

Highlights¹

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

Activity levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of influenza PCR positives has been generally increasing since week 48. The number of COVID-19 PCR positives has stabilized in the past two weeks, following a gradual decline since week 47. The number of PCR positives continues to be lower than during the same time period in 2022/23. The number of laboratory-detected RSV cases has been declining since week 1. The number of PCR positives is lower than during the same time period in 2022/23.
Laboratory-confirmed cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenza: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 244 new cases of Influenza A, and 32 new cases of Influenza B reported during week 4; there have been 1312 cases of Influenza A and 104 cases of Influenza B reported since the start of the 2023-2024 season. COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 160 new cases of COVID-19 reported during week 4; there have been 6615 laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 since the start of the 2023-2024 season. RSV: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 68 new cases of RSV reported during week 4; there have been 1088 laboratory confirmed cases of RSV since the start of the 2023-2024 season.
Severity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Influenza: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the 2023-2024 season there have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 253 hospitalizations (non-ICU) 20 ICU admissions 26 deaths COVID-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the 2023-2024 season there have been: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 664 hospitalizations (non-ICU) 57 ICU admissions 121 deaths
Outbreaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were 4 new long term care facility outbreaks declared in this reporting period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 influenza 2 COVID-19 2 RSV
Syndromic surveillance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The percentage of emergency department visits for influenza like illness (ILI) was 0.8% during this reporting period.

¹ See Appendix for data notes.

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

INFLUENZA

Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by week (N=1416), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia²

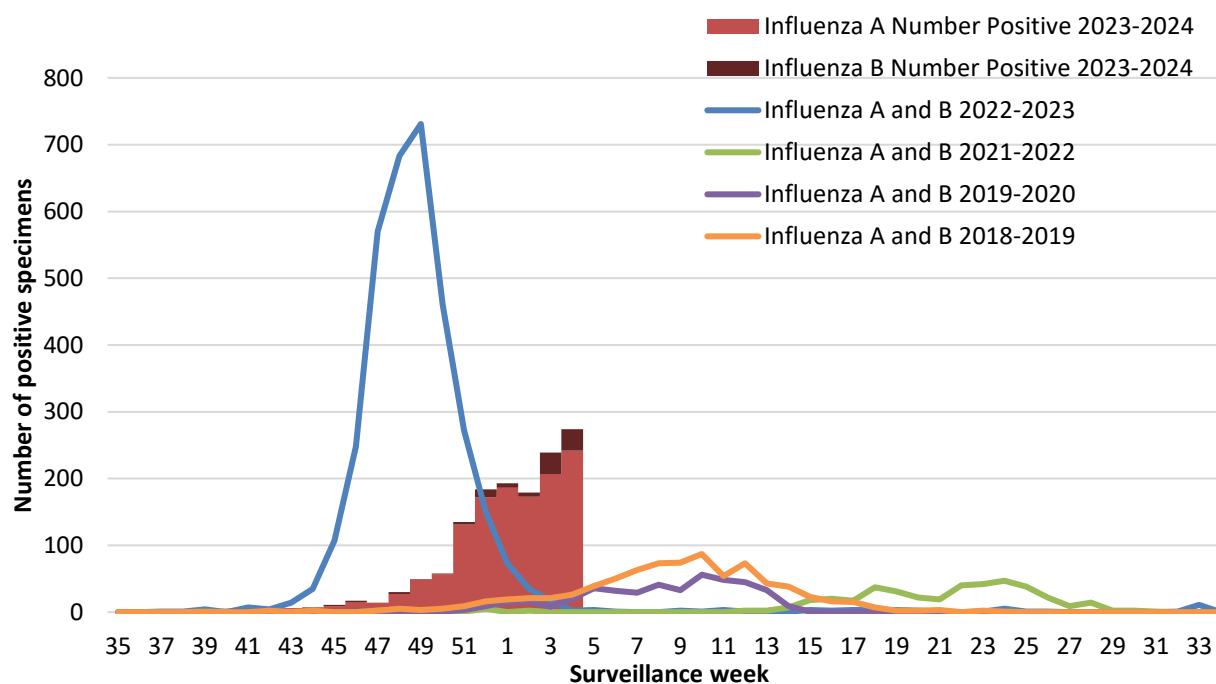


Table 1: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by zone, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia³

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD			CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL	INFLUENZA A	INFLUENZA B	TOTAL
Western	34	2	36	163	16	179
Northern	88	3	91	457	11	468
Eastern	52	25	77	353	70	423
Central	70	2	72	339	7	346
Nova Scotia Total	244	32	276	1312	104	1416

² There were no reported influenza cases during the 2020-2021 season.

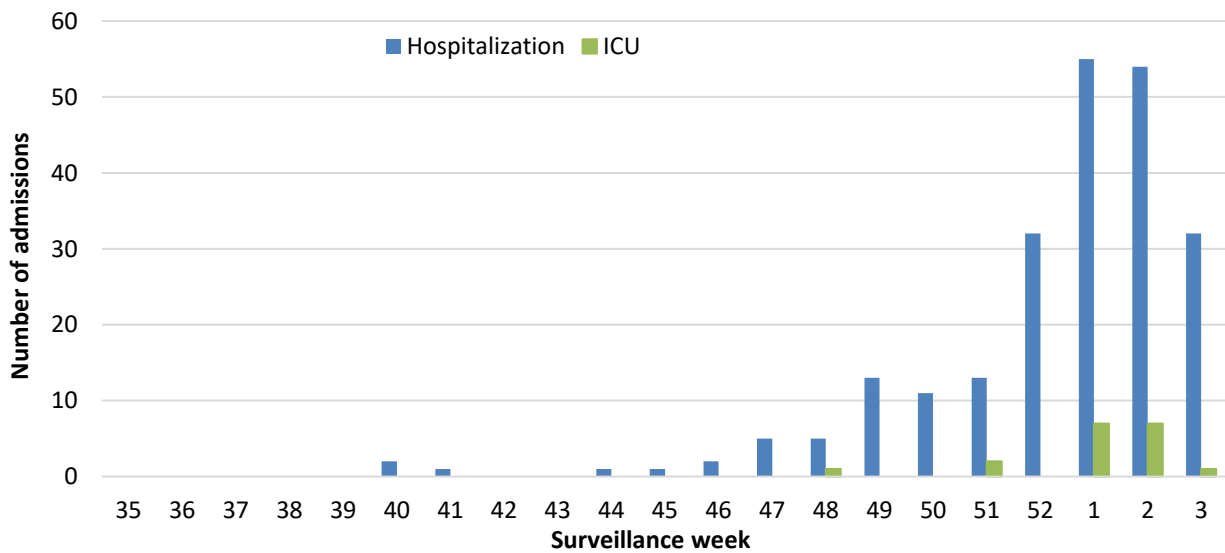
³ Influenza case data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

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	30	5	35	155	15	170
5-19	38	14	52	170	51	221
20-44	50	10	60	251	27	278
45-64	51	2	53	290	7	297
65+	75	1	76	446	4	450
Nova Scotia Total	244	32	276	1312	104	1416

Figure 2. Number of influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁴



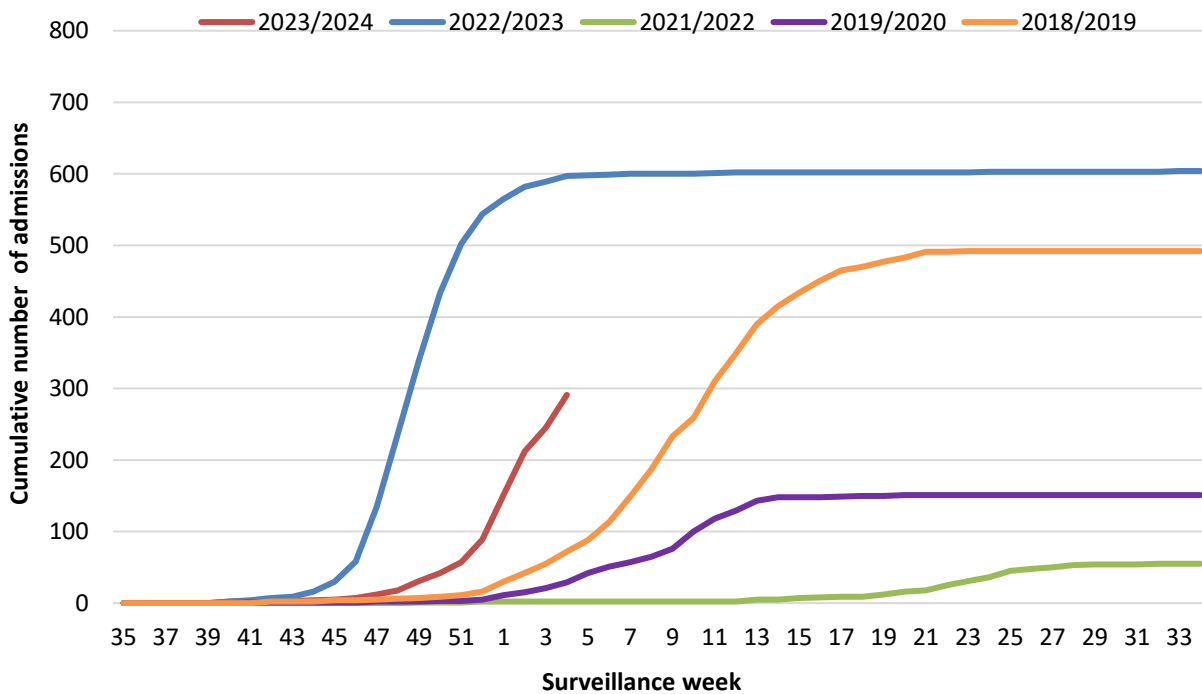
⁴ Due to influenza outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

Table 3: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for influenza positive patients, based on most severe outcome, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁵

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	17	0	0
5-19	14	0	0
20-44	22	3	1
45-64	63	10	2
65+	137	7	23
Nova Scotia Total	253	20	26

Figure 3: Cumulative influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by week, 2023-24 season compared to prior seasons, Nova Scotia⁶



⁵ 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. Influenza outcome data are continuously entered and cleaned. Past-week data may be modified.

⁶ There were no reported cases of influenza during the 2020-2021 season.

COVID-19

Figure 4: Laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by week (N=6615), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous season, Nova Scotia

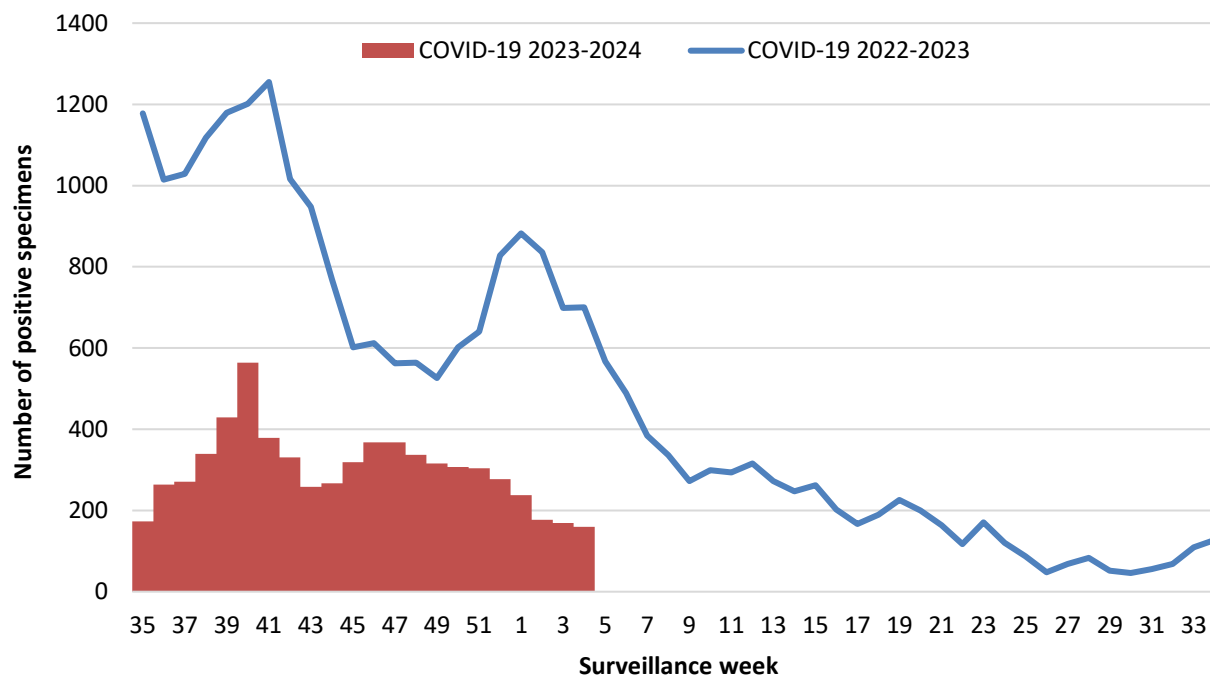


Table 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by zone, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁷

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Western	31	1487
Northern	25	1272
Eastern	35	1119
Central	69	2737
Nova Scotia Total	160	6615

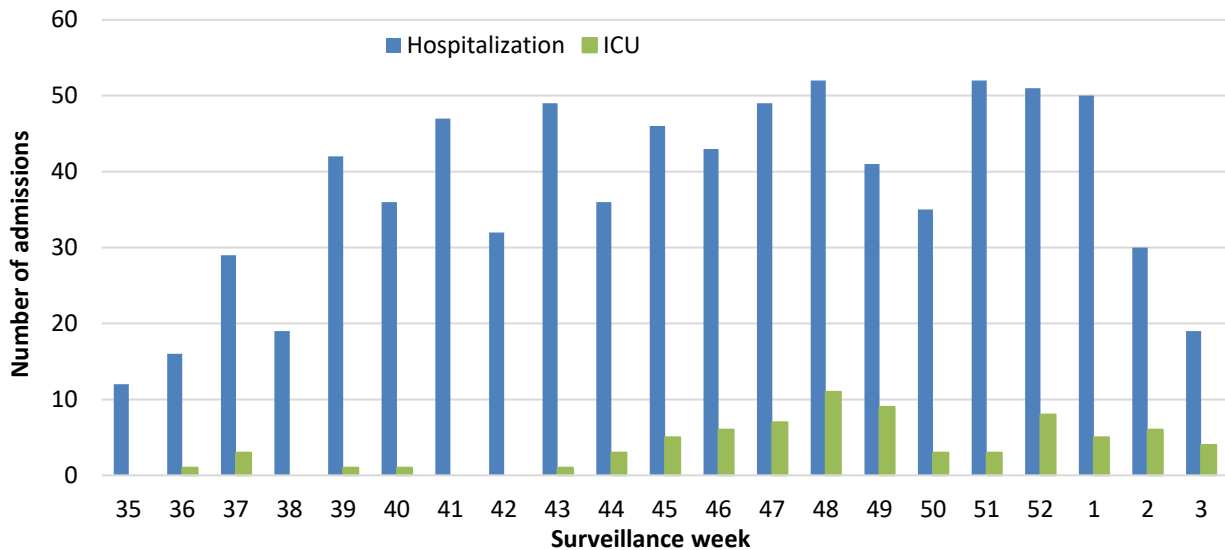
⁷ COVID-19 case data are continuously entered and cleaned. Data from prior weeks may be modified.

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

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	6	107
5-19	6	96
20-44	35	1006
45-64	35	1460
65+	78	3946
Nova Scotia Total	160	6615

Figure 5: Number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁸



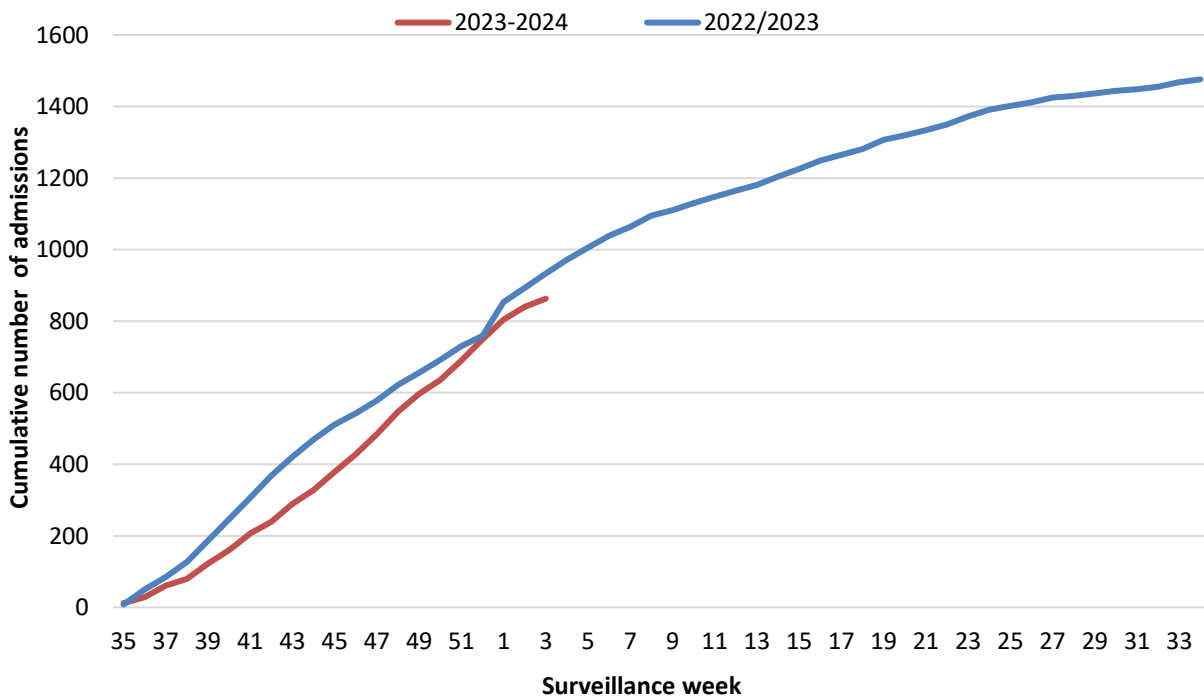
⁸ Due to COVID-19 outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

Table 6: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for COVID-19 positive patients, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia⁹

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	6	0	0
5-19	5	0	0
20-44	20	5	0
45-64	79	16	4
65+	554	36	117
Nova Scotia Total	664	57	121

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



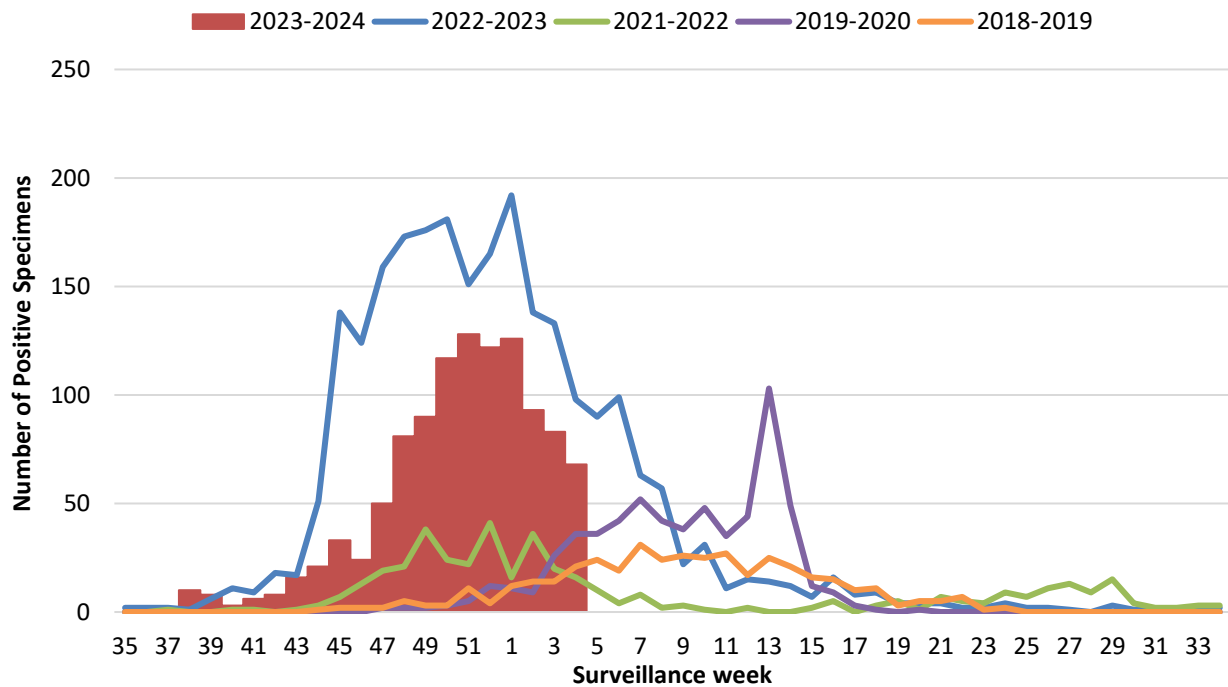
⁹ In this table, only the most severe outcome for a case is included; numbers of hospitalizations and ICU admissions could therefore decline over time, if a person counted in one of those columns moves to a more severe outcome. COVID-19 outcome data are continuously entered and cleaned. Data from prior weeks 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	11	208
6-11 months	8	64
12-23 months	3	122
2-4 years	7	197
5-19 years	4	69
20-64 years	13	140
65+ years	22	288
Nova Scotia Total	68	1088

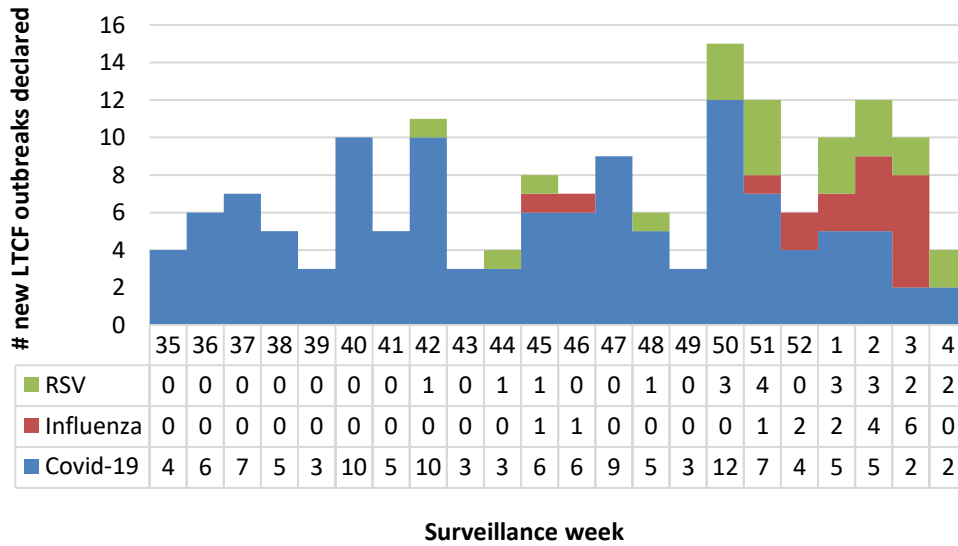
Figure 7: Laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by week (N=1088), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹⁰



¹⁰ 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.

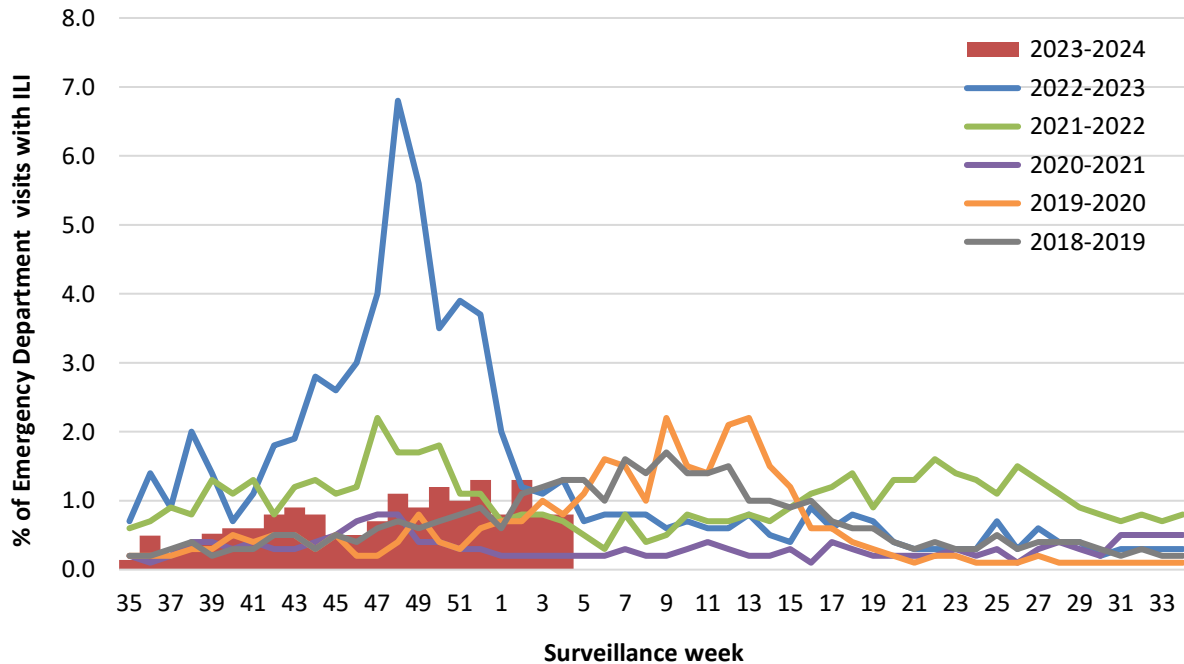
RESPIRATORY OUTBREAKS

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 Scotia¹¹



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



¹¹ Outbreak definitions can be found in the Appendix.

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

OTHER RESPIRATORY ILLNESS

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

PATHOGEN	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Adenovirus	0	35
Bocavirus	0	0
Coronavirus*	0	0
Enterovirus/Rhinovirus	1	191
Metapneumovirus	0	3
Parainfluenza	0	28

**Excludes COVID-19*

Week 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

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 4 (January 21, 2024 to January 27, 2024)

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.

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