

# Influenza Reporting and Surveillance in Utah

## 1. Influenza-associated hospitalizations

Influenza-associated hospitalizations (identified via culture, DFA, or rapid testing) are a reportable condition in Utah. The purpose for this reporting is two-fold.

- a. Influenza-associated hospitalizations can assist public health in tracking the timing, magnitude, and severity of the current influenza season.
- b. Early recognition of severe or unusual cases of influenza is essential to early recognition of an influenza pandemic.

The reporting form for influenza-associated hospitalizations is available at:

<http://health.utah.gov/epi/forms/Influenza0708.pdf>.

## 2. Pediatric influenza-associated deaths

Pediatric influenza-associated deaths (identified via culture, DFA, or rapid testing) are a nationally reportable condition. Although most influenza deaths occur among the elderly, pediatric influenza-associated deaths do occur, even among previously healthy children. Gathering data on pediatric influenza-associated deaths will assist public health in developing strategies to prevent influenza-associated deaths in children.

## 3. Surveillance in Utah

In addition to tracking influenza-associated hospitalizations and pediatric influenza-associated deaths, public health employs several other methods to track the timing, magnitude, and severity of the influenza season.

- a. School districts report absenteeism data on a weekly basis. These numbers are compared with historical data to determine if excess absenteeism is occurring.
- b. Sentinel clinics throughout the state track the percentage of patients presenting with "influenza-like illness" on a weekly basis. These numbers are evaluated to assist with the interpretation of the progress of influenza illness within the community.

The weekly surveillance report is available at:

<http://health.utah.gov/epi/diseases/flu/SurvInfo.htm>.

## 4. Laboratory and clinician reporting

Laboratories and clinicians should report all cases of laboratory-identified influenza-associated hospitalizations and pediatric influenza-associated deaths to their local or state health department within three working days. A listing of all local health departments and their phone numbers is available at: [www.health.utah.gov/els/epidemiology/lhd\\_contact.htm](http://www.health.utah.gov/els/epidemiology/lhd_contact.htm). The Utah Department of Health also has a toll-free 24/7-hotline number for public health emergencies: 1-888-EPI-UTAH (374-8824).

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