

Seqirus Media Monitoring

28th May 2018

Seqirus mentions

Government gets 800,000 new flu vaccine doses amid shortage

In Australia, the federal government has secured 800,000 additional influenza vaccine doses amid a national shortage days before winter. Manufacturer Seqirus Australia has also agreed to restart its local production of its quadrivalent flu vaccine in Parkville, Melbourne, producing 500,000 doses for the NIP.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/government-gets-800-000-new-flu-vaccine-doses-amid-shortage-20180525-p4zhlt.html>

Additional sources: (The Age) (Foreign Affairs) (Daily Mail) (Department of Health)

National shortage of influenza vaccine

In South Australia, there have been 1,303 cases of influenza notified to the Communicable Disease Control Branch as of 19 May 2018, compared to 1,372 cases over the same period in 2017, with no indication that the 2018 influenza season has commenced. Immunisation providers, including pharmacies, are asked to "offer unvaccinated persons over 65 years a trivalent influenza vaccine (Fluad or Fluzone), or if not available, a single dose of quadrivalent influenza vaccine. Revaccination later in the same season for individuals who have already received vaccination is not recommended."

<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/protecting+public+health/alerts/health+alerts/national+shortage+of+influenza+vaccine>

Influenza vaccine supply

In Australia, Victoria State Government issued a health advisory explaining that "due to unprecedented demand across Australia for influenza vaccine in 2018, there is now no stock available for order in Victoria of Fluarix Tetra, FluQuadri, Afluria Quad, Fluzone High Dose and Fluad"

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/news-and-events/HealthAlerts/influenza-vaccine-supply-may-2018>

Industry News

Eurocine Vaccines has Completed Dosing of its Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine Candidate, Immunose FLU, in the Second Clinical Study

This week, dosing was completed according to plan in the second clinical study with Eurocine Vaccines' Immunose FLU, developed with the aim to become a modern and effective nasal influenza vaccine. "In the perspective of this year's severe influenza outburst we are pleased to have chosen the broader quadrivalent, rather than trivalent, vaccine for our product candidate", says Dr. Anna-Karin Maltais, Chief Scientific Officer.

<http://www.4-traders.com/EUROCINE-VACCINES-AB-38766620/news/Eurocine-Vaccines-has-Completed-Dosing-of-its-Quadrivalent-Influenza-Vaccine-Candidate-Immunose-t-26658400/>

Additional sources: (Samachar Live)

Victorian health minister says the supply of influenza vaccine needs to be improved

In Australia, the state's chief health officer has advised health professionals stocks of five brands of flu vaccine have run out in Victoria. Limited stock of FluQuadri Junior was still available to providers to order and a limited supply of Fluzone and FluQuadri may arrive in coming days and weeks. However, it was likely to be extremely limited.

<https://www.bendigoadvertiser.com.au/story/5428631/flu-vaccination-stocks-near-exhaustion/>

Pandemic Influenza News

Global health shifts to local experts with global partners

Jimmy Kolker, now a visiting scholar at the American Association for the Advancement of Science's Center for Science Diplomacy, used to be assistant secretary for global affairs at the U.S. Health and Human Services Department. He explains how multidisciplinary and multinational approaches are especially beneficial as researchers in emerging economies increasingly want to select the health experts they partner with and the research they want to pursue. Such collaborations have led research teams to no longer focus exclusively on infectious diseases, but also on chronic diseases

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/360/6391/868.full>

Academic studies

Don't Discount Low Efficiency Influenza Vaccines

A new study finds that even in a low-efficacy year, the flu vaccine can have important public health benefits, so long as its deployment is strategic and widespread. A cross-country team of researchers used an optimization algorithm to analyze a mathematical model of influenza patterns across the United States. Their goal was to find out the optimal age-specific distribution of the vaccine. With optimal distribution, even low-efficacy flu vaccines can make a difference, although their benefits vary somewhat depending on which age group has a high uptake rate. To reduce mortality, the best approach is to boost the rates of vaccination among the elderly, offering direct protection against the virus to as many members of that vulnerable population as possible.

<http://www.contagionlive.com/news/dont-discount-low-efficiency-influenza-vaccines>

OMRF scientist secures grant to study possible way to improve flu vaccine

An Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation scientist, Dr. Jose Alberola-Illa, received a five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health to study a novel population of cells that appear to be protective against influenza. The grant will provide Alberola-Illa with \$2.69 million to investigate the role a type of white blood cell plays in mounting the body's response against flu infection. In preliminary experiments, Alberola-Illa found that laboratory mice with greater numbers of the cells were better protected from the virus.

<http://newsok.com/article/5595837/omrf-scientist-secures-grant-to-study-possible-way-to-improve-flu-vaccine>

Protection From H1N1 Flu Is The Same As From Seasonal Flu

An advance study found that giving Tamiflu prophylactically to people confined in close quarters – in this case, fighting installations – seemed to stem outbreaks. In this study, Tamiflu was given to 1100 personnel out of a come to of 1175 personnel. Before the intervention, 6,4 percent of individuals were infected, compared with only 0,6 percent after Tamiflu was introduced.

<https://nipabuno.wordpress.com/2018/05/25/protection-from-h1n1-flu-is-the-same-as-from-seasonal-flu-part-3-of-3/>

Pediatric influenza news

Flu shots for Tas kids despite shortage

Young children in Tasmania have been guaranteed a flu shot by the state's health department despite a national shortage. A surge in demand for the vaccine of up to 30 per cent has led to a limited supply across Australia, federal authorities said. Tasmania's director of public health Mark Veitch says vaccines have been put aside for kids aged up to six.

<http://www.3ba.com.au/news/national-news/77303-flu-shots-for-tas-kids-despite-shortage>

Over 65's influenza news

Flu vaccine rationed as national shortage hits over 65s hardest

In Australia, influenza vaccine rationing is set to continue into early winter as health authorities

restrict supplies to GP clinics amid a national shortage. The unprecedented demand for the seasonal vaccines has almost exhausted current flu vaccines available through the National Immunisation Program following concerted state and national campaigns to lift flu immunisation rates. Dr Vicky Sheppard, NSW Health Director of Communicable Diseases said national stocks were "very tight". The most constrained stock were the vaccines for over 65s, she said.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/flu-vaccine-rationed-as-national-shortage-hits-over-65s-hardest-20180525-p4zh1.html>

General Influenza News

800,000 additional influenza vaccinations fast-tracked by federal government

An additional 800,000 influenza vaccines have been fast-tracked to Australia amid the recent national shortage. The additional doses top-up 10 million shots that were released by the Therapeutics Goods Administration through private market supplies, state programs and the National Immunisation Program, according to the Sydney Morning Herald. The additional vaccines couldn't come at a better time, as state health authorities have been forced to ration flu shots after supplies were almost exhausted just days ahead of the winter season.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5773509/800-000-l-influenza-vaccinations-fast-tracked-federal-government.html>

Additional sources: (The Gympie Times) (SBS) (Ten Daily) (The Northern Daily Leader) (The Guardian) (Grafton Daily Examiner) (News.com.au) (News.com.au) (Ararat Advertiser) (Daily Mail)

Vic to conserve flu shots for vulnerable

The Victorian health department says it will be rationing flu shots for the state's most vulnerable, as unprecedented demand has led to a nationwide shortage of the vaccine. More than 1.5 million people have been vaccinated in Victoria so far in 2018, and supplies are now exhausted, Victoria's chief health officer Charles Guest confirmed on Friday.

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5428865/vic-to-conserve-flu-shots-for-vulnerable/?cs=12>

Additional sources: (St George and Sutherland Shire Leader) (The Age) (3AW) (The Courier) (Yahoo7 News)

Canberra officials have been taking flu vaccines from doctors' offices

In Australia, ACT Health officials have visited GPs in Canberra this week to seize flu vaccines in the face of a nationwide shortage as Canberrans rush to get vaccinated early in unprecedented numbers. Canberra GP Thinus van Rensburg tweeted on Thursday that he had tried to stop health officials from removing the flu stock from his Charnwood practice.

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/act/canberra-officials-have-been-taking-flu-vaccines-from-doctors-offices-20180525-p4zhgx.html>

Public Health: Get vaccinations early

In Guam, as school children get ready to greet summer with open arms, the Department of Public Health and Social Services is urging families to get vaccinated well before the mad rush of the back-to-school season. Annette Aguon, Public Health's immunization program supervisor, said that unlike the continental U.S., which typically sees an increase in flu cases starting in late November, Guam's flu season is year-round.

<https://www.guampdn.com/story/news/2018/05/26/public-health-get-vaccinations-early-year/627793002/>

Pharmacies deliver 1.3 million seasonal flu jabs

Some 1.3 million flu vaccinations were given by community pharmacists in England in the 2017/2018 season, in what has been described a "hugely significant milestone" by professional negotiators. This totals 393,304 more vaccinations than the previous season. In addition, 71.1% of all community pharmacies in England participated in the latest vaccination programme — 530 more than in the previous flu season, NHS Business Services Authority figures have revealed.

<http://www.pharmaceutical-journal.com/news-and-analysis/news/pharmacies-deliver-13-million-seasonal-flu-jabs/20204919.article>

Flu vaccine shortage no cause for alarm: Murrumbidgee Health

In Australia, the Murrumbidgee Local Health District has reassured the public that the nationwide shortage of the flu vaccine should not have a drastic effect on the district. Director of public health Tracey Oakman said the district was affected in the same way as the rest of NSW, but said more vaccine was expected to arrive in the coming weeks, long before the peak of flu season in July and August

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/5426419/flu-vaccine-shortage-no-cause-for-alarm-murrumbidgee-health/>

A batch of 400,000 vaccine doses against influenza A(H1N1) arrives in Honduras

A batch of 400,000 vaccines to fight Influenza H1N1 arrived Friday at the Puerot Cortes container shipping terminal. The cargo will be delivered to health authorities in Tegucigalpa for planned distribution to the most vulnerable in the population.

<http://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/1181567-410/honduras-vacunas-influenza-ah1n1-cortes-salud>

Sharp increase in demand for free flu vaccine

Queensland Health has issued 45 per cent more free flu vaccine than at the same time last year as more people line up for the jab off the back of the record 2017 season. New data released this week shows 4315 Queenslanders have tested positive for influenza so far this year — 267 cases higher than this time last year — but the jump coincides with significantly increased testing.

<http://www.news.com.au/national/queensland/sharp-increase-in-demand-for-free-flu-vaccine/news-story/30b262f3ee56b69b123ecd7dad1619bb>

At the Hospitals: Alice Peck Day Recognized for Excellence in Vaccination

The New Hampshire Immunization Program recently recognized Alice Peck Day Memorial Hospital for excellence in influenza vaccination and nurse Holly Beam, who works in APD's primary care, for excellence in vaccine management. APD's primary care was recognized as a champion for implementing an influenza vaccination program in the hospital. In 2017, 98.4 percent of APD employees received the flu vaccine.

<http://www.vnews.com/Alice-Peck-Day-Recognized-for-Excellence-in-Vaccination-17769556>

Burden of disease

Ohio's flu season was the worst in 5 years. Here's why

The number of influenza-related hospitalizations in Ohio this season was the highest in five years, according to the final state flu season data released Friday. The figures were prompted by an early start, early peak and long season, officials said. The 17,397 flu-related hospitalization cases reported for the 2017-18 flu season were more than twice as many as last season's 8,661 cases reported by the Ohio Department of Health.

<http://www.mydaytondailynews.com/news/local/ohio-flu-season-was-the-worst-years-here-why/DU8Exqj8hxWVIAGpYWmu5N/>

Seasonal influenza claims nine lives

In Sri Lanka, while admitting that the seasonal influenza spreading in the Southern Province had caused the deaths of nine individuals last month, Chief Epidemiologist Dr. Anil Dissanayake said the number of admissions to hospitals had considerably reduced this week.

<http://www.dailymirror.lk/article/Seasonal-influenza-claims-nine-lives-150445.html>

Flu deaths doubled in Iowa this year, to 270, health department reports

The flu killed twice as many Iowans this winter as a year earlier, state experts reported Friday. The Iowa Department of Public Health reported that the state recorded 270 confirmed flu deaths in the

season starting last fall. That compares to 133 at this point a year earlier. Just 44 flu deaths were confirmed in Iowa two winters ago.

<https://eu.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/health/2018/05/25/flu-deaths-iowa-winter-seasonal-vaccine-disease-killer/645749002/>

News Scan for May 25, 2018 - CIDRAP

As spring winds down, US flu levels continued to drop or remain at low levels again last week, but the CDC recorded one new influenza-related death in a child, according to a CDC update. Flu was reported as widespread in only Massachusetts, compared with that state plus New York the week before. All 50 states reported minimal influenza-like illness activity.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2018/05/news-scan-may-25-2018>

The first confirmed cases of H3N2 influenza in Itabira

The Municipal Health Department this week received confirmation from the Ezquiel Dias Foundation (FUNED) that the tested samples of two patients with SARS were caused by the influenza virus H3N2, a subtype of influenza A

<http://www.defatoonline.com.br/virus-da-gripe-h3n2-tem-primeiros-casos-confirmados-em-itabira/>

Health Secretariat confirms two new deaths from H1N1 in Rio Preto

The Sao Jose do Rio Preto Health Department confirmed two new deaths from influenza A H1N1 on Thursday. The health secretariat said the two victims were a man over 60 and a woman over 40. This year the city has seen five deaths from influenza, four of them for Influenza A H1N1 and one for Influenza A H3N2. In all cases the victim had prior health conditions or related problems or was in an at risk group.

<http://g1.globo.com/sp/sao-jose-do-rio-preto-aracatuba/noticia/secretaria-de-saude-confirma-duas-novas-mortes-por-h1n1-em-rio-preto.ghtml>

Health authorities investigating the first case of suspected H1N1 this year

The first suspected case of influenza virus H1N1 in Venancio Aires is under investigation. The 65-year-old woman has been hospitalized at the Hospital Sao Sebastiao Martir and has received medication indicated for the treatment of H1N1. Health staff have collected material and sent it for analysis in Porto Alegre. The results of the tests are due on Monday, 28.

<http://www.folhadomate.com/noticias/saude/municipio-investiga-primeiro-caso-suspeito-de-gripe-h1n1-deste-ano>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

Bird flu outbreak in Kathmandu

In Nepal, H5N1 influenza virus has been detected in two farms in the capital. After the bird flu was detected and confirmed in ducks, the authorities culled 5,451 ducks and 180 hens, besides destroying 3,720 eggs of ducks. According to the Chief of Epidemiology and Disease Control Division Dr Kedar Century, after the Directorate of Animal Health confirmed detection of bird flu it asked EDCD to send necessary manpower for assistance. "We sent our staff for investigation and they have collected throat swab of two people in the area who showed symptoms of bird flu," added Dr Century.

<http://thehimalayantimes.com/kathmandu/bird-flu-outbreak-in-kathmandu/>

Additional sources: (Crosfblogs.typepad.com)

Government relaxes poultry restrictions after four months of bird flu prevention zones

Avian Influenza Prevention Zones in England and Wales have been lifted with immediate effect. The government confirmed its decision on the back of updated veterinary risk assessment carried out by the Animal and Plant Health Agency which confirmed the risk of incursion from wild birds had returned from high to low. It comes exactly four months after the prevention zone was introduced to curb the risk of infection spreading following three separate findings of the H5N6 strain in wild birds

in England and one in Wales.

<https://www.fginsight.com/news/news/government-relaxes-poultry-restrictions-after-four-months-of-bird-flu-prevention-zones-61838>

Additional sources: ([Daily Post Wales](#)) ([4-Traders](#)) ([Farming UK](#))

Bird flu is back 'at Seeburg lake'

The Mansfeld-Sudharz district authorities said they had been informed that on Friday morning the three dead swans with the H5 virus were found. The dead animals were sent to the Friedrich Loeffler Institute in order for them to carry out a range of tests to determine what the virus subtype was so authorities can take appropriate measures.

<http://www.mdr.de/sachsen-anhalt/magdeburg/h-fuenf-virus-gefluegelpest-am-suessen-see-seeburg-100.html>

Low-pathogenic AI strikes Russian Far East

Russian veterinary body Rosselkhozadzor is to cull 239,000 chickens at the Nadezhdinskaya Ptitsa poultry farm in Primorsky Krai, in Russia's Far East region, following an outbreak of low-pathogenic avian influenza (AI) H9N2. Preliminary samples taken from dead poultry at the farm showed the presence of the H7N2 subtype, potentially dangerous to humans, said Marina Polyakova, deputy director of the regional department of Russian sanitary service Rospotrebnadzor.

<https://www.globalmeatnews.com/Article/2018/05/25/Russia-to-cull-chickens-to-prevent-avian-flu-spreading>