



Surveillance Advisory: Seasonal Influenza

Issue

- Influenza vaccine for the upcoming flu season is becoming available throughout the Department of Defense (DoD) and immunization campaigns are underway.
- DoD policy requires influenza vaccination for all Active Duty and Reserve Component personnel.
- Navy Medicine influenza surveillance strategy includes central analysis of electronic clinical data, local ESSENCE monitoring, Fleet Disease and Injury (D&I) tracking, and reporting of hospitalizations associated with laboratory confirmed influenza via Disease Reporting System internet (DRSi).
- The topic of September's Tri-Service Disease Surveillance Training is "Influenza Surveillance". For information about how to join this online discussion on 26 September, contact the DRSi helpdesk as described below.

Background

Influenza, or the flu, is a viral illness characterized by the sudden onset of fever, respiratory symptoms and fatigue. Influenza season in the United States typically peaks in January and February and can begin as early as October. While most people infected with the influenza virus recover quickly, complications can lead to more severe disease presentation and extended illness. The military training and shipboard environments are particular areas of concern with regards to disease spread due to close living quarters.

Influenza policy and guidance resources can be found on NMCPHC's [Influenza webpage](#). Vaccination is the best way to prevent illness from influenza, and is required for all active duty and reserve component personnel. Navy Medicine influenza surveillance strategy includes MTF participation in the US Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine (USAFSAM) sentinel laboratory surveillance program, reporting of influenza hospitalizations, syndromic tracking of influenza-like-illness via ESSENCE or D&I, and NMCPHC's weekly influenza reports based on laboratory tests and results, pharmacy transactions, clinical encounters and vaccination records recorded in the direct care military system.

NMCPHC Surveillance and Reporting Guidance and Additional Resources

1. Navy Medicine's medical surveillance and medical event reporting is guided by Chapter 22 of the Navy's Manual of the Medical Department and BUMEDINST 6220.12C.
 - a. Navy and Marine Corps units providing patient care should report hospitalization associated with laboratory confirmed influenza in any patient under the age of 65 via DRSi as an "Influenza-associated Hospitalization".
 - i. Patients seen in the outpatient clinic setting who are lab positive for influenza are NOT required to be reported unless they become hospitalized.

