



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

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STATE HEALTH COMMISSIONER

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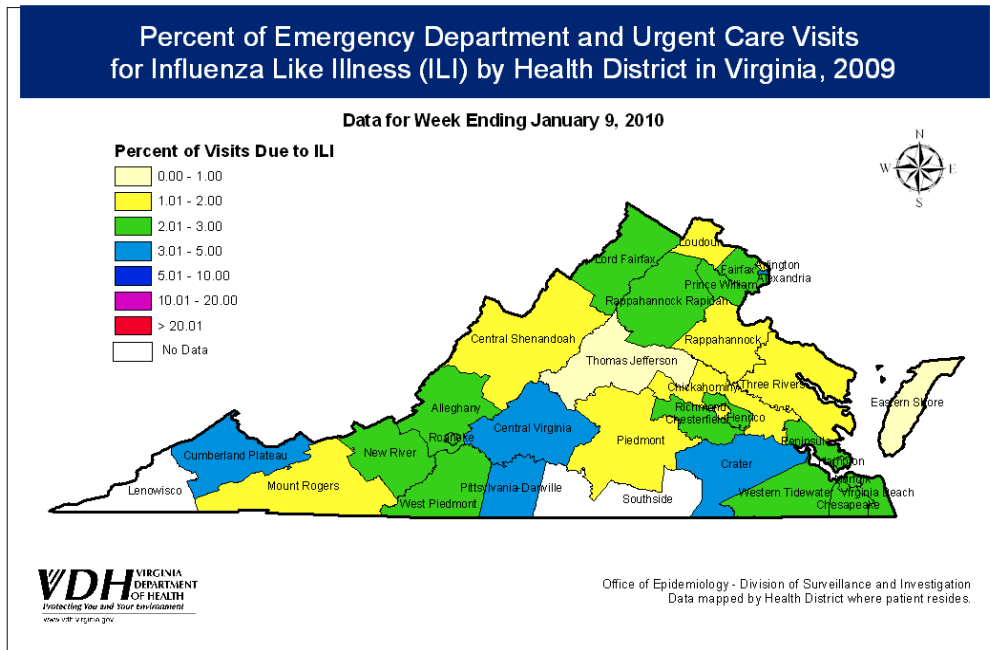
Dear Colleague:

Today's communication will provide a brief update on H1N1 surveillance and focus primarily on vaccination activities. Our combined public/private vaccination campaign is at the mid-point; it is so important that we continue to encourage vaccination in order to develop true herd immunity and protect our population from a potential third wave of disease.

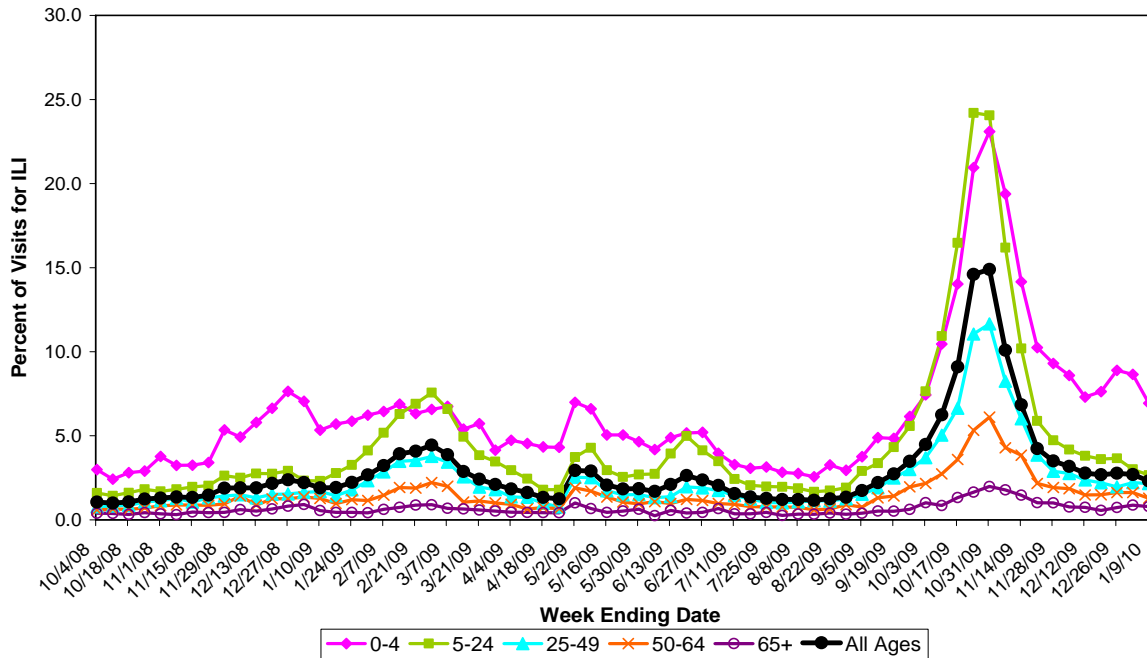
But before we move on to H1N1, many of you have asked for information about medical volunteer efforts to help the people of Haiti. Our website, www.vdh.virginia.gov, has information and links for those of you interesting in volunteering.

Surveillance

- Influenza-like illness activity has decreased to the level of "regional" after being "widespread" for 16 weeks.
- Essentially all identified flu viruses continue to be the H1N1 strain.
- The percent of emergency department and urgent care visits for influenza-like illness are in the 2 to 3% range, down from an average of 15% in October.
- Of note, children up to age 4 continue to seek care at a higher rate than other groups.



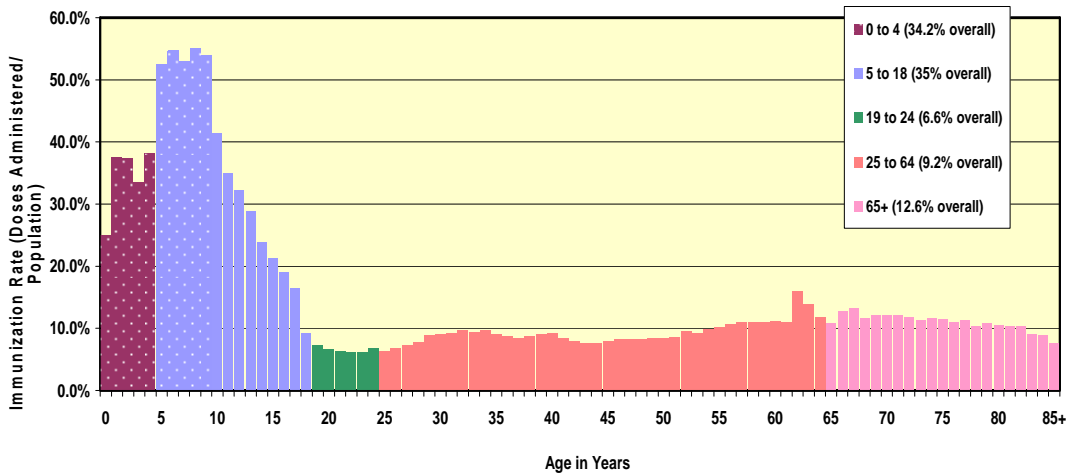
Percent of Emergency Department and Urgent Care Visits for Influenza-like Illness (ILI) by Age Group, Virginia, 2008-09 and 2009-10 Influenza Seasons



Vaccination-

Over 3.8 million doses of vaccine have been distributed in Virginia with over **1.2 million** being documented as delivered. Through the combined efforts of the medical community, pharmacies and health departments, **15 %** of the population is immunized with significantly higher rates (**35%**) in the pediatric population. (The graph below shows first and second doses combined) Our goal, to provide herd immunity to the population and mitigate a potential third wave of disease, is **20%** overall.

H1N1 Immunization Rates by Age, Public and Private Sectors, Reported through 1/12/2010



Note: Doubling indicates the age groups 6 months to 9 years that are recommended to receive two doses. Persons aged greater than 85 are reported as age 85 years.

History has demonstrated that, in the 1957-58 influenza epidemic, vaccination efforts waned and there was significant mortality in the third wave of disease in February. The 1918-1919 pandemic also featured a third wave in February-March in Britain. Each of us through ongoing vaccination efforts can prevent this from being the case this year.

I continue to have discussions with people who think they do not need vaccination if not in a high risk group. I ask you to redouble your efforts to encourage vaccination. Each of you, as a knowledgeable and trusted clinician in your field, can help share vaccine efficacy and safety information in your community. We all need to continue to encourage vaccination at routine visits, at hospital discharges, through pharmacies and vaccine events.

Lastly, the Governor, Secretary and we here at VDH would like to recognize the clinicians who have comprised The Commissioner's Infectious Disease Advisory and Primary Care Advisory Committees. In spite of very busy clinical lives, these doctors participated in numerous conference calls- providing "ground truth", sound advice and insight as we worked together through our H1N1 response. This new partnership of clinical and public health has been invaluable and has become a model that will continue into the future. These dedicated Virginians are listed below:

Commissioner's Infectious Disease Advisory Group

Michael B. Edmond	Frederick G. Hayden	Thomas M. Kerkering
Edward C. Oldfield	James L. Pearson	Donald Poretz
Ronald B. Turner	Richard P. Wenzel	

Commissioner's Primary Care Advisory Committee

Alfred Abuhamad	Alice Ackerman	David Ascher
Mike Ashby	Bob Chevalier	Tom Cleary
David Davidow	Phil Dawson	Diane Dubinsky
Tom Eppes	Bob Gunther	Jon Katz
Tom Kayrouz	William Koch	Donald Lewis
Doug Mitchell	Wade Neiman	Wayne Reynolds
Mark Ryan	Sofia Teferi	Ron Turner
Arno Zarnitsky		

And, again, I want to thank all of you who have worked so hard and with such skill and dedication to keep Virginians healthy. It is a privilege to serve you.

Sincerely,



Karen Remley, MD, MBA, FAAP