

RESPIRATORY WATCH

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Highlights of this two week reporting period¹

The 2024-2025 season runs from August 25, 2024 to August 29, 2025

Activity levels²

- Influenza activity in each of weeks 18 (N=74) and 19 (N=37) was lower than the previous reporting period, week 17 (N=89).
 - The total number of PCR positive cases in this reporting period (N=111) was lower than the number in the same reporting period in the 2023/24 season (N=135).
- COVID-19 activity was lower in week 18 (N=28) and higher in week 19 (N=46) compared with the previous reporting period, week 17 (N=34).
 - The total number of PCR positive cases in this reporting period (N=74) was lower than the number in the same reporting period in the 2023/24 season (N=174).
- RSV activity in each of weeks 18 (N=11) and weeks 19 (N=11) was lower than the previous reporting period, week 17 (N=20).
 - The total number of PCR-positive cases in this reporting period (N=22) was similar to the number in the same reporting period in the 2023/24 season (N=20).

Influenza, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity during this two week reporting period and the 2024/25 season

	Influenza		COVID-19		RSV	
	This reporting period	2024/25 season	This reporting period	2024/25 season	This reporting period	2024/25 season
Laboratory testing						
New laboratory-confirmed cases	111	6091	74	4247	22	2335
Percent positivity (%) ³	5.2	-	3.4	-	1.0	-
Severe outcome⁴						
Hospitalizations (non-ICU)	13	1162	2	678		
ICU admissions	3	120	0	69		
Deaths	4	111	0	103		
Outbreaks⁵						
Acute-care facility	0	30	2	44	0	5
Long-term care facility	1	89	2	136	0	29

ILI activity⁶

During this reporting period, the percentage of emergency room visits for influenza like illness (ILI) was higher (1.3% in week 18) and lower (0.4% in week 19) than the previous reporting period, week 17 (0.7%).

¹ See data notes in Appendix.

² Use of multiplex polymerase chain reaction (PCR) respiratory virus testing may affect the number of tests conducted and number of cases identified and reported.

³ Percent positivity is useful for understanding current pathogen spread in the community.

⁴ New hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths in recent surveillance weeks may be undercounted because of reporting delays. Outcomes are not reported for RSV because it is not a notifiable condition in Nova Scotia.

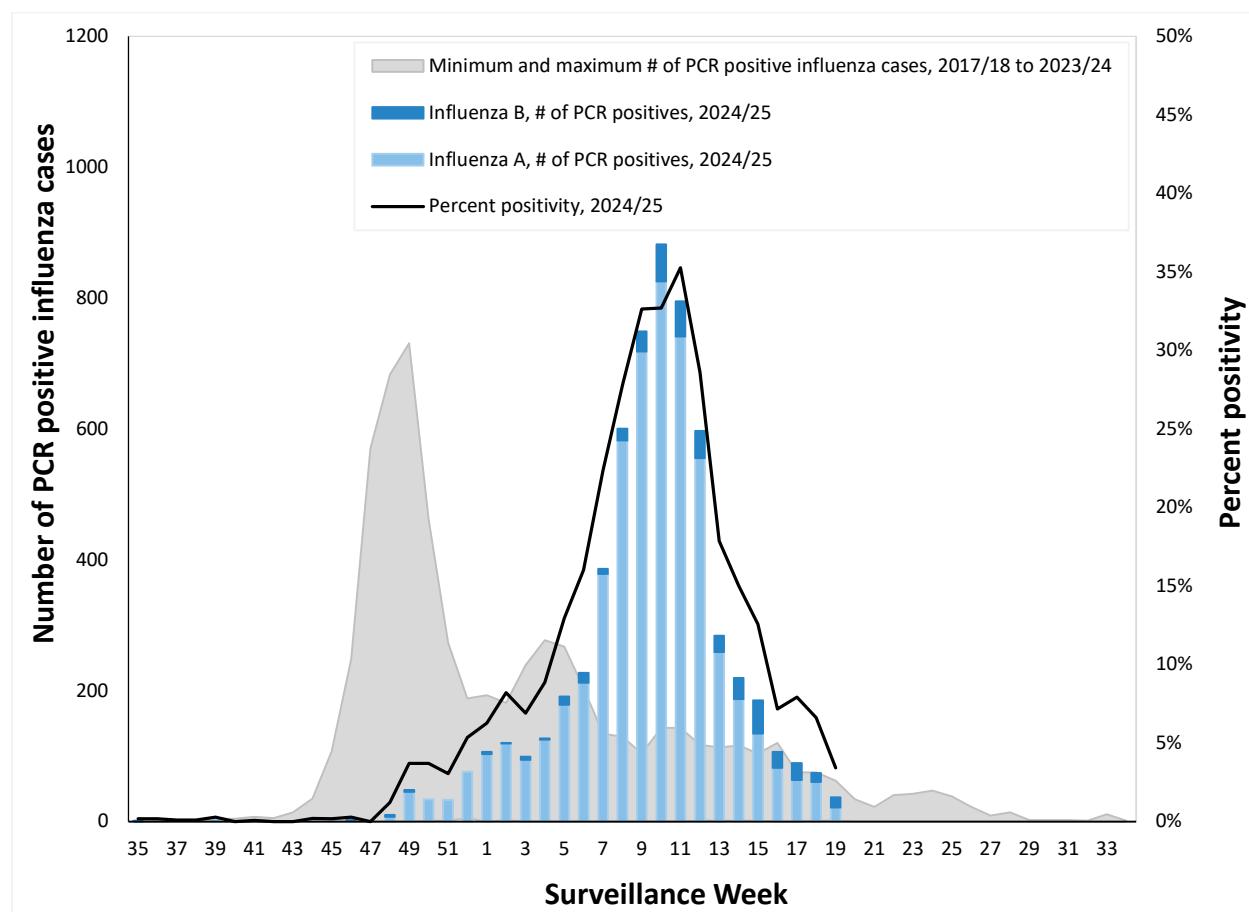
⁵ Local public health continuously enters and updates outbreak data. Counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

⁶ ILI percentages may vary from previous surveillance weeks as emergency departments continuously enter and update data.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Influenza

Figure 1: Laboratory-confirmed influenza cases (N=6091) and percent positivity by surveillance week, 2024/25 season, compared with previous seasons, Nova Scotia⁷



⁷ Minimum is zero during reporting weeks with no positive specimen in seasons 2019/20 to 2023/24. There were no influenza cases reported during the 2020-2021 season. Local public health continuously enters and updates influenza case data and counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Table 1: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases during current reporting period and cumulative 2024/25 season, by zone, Nova Scotia⁸

Zone	Current reporting period			Cumulative (2024/25)		
	Influenza A	Influenza B	Total	Influenza A	Influenza B	Total
Western	12	19	31	1389	81	1470
Northern	18	3	21	1425	237	1662
Eastern	21	4	25	1317	28	1345
Central	30	4	34	1514	100	1614
Nova Scotia Total	81	30	111	5645	446	6091

Table 2: Number of laboratory-confirmed influenza cases during current reporting period and cumulative 2024/25 season, by age groups, Nova Scotia⁸

Age group (years)	Current reporting period			Cumulative (2024/25)		
	Influenza A	Influenza B	Total	Influenza A	Influenza B	Total
0-4	3	0	3	475	40	515
5-19	3	9	12	645	178	823
20-44	7	15	22	984	158	1142
45-64	25	2	27	1307	44	1351
≥ 65	43	4	47	2234	26	2260
Nova Scotia Total	81	30	111	5645	446	6091

Table 3: Cumulative number of hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths among lab-confirmed influenza positive patients, 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia⁹

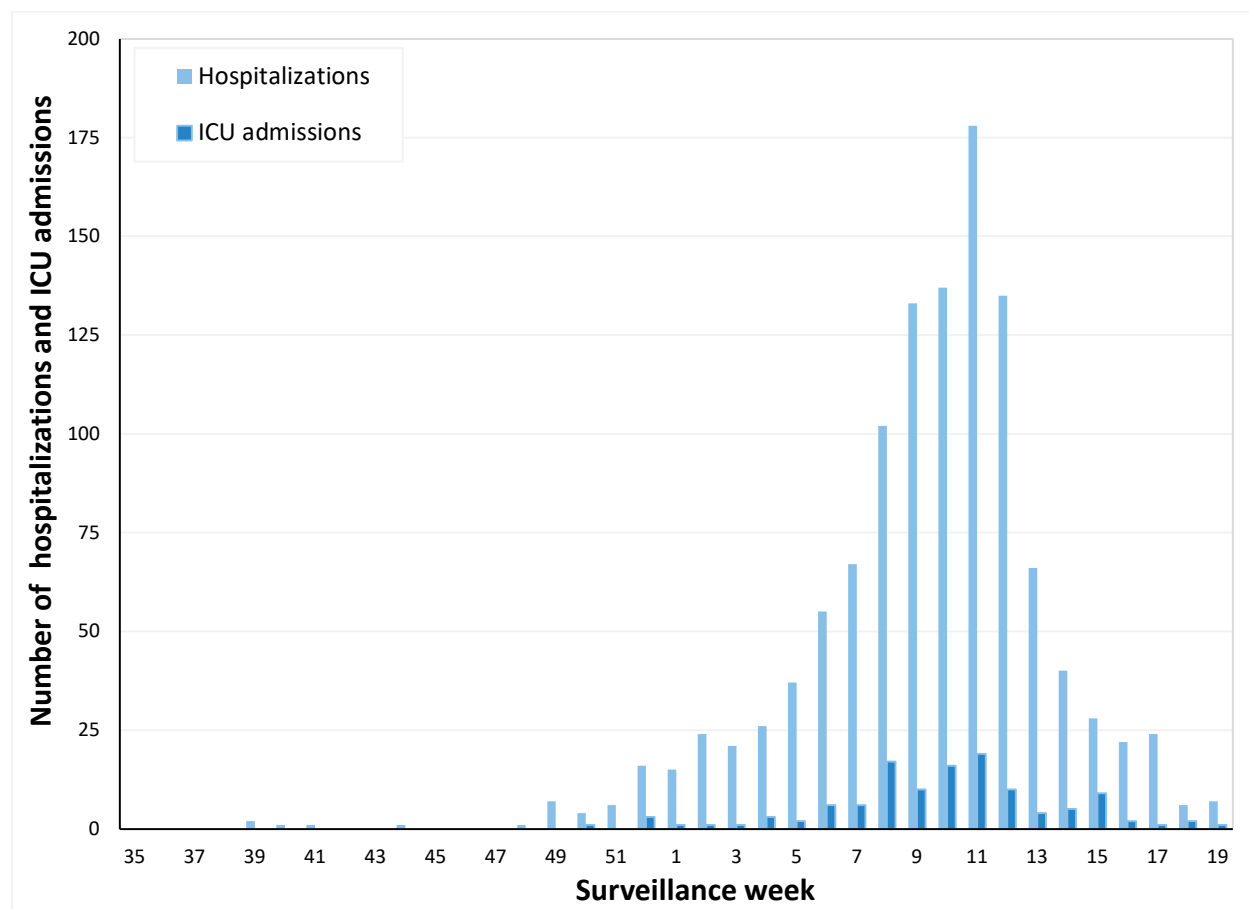
Age group (years)	Cumulative (2024/25)		
	Hospitalizations	ICU	Deaths
0-4	48	1	0
5-19	80	3	1
20-44	78	11	2
45-64	229	49	24
≥ 65	727	56	84
Nova Scotia Total	1162	120	111

⁸ Local public health continuously enters and updates influenza case data and counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

⁹ Individuals may be included in multiple columns if they have more than one severe outcome (i.e., categories are not mutually exclusive). Recent hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths may be undercounted due to delays in reporting.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

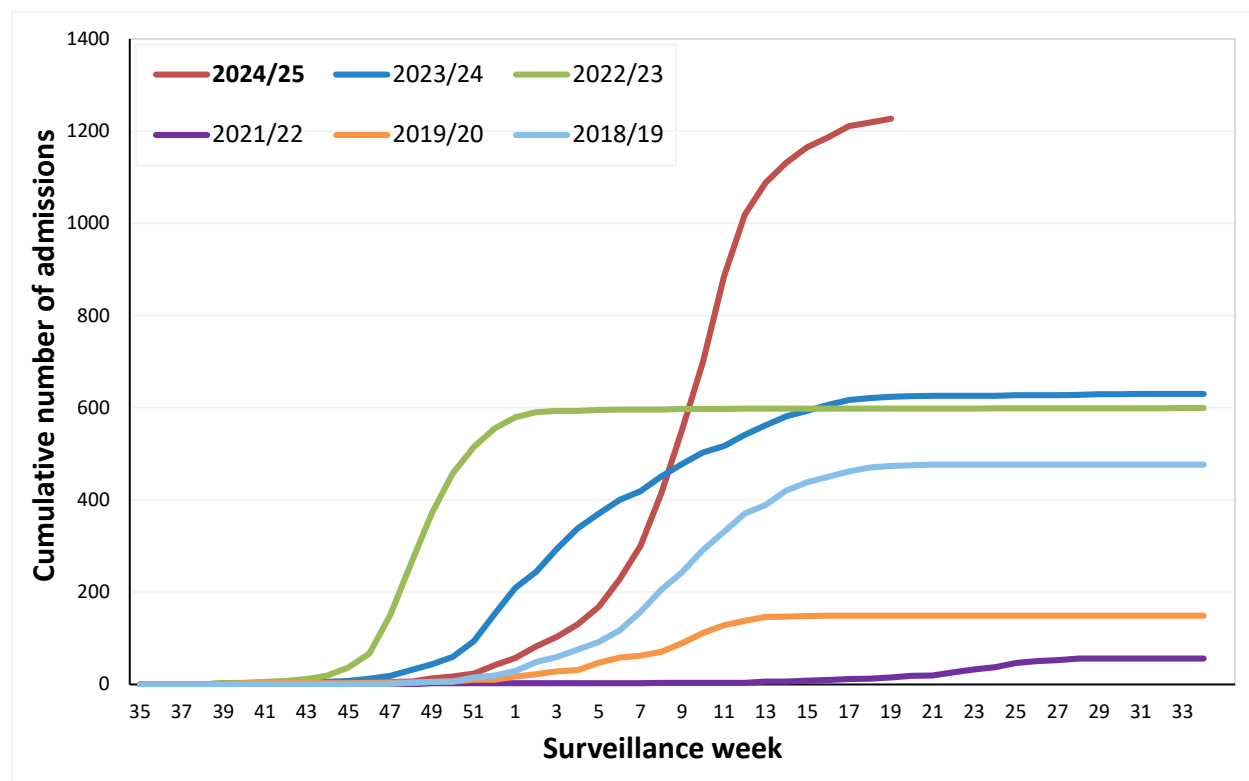
Figure 2: Number of influenza hospitalizations and ICU admissions by surveillance week, 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia¹⁰



¹⁰ Cases who are hospitalized and admitted to the ICU in the same surveillance week will be included in both the hospitalization and ICU counts for that surveillance week. Recent hospitalizations and ICU admissions may be undercounted due to delays in reporting.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Figure 3: Cumulative number of hospitalizations and ICU admissions for influenza by surveillance week, 2024/25 season compared with previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹¹



¹¹ Figure 3 presents the cumulative number of cases who were admitted to hospital and/or ICU during the season. Cases are counted once. There were no reported cases of influenza during the 2020-2021 season.

COVID-19

Figure 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases (N=4247) and percent positivity, 2024/25 season, compared with previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹²

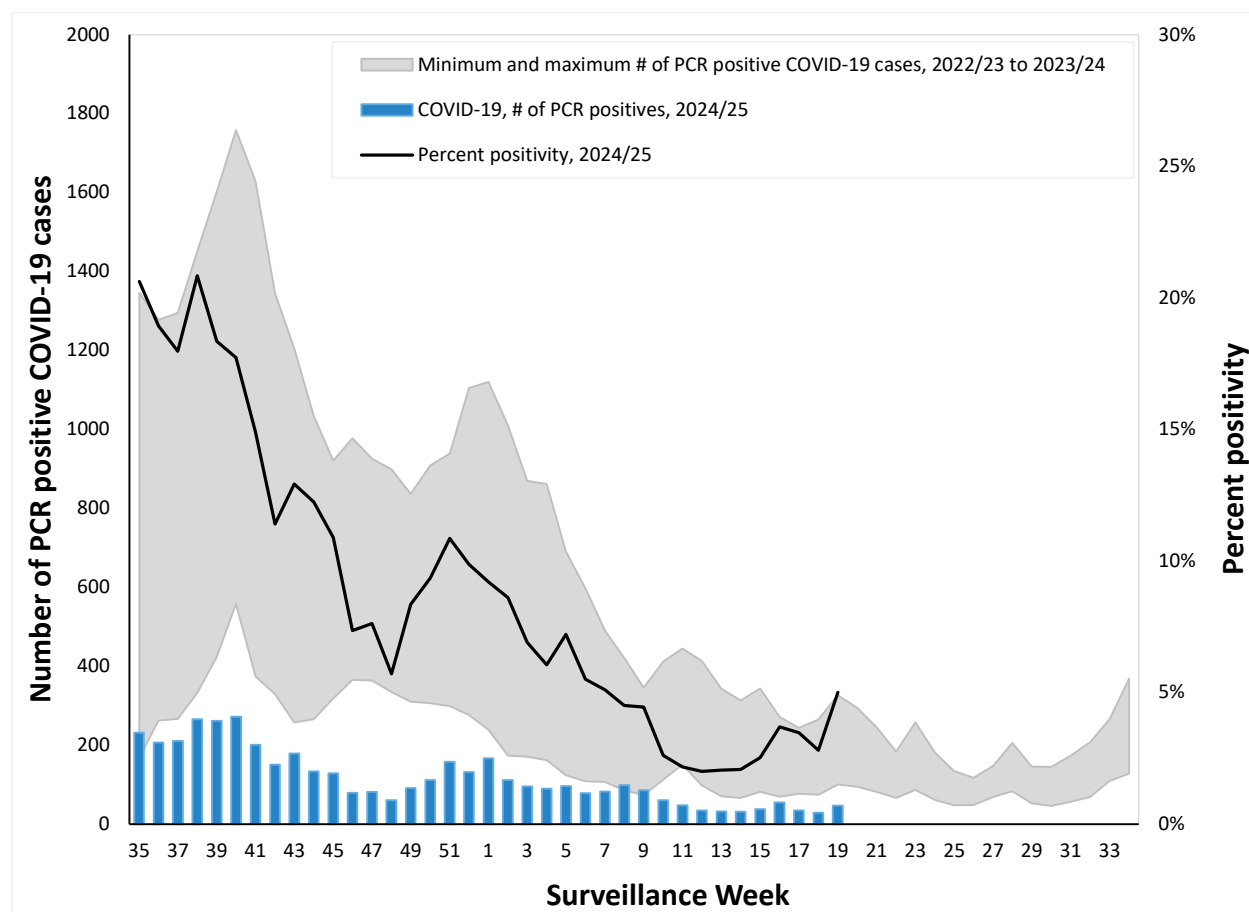


Table 4: Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases during current reporting period and cumulative 2024/25 season, by zone, Nova Scotia¹²

Zone	Current reporting period	Cumulative (2024/25)
Western	21	926
Northern	12	971
Eastern	18	743
Central	11	1607
Nova Scotia Total	62	4247

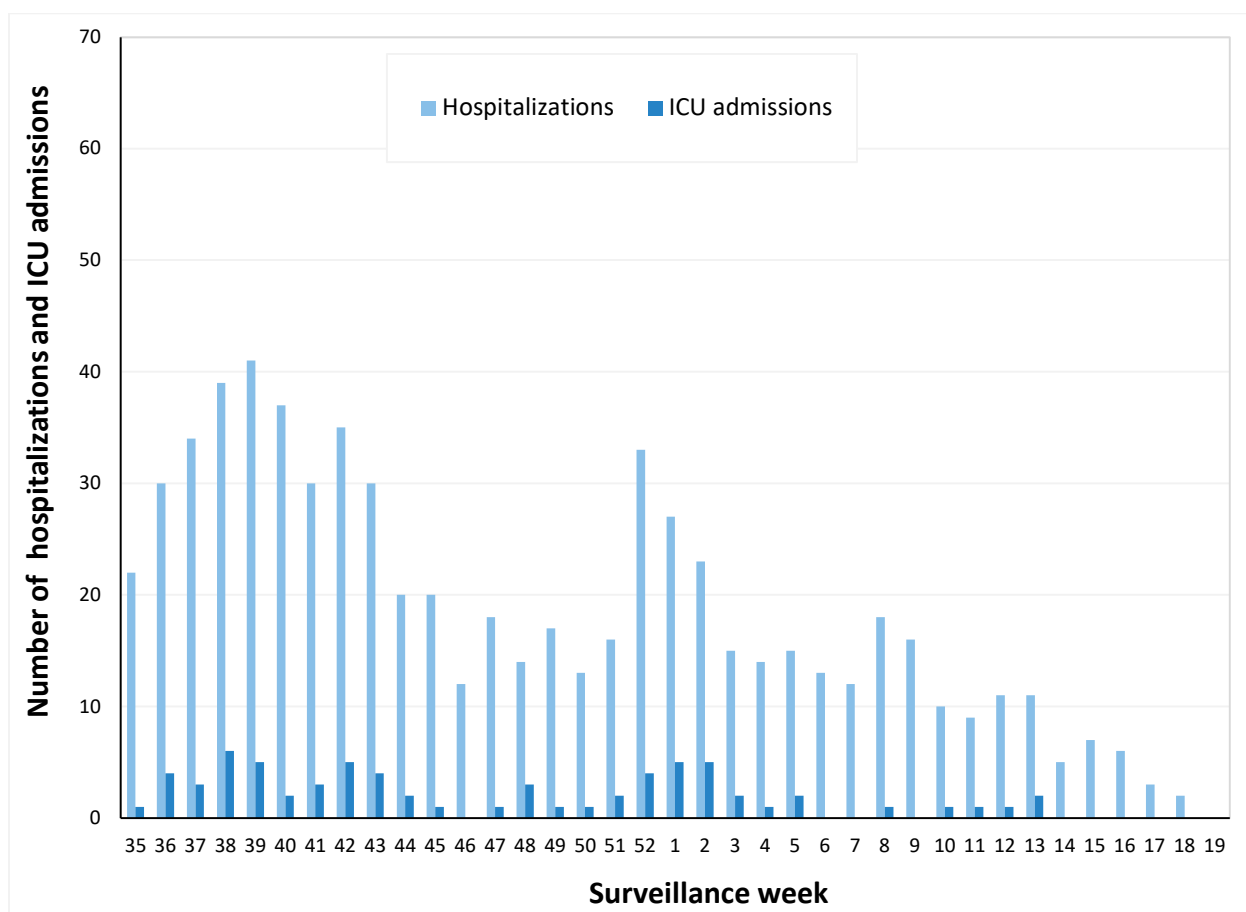
¹² Local public health continuously enters and updates COVID-19 case data. Counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Table 5. Number of laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases during current reporting period and cumulative 2024/25 season, by age group, Nova Scotia¹³

Age group (years)	Current reporting period	Cumulative (2024/25)
0-4	2	119
5-19	2	117
20-44	8	479
45-64	11	687
≥ 65	39	2845
Nova Scotia Total	62	4247

Figure 5: Number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions by week, 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia¹⁴



¹³ Local public health continuously enters and updates COVID-19 case data. Counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

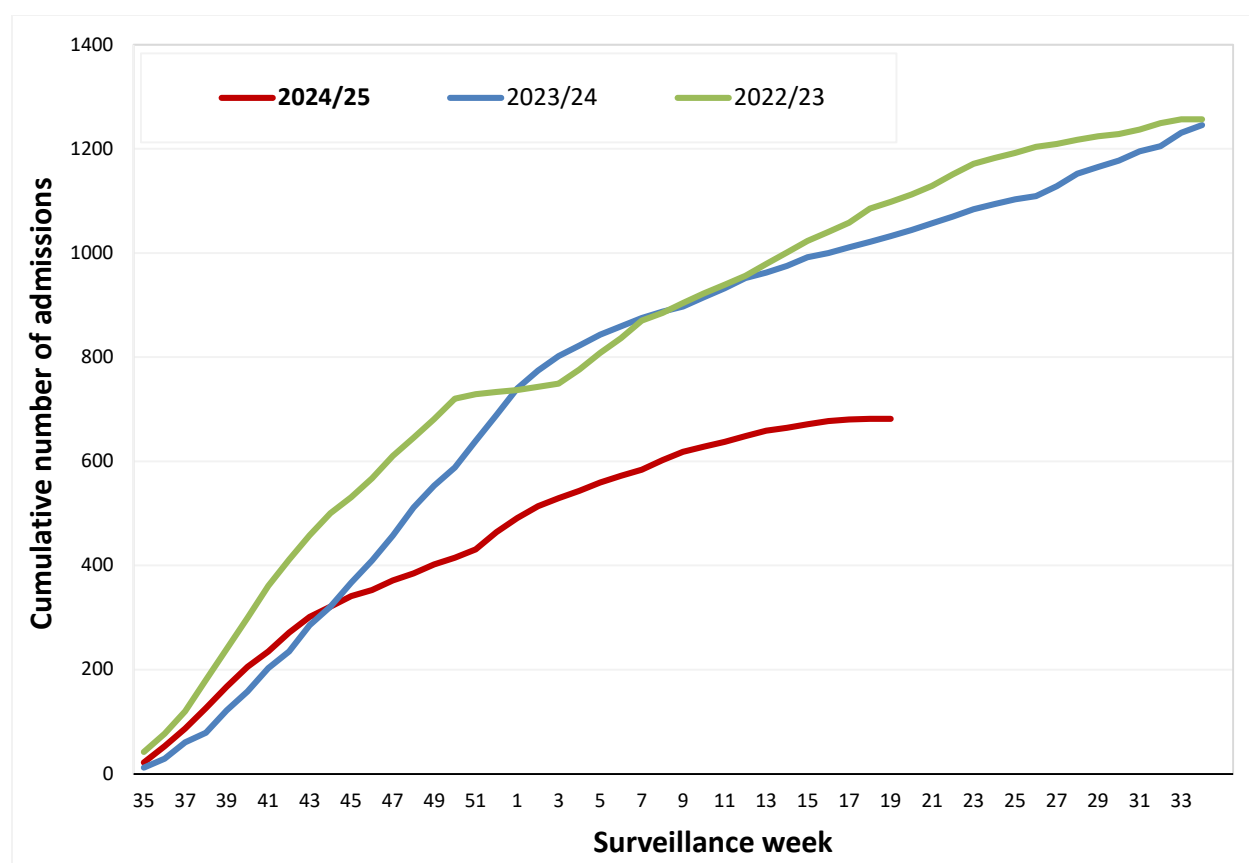
¹⁴ Cases who are hospitalized and admitted to the ICU in the same surveillance week will be included in both the hospitalization and ICU counts for that surveillance week. Recent hospitalizations and ICU admissions may be undercounted due to delays in reporting.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Table 6: Cumulative number of hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths among COVID-19 positive patients, 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia¹⁵

Age group (years)	Cumulative (2024/25)		
	Hospitalizations	ICU admissions	Deaths
0-4	16	2	0
5-19	7	2	0
20-44	16	3	3
45-64	71	13	5
≥ 65	568	49	95
Nova Scotia Total	678	69	103

Figure 6: Cumulative number of COVID-19 hospitalizations and ICU admissions, by surveillance week, 2024/25 season compared with previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹⁶



¹⁵ Cases can have more than one severe outcome (e.g., be hospitalized and then admitted to the ICU); therefore, cases may be counted multiple times if they have more than one severe outcome (i.e., categories are not mutually exclusive). Recent hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths may be undercounted due to delays in reporting

¹⁶ Figure 6 presents the cumulative number of cases who were admitted to hospital and/or ICU during the season. Cases are counted once.

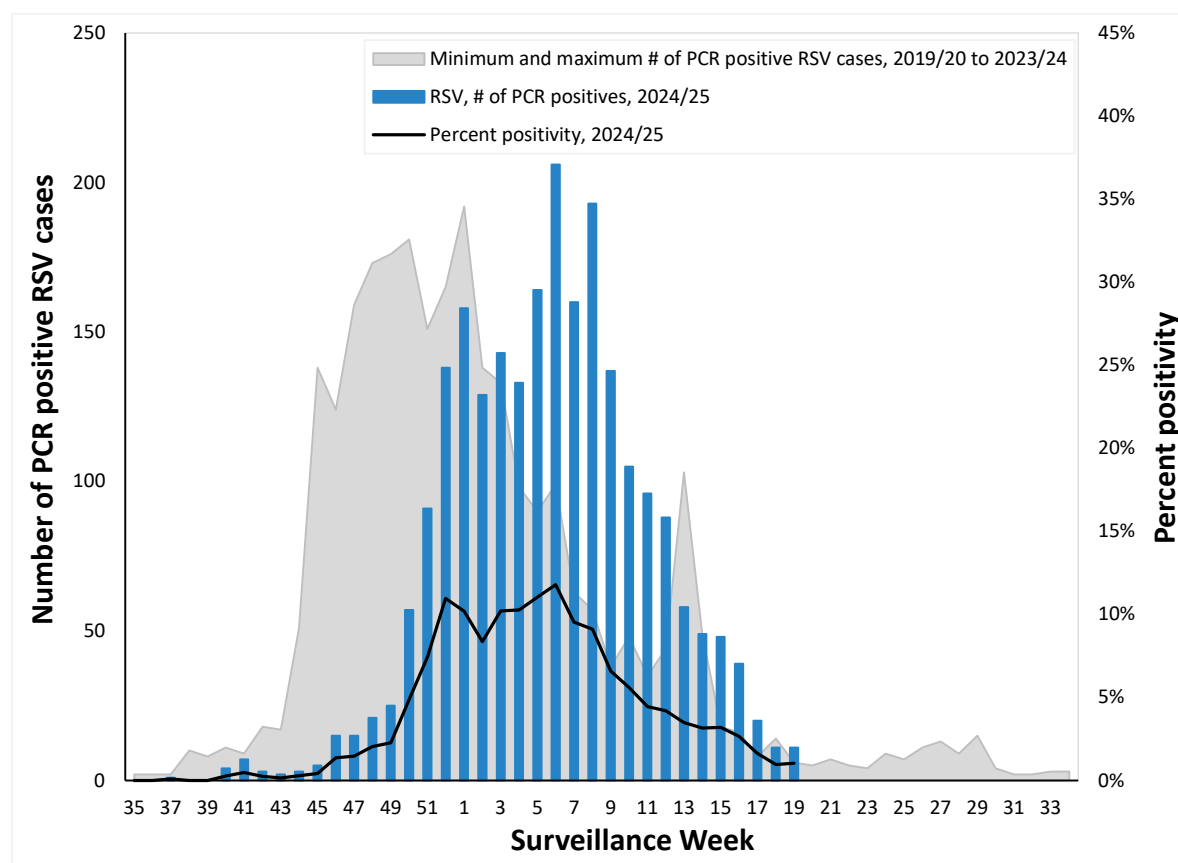
Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)¹⁷

Table 7: Number of laboratory-confirmed RSV cases by age group, current reporting period and cumulative 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia¹⁸

Age group	Current reporting period	Cumulative (2024/25)
0-5 months	0	235
6-11 months	1	153
12-23 months	1	246
2-4 years	0	370
5-19 years	0	166
20-64 years	4	419
≥ 65 years	16	736
Nova Scotia Total	22	2325

Figure 7: Laboratory-confirmed RSV cases (N=2335) by week, 2024/25 season, compared with previous seasons, Nova Scotia¹⁹



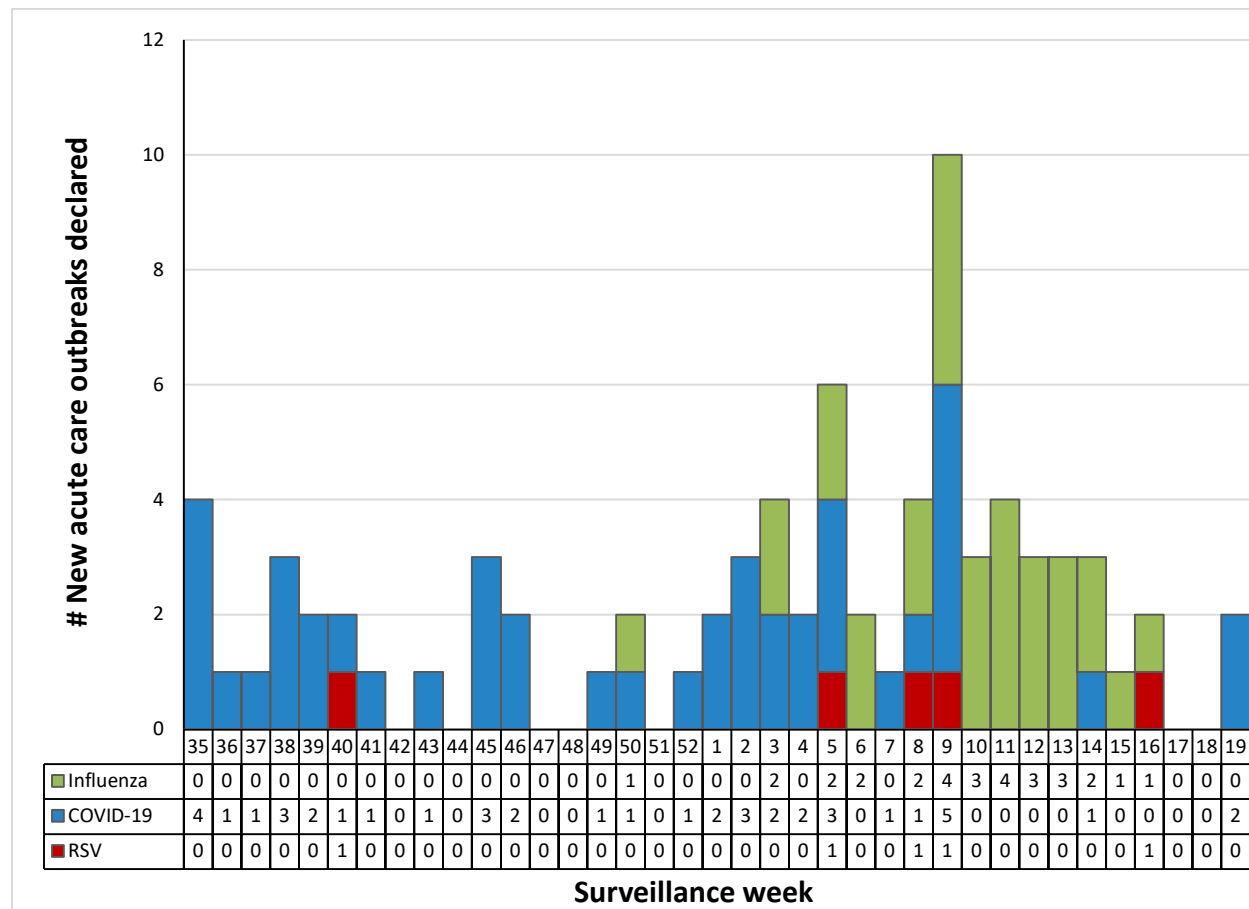
¹⁷ RSV is not a notifiable condition in Nova Scotia. Counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks because of reporting delays.

¹⁸ The total number of cases is less than the total count in Figure 7 because age is not reported for all cases.

¹⁹ There were no reported RSV cases during the 2020-2021 season. The implementation of the multiplex respiratory virus PCR testing in 2022/23 may increase the number of cases detected.

Respiratory Outbreaks

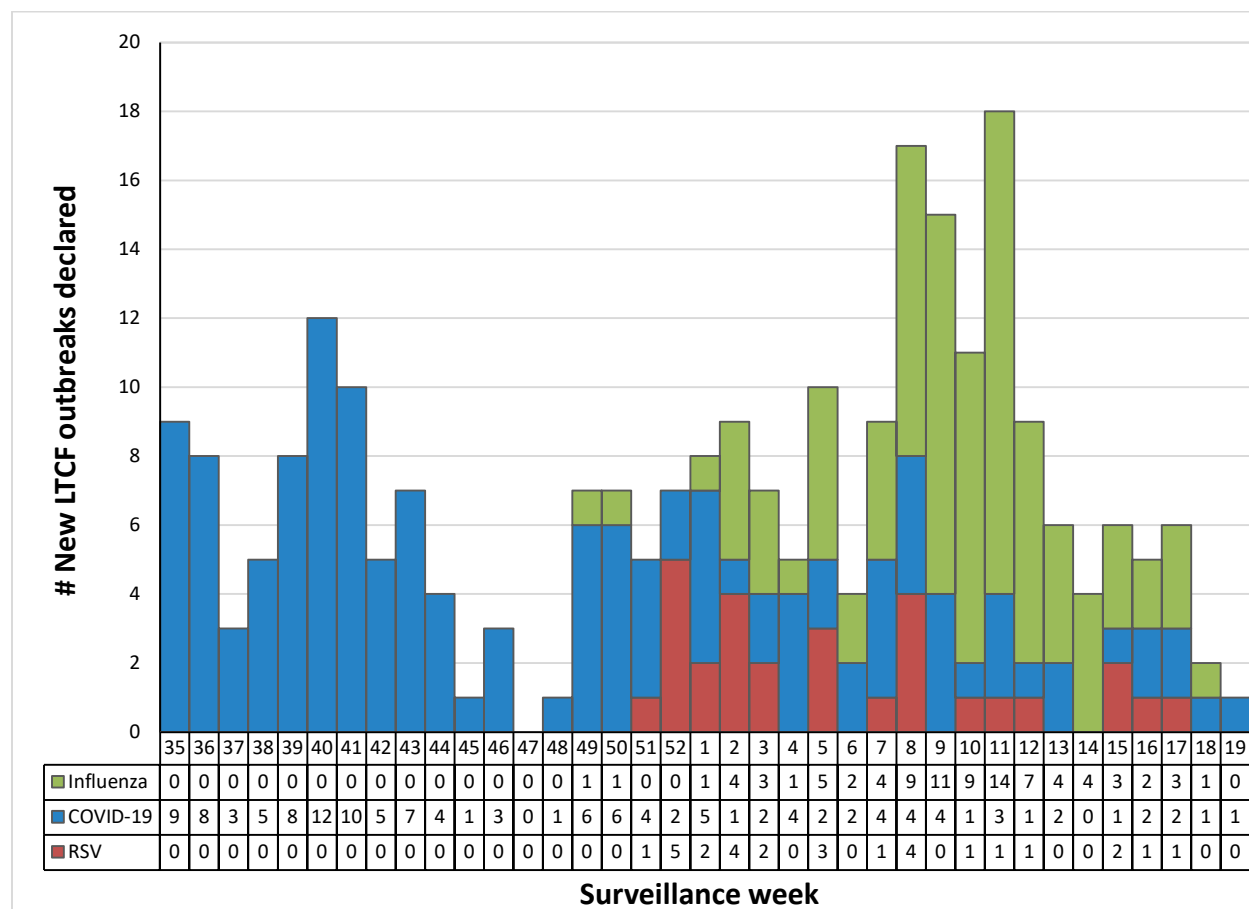
Figure 8. Number of new acute care facility respiratory outbreaks by surveillance week and respiratory virus (influenza, COVID-19 and RSV), 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia²⁰



²⁰ Acute care facility outbreak definitions are described in the Appendix. Local public health continuously enters and updates outbreak data. Counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Figure 9. Number of new long-term care facility (LTCF) respiratory outbreaks by surveillance week and respiratory virus (influenza, COVID-19 and RSV), 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia²¹

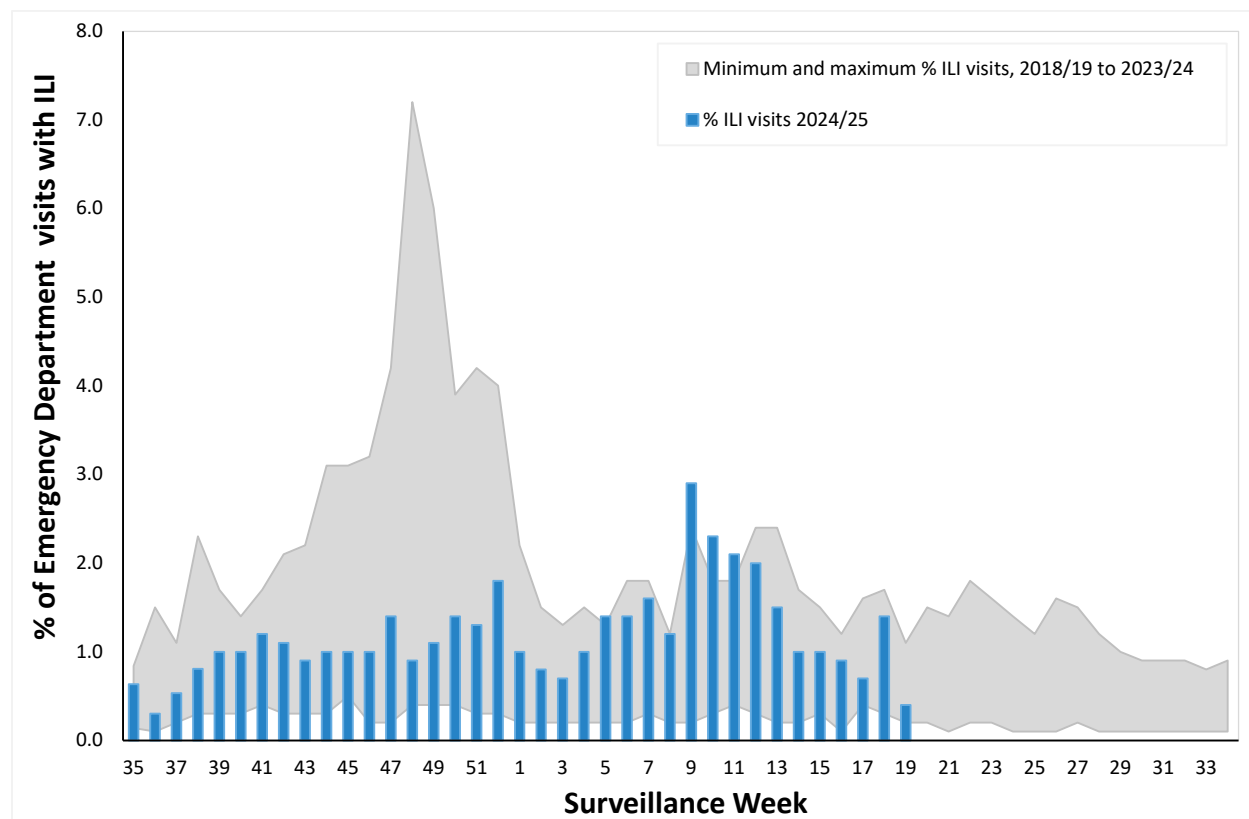


²¹ LTCF outbreak definitions are described in the Appendix. Local public health continuously enters and updates outbreak data. Counts may differ from previous surveillance weeks.

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Syndromic Surveillance

Figure 10: Percentage of emergency department visits due to influenza-like illness (ILI) by surveillance week, 2024/25 season, compared with previous seasons, Nova Scotia²²



Other Respiratory Illness

Table 8: Number of positive specimens for other respiratory viruses, current reporting period and cumulative 2024/25 season, Nova Scotia

PATHOGEN	Current reporting period	Cumulative (2024/25)
Adenovirus	0	32
Bocavirus	0	2
Coronavirus*	2	64
Enterovirus/Rhinovirus	13	322
Metapneumovirus	3	26
Parainfluenza	3	52

*Excludes COVID-19

²² ILI percentages may vary from previous surveillance weeks as emergency departments continuously enter and update data.

Appendix – data notes and definitions

Data Notes

- A surveillance week runs from Sunday to Saturday. Nova Scotia's 2024/25 season aligns with the [Public Health Agency of Canada \(PHAC\) FluWatch surveillance weeks](#).
 - This year runs from August 25, 2024 (Week 35) to August 29, 2025 (Week 34).
- Notifications of hospitalizations, ICU admissions, and deaths may lag by several weeks, and deaths are particularly affected. Additionally, data are incomplete for the most recent reporting period because of lags in local public health reporting of COVID-19 and influenza outcomes. Figures presenting outcomes by week do not include data for the most recent surveillance week.
- Definitions for hospitalizations and deaths related to each of COVID-19 and influenza were changed in August 2024. These case definitions are found in the [Surveillance guidelines](#).
- 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, but is not limited to, influenza, RSV, and COVID-19. See [Nova Scotia's Respiratory Surveillance Plan](#) for a full list of what is tested.
 - In the 2022-2023 season, access to multiplex PCR testing in Nova Scotia increased testing accessibility which likely increased detection in community influenza and RSV.
 - Testing is limited to [specific populations](#) and the counts reported in this report under-represent the actual number of cases in the community.

Definitions used in respiratory surveillance, and useful links, 2024/25

See: [Nova Scotia's Respiratory Response Plan](#) and [Nova Scotia's Respiratory Surveillance Plan for Public Health](#)

Acronyms

ICU	Intensive care unit
ILI	Influenza-like illness
RSV	Respiratory syncytial virus
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction
LTCF	Long term care facilities

Outbreak Definitions

Pathogen	Acute care facility	Long-term care facility (LTCF)
Influenza	≥ 2 symptomatic residents where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of influenza, epidemiologically linked within the patient care unit in a 7-day period	≥ 2 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
COVID-19	≥ 2 symptomatic residents where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19, epidemiologically linked within the patient care unit in a 10-day period	≥ 2 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

Weeks 18-19 (April 27, 2025 to May 10, 2025)

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	≥ 2 symptomatic residents where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of RSV, epidemiologically linked within the patient care unit in a 7-day period	≥ 2 symptomatic residents where at least one is a laboratory confirmed case of RSV, epidemiologically linked within the LTCF in a 7-day period
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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 < 5 or ≥ 65 years, 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: [Global Influenza Programme \(who.int\)](#)
US: [FluView | FluView | CDC](#)