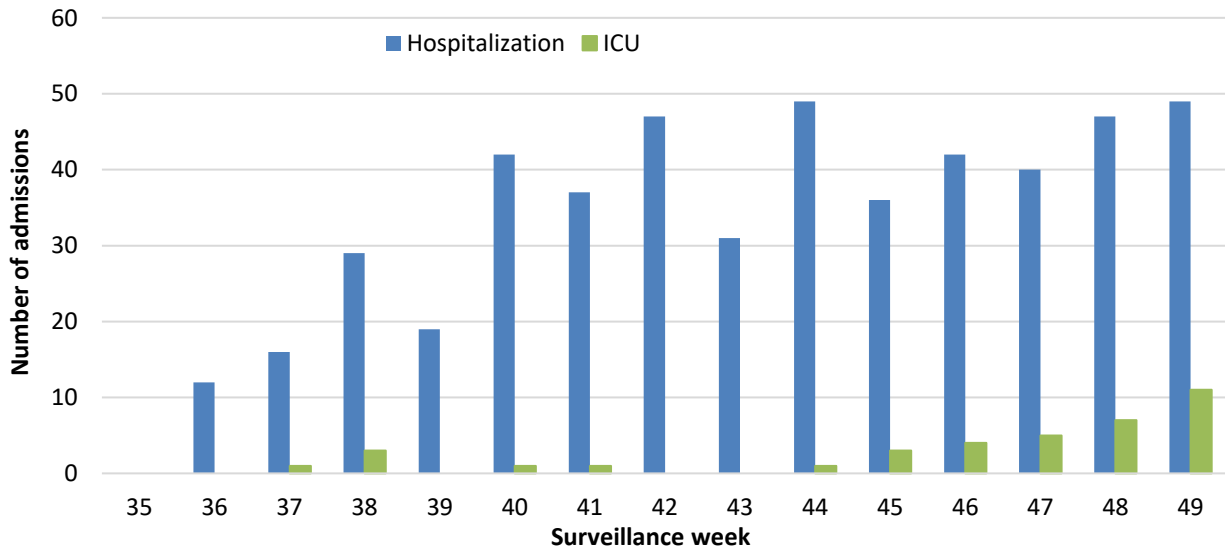
<sup>7</sup> COVID-19 case data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

Week 50 (December 10, 2023 to December 16, 2023)

**Table 5. Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by age group, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia**

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-4	7	66
5-19	3	72
20-44	39	778
45-64	64	1176
65+	191	3200
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>5292</b>

**Figure 5: Number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>8</sup>**



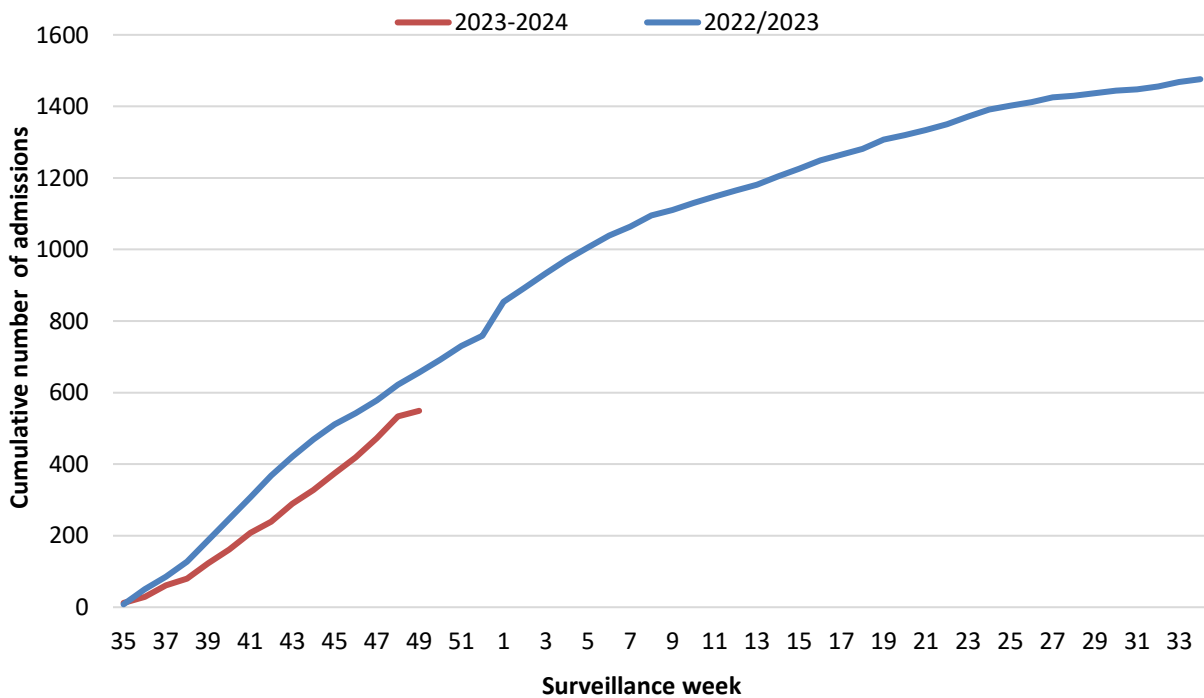
<sup>8</sup> Due to COVID-19 outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Week 50 (December 10, 2023 to December 16, 2023)

Table 6: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for COVID-19 positive patients, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>9</sup>

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	3	0	0
5-19	4	0	0
20-44	11	3	0
45-64	44	8	4
65+	366	16	85
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>89</b>

Figure 6: Cumulative Covid-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by week, 2023-24 season compared to prior seasons, Nova Scotia



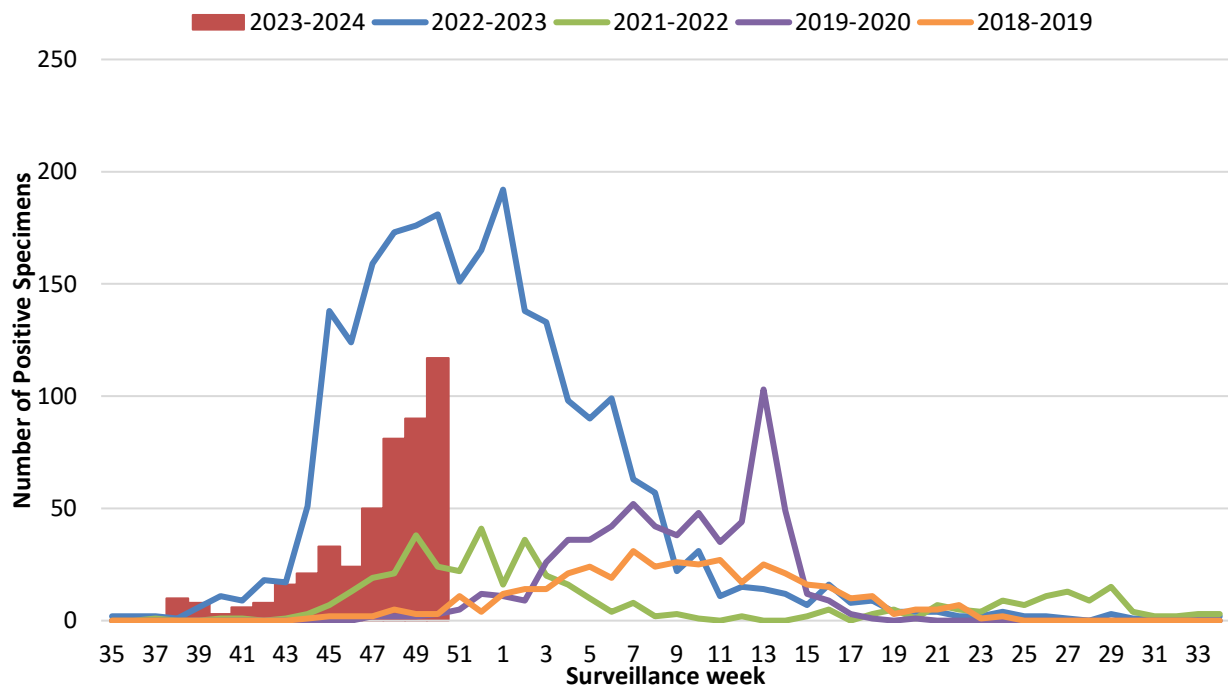
<sup>9</sup> In this table, only the most severe outcome for a case is included; numbers of hospitalizations and ICU admissions could therefore decline over time, if a person counted in one of those columns moves to a more severe outcome. COVID-19 outcome data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

RSV

**Table 7: Number of laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by age group, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia**

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-5 months	26	97
6-11 months	7	31
12-23 months	21	66
2-4 years	19	108
5-19 years	10	34
20-64 years	11	44
65+ years	23	88
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>468</b>

**Figure 7: Laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by week (N=468), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia<sup>10</sup>**

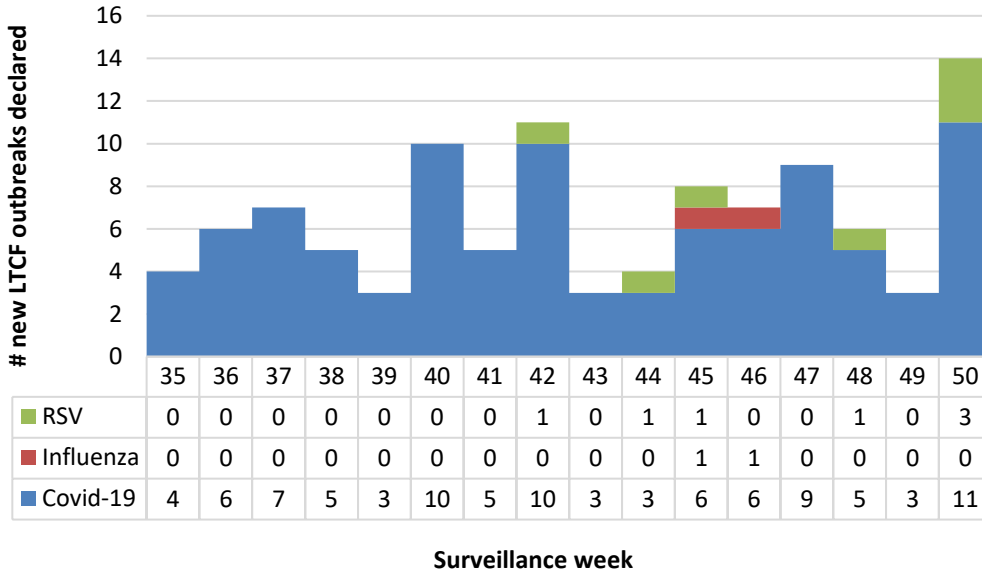


<sup>10</sup> There were no reported RSV cases during the 2020-2021 season. There has been a change in testing methods with the implementation of multiplex respiratory virus PCR. This may increase the number of cases detected.



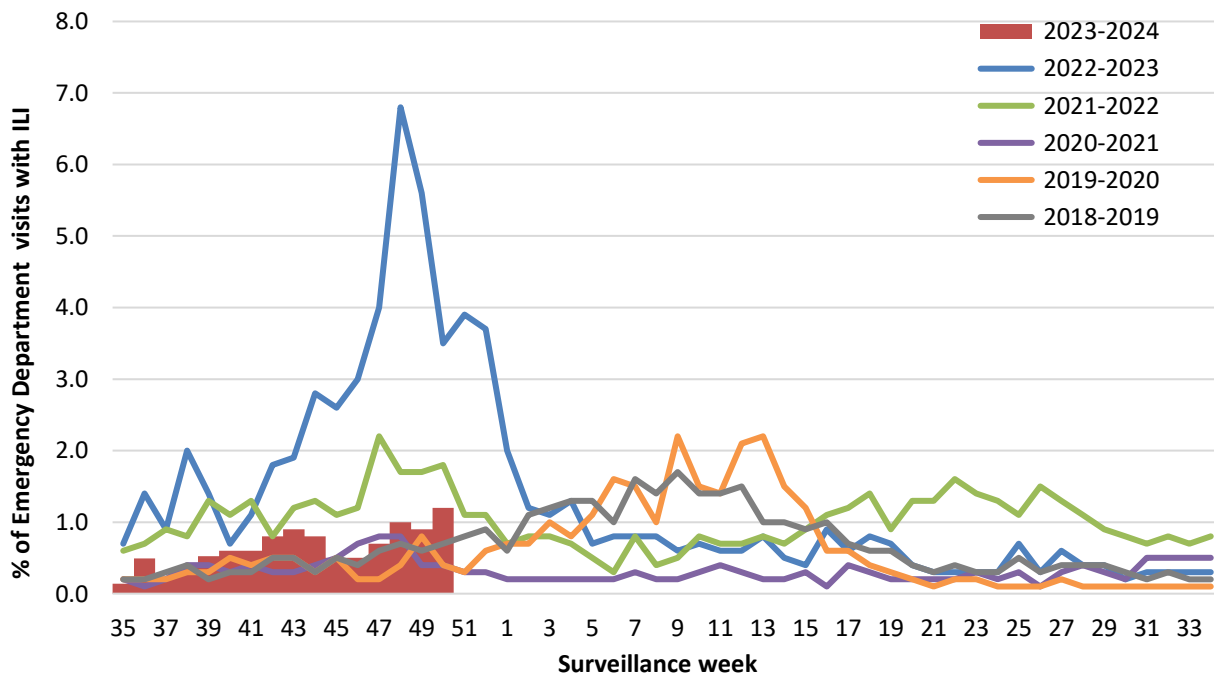
RESPIRATORY OUTBREAKS

Figure 8. Number of new long term care facility respiratory outbreaks by week and respiratory virus (influenza, COVID-19 and RSV), 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>11</sup>



SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE

Figure 9: Percentage of emergency department visits due to ILI by report week, 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia



<sup>11</sup> Outbreak definitions can be found in the Appendix.

**OTHER RESPIRATORY ILLNESS**

**Table 8: Number of positive specimens for other respiratory viruses, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia**

<b>PATHOGEN</b>	<b>CURRENT PERIOD</b>	<b>CUMULATIVE 2023-2024</b>
<b>Adenovirus</b>	2	26
<b>Bocavirus</b>	0	0
<b>Coronavirus*</b>	0	0
<b>Enterovirus/Rhinovirus</b>	4	170
<b>Metapneumovirus</b>	0	2
<b>Parainfluenza</b>	0	27

*\*Excludes COVID-19*

## Week 50 (December 10, 2023 to December 16, 2023)

### APPENDIX – DATA NOTES AND DEFINITIONS

#### DATA NOTES

- A surveillance week runs from Sunday to Saturday. Nova Scotia’s 2023-2024 season is aligned with the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) FluWatch surveillance weeks.
  - This year runs from August 27, 2023 (Week 35) to August 24, 2024 (Week 34).
- Notifications of hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths may lag; deaths are particularly affected. Additionally, data are incomplete for the most recent week because COVID-19 and influenza outcome reporting from public health occurs on Wednesdays. The most recent surveillance week is not included in graphs showing outcomes by week because of this.
- The definition for a COVID-19 hospitalization was changed in May 2023.
- A case can have more than one outcome (e.g., be hospitalized, and later move to the ICU); multiple outcomes per case are counted in graphs showing outcomes by week, where applicable.
- RSV is not a notifiable disease in Nova Scotia.
- Testing eligibility guidelines and the use of multiplex PCR testing affect the number of cases identified and reported.
  - A multiplex PCR tests for multiple respiratory pathogens simultaneously. Routine multiplex PCR tests include influenza, RSV, and Covid-19.
  - In the 2022-2023 season, Nova Scotia saw increased accessibility to a multiplex PCR testing which likely increased detection in community of Influenza and RSV.
  - Testing is limited to specific populations and the numbers reported here under-represent the true burden of disease in the community.

#### DEFINITIONS USED IN RESPIRATORY SURVEILLANCE, AND USEFUL LINKS, 2023-2024

See: [Nova Scotia’s Respiratory Response Plan](#)

#### ACRONYM LIST

**ICU** Intensive care unit  
**ILI** Influenza-like illness  
**RSV** Respiratory syncytial virus

#### OUTBREAK DEFINITIONS

##### **Lab Confirmed COVID-19 Outbreak**

Two or more laboratory-confirmed resident cases, AND at least one is a facility acquired case, with all cases epidemiologically linked within the LTCF in a 10-day period

##### **Lab Confirmed Influenza Outbreak**

Two or more resident cases of ILI (influenza-like illness), where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of influenza, within the LTCF in a 7-day period

## Week 50 (December 10, 2023 to December 16, 2023)

### Lab Confirmed Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Outbreak

Two or more symptomatic residents where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of RSV, epidemiologically linked within the LTCF in a 7-day period

### ILI CASE DEFINITION

Acute onset of respiratory illness with fever and cough and with one or more of the following – sore throat, arthralgia, myalgia or prostration which is likely due to influenza. In children under 5, gastrointestinal symptoms may also be present. In patients under 5 or 65 and older, fever may not be prominent.

### NATIONAL FLUWATCH DEFINITIONS FOR INFLUENZA ACTIVITY LEVELS

<b>No activity</b>	No laboratory-confirmed influenza detections in the reporting week, however, sporadically occurring ILI* may be reported
<b>Sporadic</b>	Sporadically occurring ILI* and lab confirmed influenza detection(s) with <b>no outbreaks</b> detected within the influenza surveillance region
<b>Localized</b>	(1) Evidence of increased ILI* and (2) lab confirmed influenza detection(s) together with (3) outbreaks occurring in schools, hospitals, residential institutions and/or other types of facilities occurring in less than 50% of the influenza surveillance region
<b>Widespread</b>	(1) Evidence of increased ILI* and (2) lab confirmed influenza detection(s) together with (3) outbreaks occurring in schools, hospitals, residential institutions and/or other types of facilities occurring in greater than or equal to 50% of the influenza surveillance region

### OTHER CASE DEFINITIONS

See: [Surveillance Guidelines | novascotia.ca](#)

### LINKS TO OTHER WEEKLY INFLUENZA REPORTS

Canada: [Weekly influenza reports - Canada.ca](#)

World: <https://www.who.int/teams/global-influenza-programme/surveillance-and-monitoring/influenza-updates/current-influenza-update>

US: [www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly)