

## Highlights<sup>1</sup>

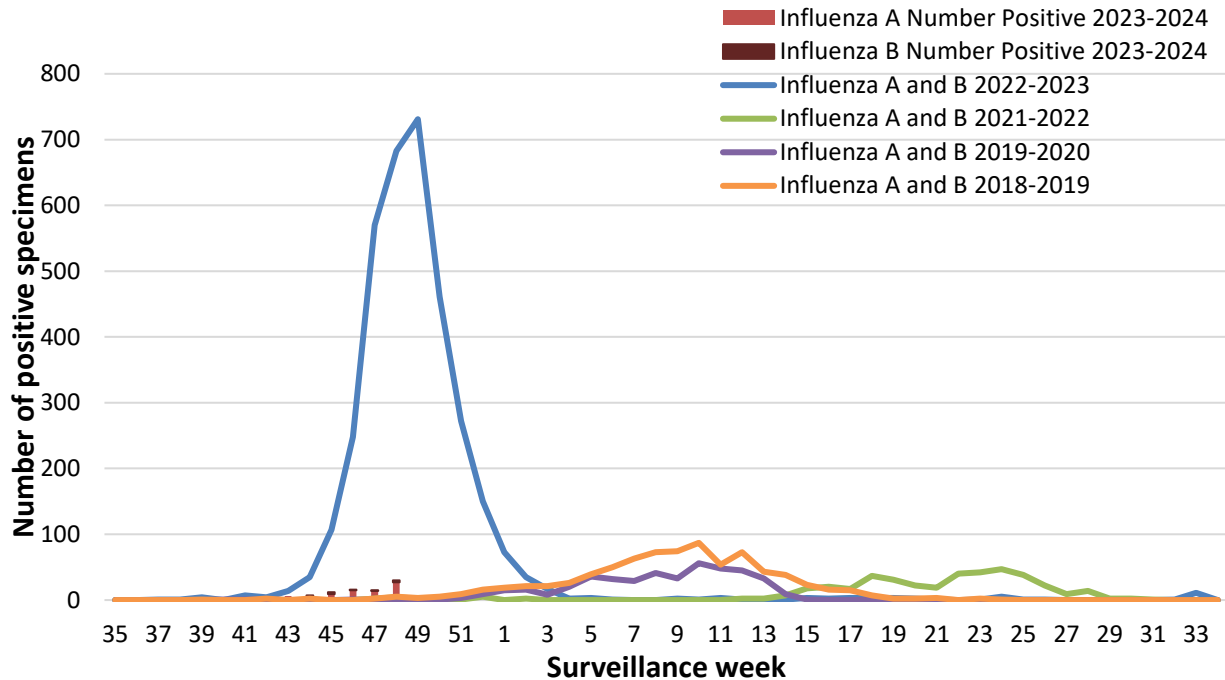
*The 2023-2024 season runs from August 27, 2023 to August 24, 2024*

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>• A slight decline in COVID-19 PCR positives cases reported this week. 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 two reporting weeks.</li> </ul>
Laboratory-confirmed cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influenza:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There were 27 new cases of Influenza A, and 3 new cases of Influenza B reported during week 48; there have been 94 cases of Influenza A and 10 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 334 new cases of COVID-19 reported during week 48; there have been 4668 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 81 new cases of RSV reported during week 48; there have been 261 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>• 17 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>• 362 hospitalizations (non-ICU)</li> <li>• 7 ICU admissions</li> <li>• 77 deaths</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Outbreaks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were 6 new long term care facility outbreaks declared in this reporting period:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 0 Influenza</li> <li>○ 5 COVID-19</li> <li>○ 1 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 1.0% during this reporting period.</li> </ul>

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

**INFLUENZA**

**Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases by week (N=104), 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	1	1	2	1	5	6
Northern	12	0	12	42	2	44
Eastern	4	0	4	10	0	10
Central	10	2	12	41	3	44
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>104</b>

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

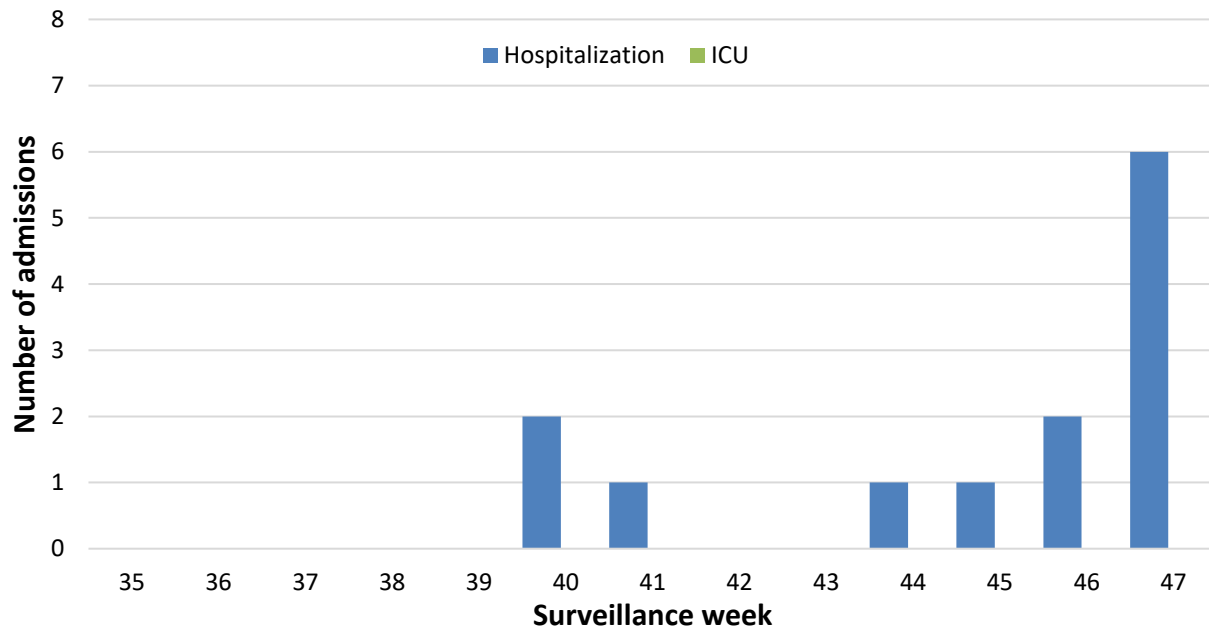
<sup>3</sup> Influenza case data are subject to ongoing quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements.

Week 48 (November 26, 2023 to December 02, 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	4	3	7	11	5	16
5-19	6	0	6	14	2	16
20-44	2	0	2	18	0	18
45-64	7	0	7	18	0	18
65+	8	0	8	33	3	36
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>104</b>

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



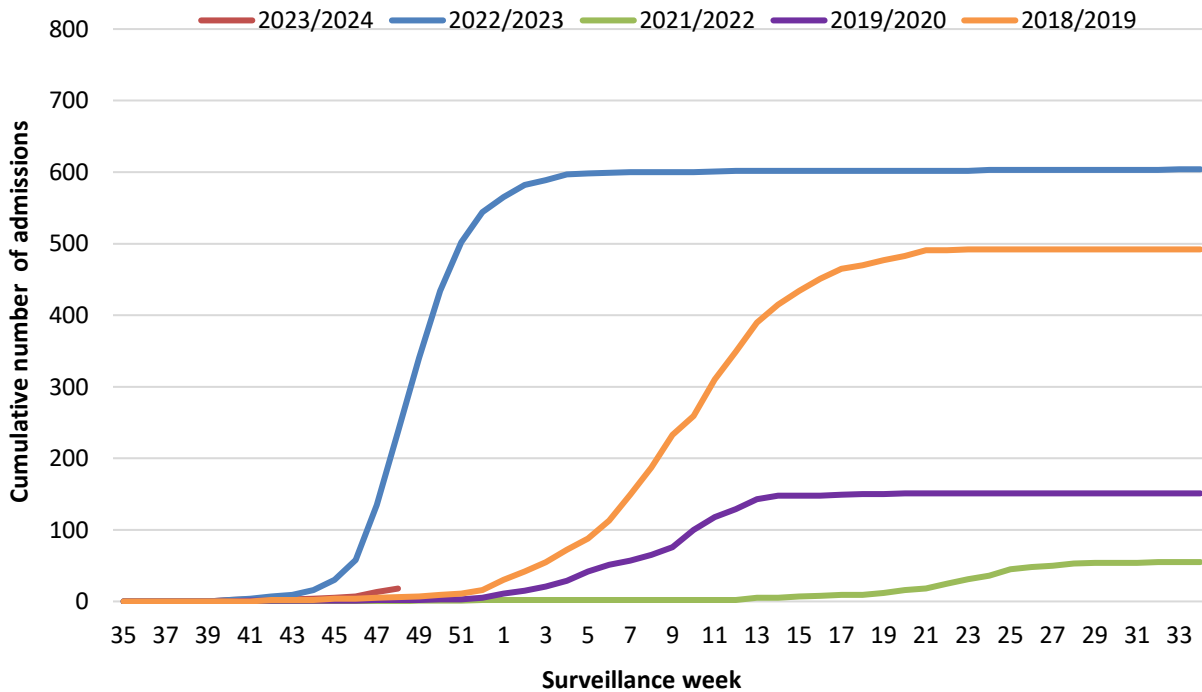
<sup>4</sup> Due to influenza outcome reporting cycles, a data delay prevents reporting on the most recent surveillance week. If a case is hospitalized and moves to ICU in the same reporting week, they will appear in both the hospitalization and ICU columns for that week.

Week 48 (November 26, 2023 to December 02, 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	1	0	0
5-19	3	0	0
20-44	3	0	0
45-64	2	1	0
65+	8	0	1
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>17</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=4668), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous season, Nova Scotia

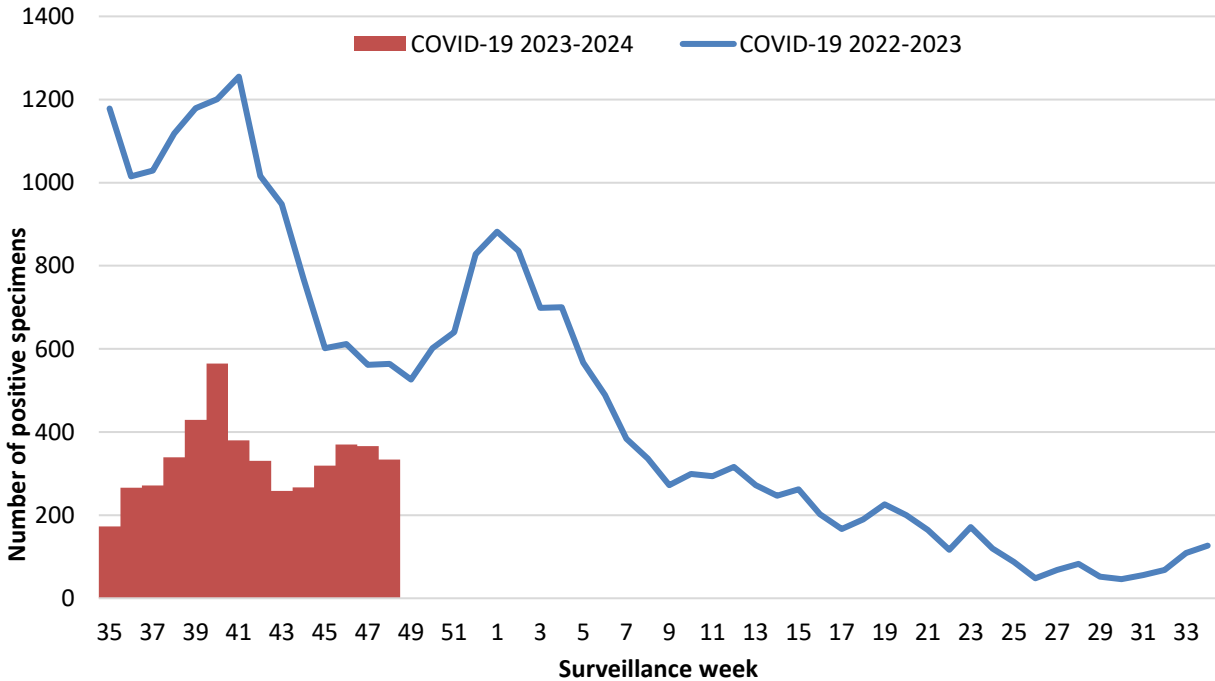


Table 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by zone, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>7</sup>

ZONE	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
Western	75	1078
Northern	86	928
Eastern	45	758
Central	128	1904
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>4668</b>

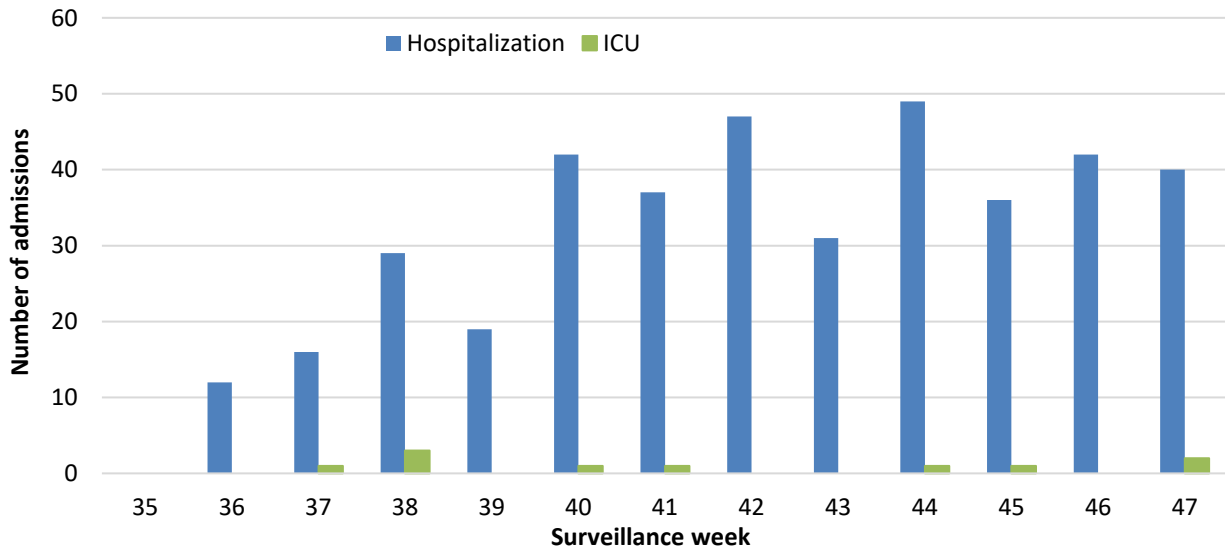
<sup>7</sup> COVID-19 case data are currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements. Any labs that belong to people out of province will be removed once out of province status is known.

Week 48 (November 26, 2023 to December 02, 2023)

Table 5. Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases by age group, current period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>8</sup>

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-4	6	51
5-19	6	61
20-44	43	680
45-64	79	1039
65+	200	2837
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>4668</b>

Figure 5: Number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>9</sup>



<sup>8</sup> COVID-19 case data are currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might undergo modification as we make improvements. Any labs that belong to people out of province will be removed once out of province status is known.

<sup>9</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. COVID-19 outcome data are currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might be modified as we make improvements, and it is expected that COVID-19 outcomes are underreported for the most recent week.

**Week 48 (November 26, 2023 to December 02, 2023)**

**Table 6: Hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths for COVID-19 positive patients, cumulative counts, 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia<sup>1011</sup>**

AGE (years)	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	3	0	0
5-19	3	0	0
20-44	8	1	0
45-64	41	1	3
65+	307	5	74
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>77</b>

**RSV**

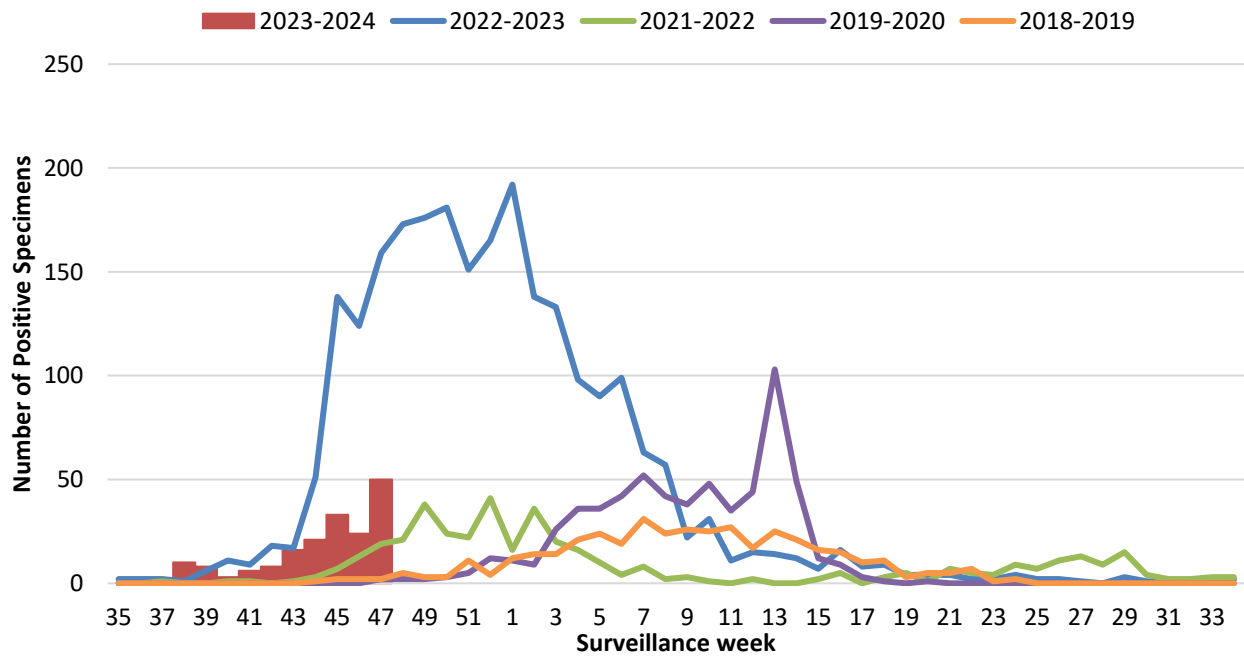
**Table 7: Number of laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by age group, current reporting period and cumulative 2023-2024 season, Nova Scotia**

AGE (YEARS)	CURRENT PERIOD	CUMULATIVE 2023-2024
0-5 months	25	57
6-11 months	5	15
12-23 months	8	29
2-4 years	21	74
5-19 years	6	13
20-64 years	5	27
65+ years	11	46
<b>Nova Scotia Total</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>261</b>

<sup>10</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 currently undergoing a quality review. As a result, data from previous weeks might be modified as we make improvements, and it is expected that COVID-19 outcomes are underreported for the most recent week.

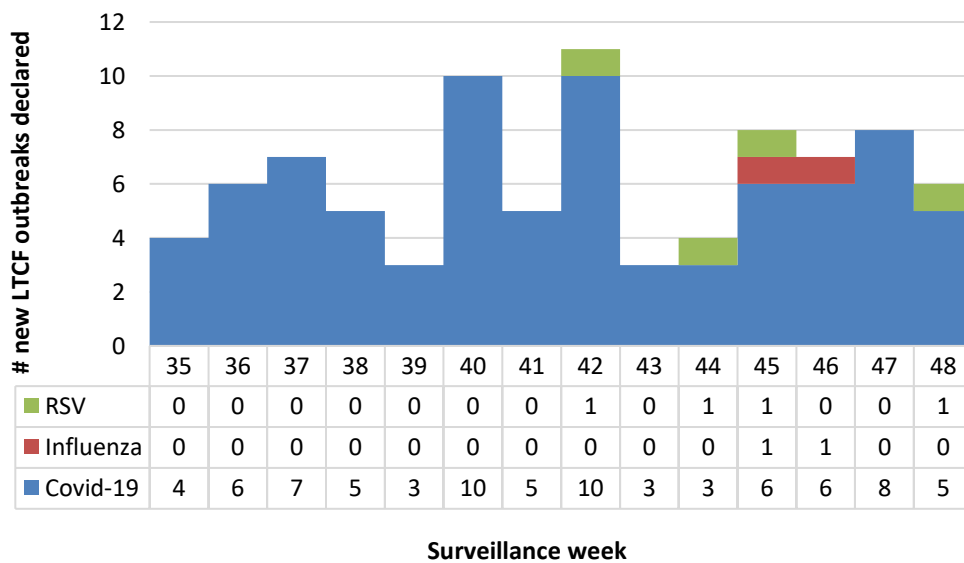
<sup>11</sup> During the 2022-2023 season, there were 648 hospitalizations, 91 ICU and 150 deaths linked to COVID-19 within the same timeframe (week 35-48).

Figure 6: Laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by week (N=261), 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia<sup>12</sup>



**RESPIRATORY OUTBREAKS**

Figure 7. 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>13</sup>



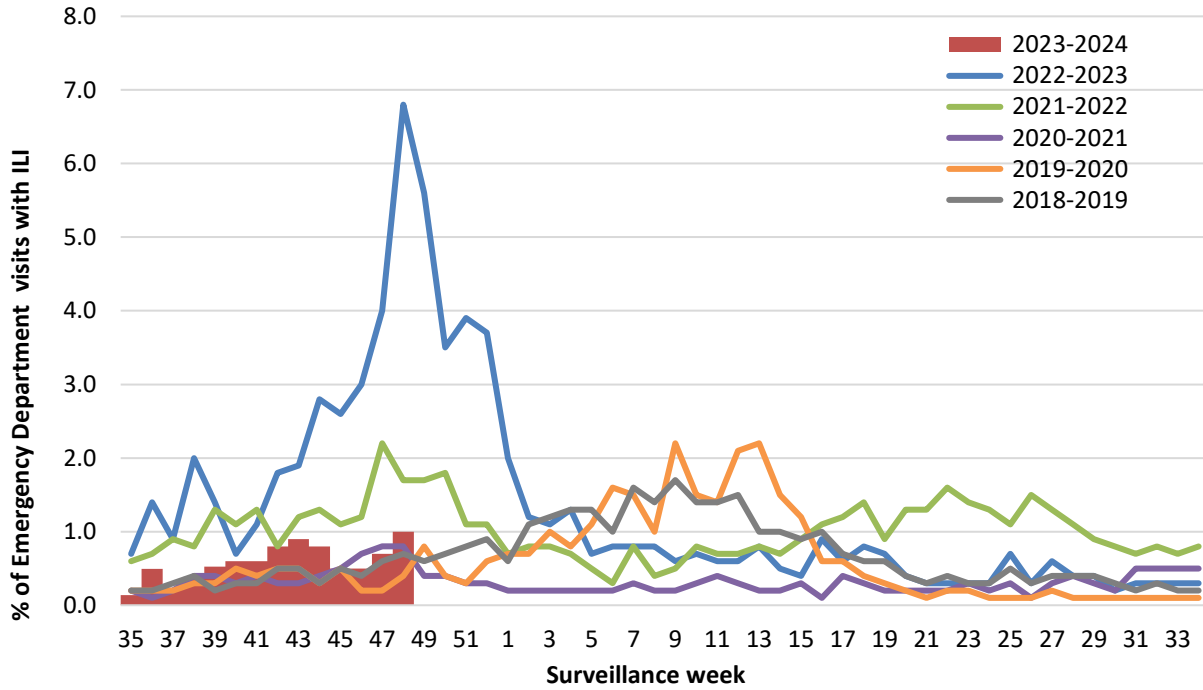
<sup>12</sup> There were no reported RSV cases during the 2020-2021 season. There has been a change in testing methods with the implementation of multiplex respiratory virus PCR. This may increase the number of cases detected.

<sup>13</sup> Outbreak definitions can be found in the Appendix.



**SYNDROMIC SURVEILLANCE**

**Figure 8: Percentage of emergency department visits due to ILI by report week, 2023-2024 season, with comparison to previous seasons, Nova Scotia**



**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	1	23
Bocavirus	0	0
Coronavirus*	0	0
Enterovirus/Rhinovirus	7	164
Metapneumovirus	0	2
Parainfluenza	1	27

\*Excludes COVID-19

## 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 respiratory virus testing affect the number of cases identified and reported.
  - Because not everyone gets tested or is eligible for testing, the numbers reported here under-represent the true burden of disease in the community.
  - The implementation of multiplex testing has likely led to increased detection of cases of other respiratory pathogens, including RSV.

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

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

#### ACRONYM LIST

<b>ICU</b>	Intensive care unit
<b>ILI</b>	Influenza-like illness
<b>RSV</b>	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 48 (November 26, 2023 to December 02, 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)