

Seqirus Media Monitoring

8th Apr 2019

Seqirus mentions

Recognizing women in vaccinology

Infectious Disease News spoke with three experts who took part in a panel discussion highlighting the impact of women in vaccinology. The panel was part of a daylong series of events at the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases' Annual Conference on Vaccinology Research that recognized the work of women in the field. The video includes perspectives from Vanderbilt University's Kathryn M. Edwards, MD, Merck's Julie L. Gerberding, MD, MPH, and Anita Zaidi, MBBS, SM, from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Edwards reports consulting for Sanofi Pasteur and Seqirus.

<https://www.healio.com/infectious-disease/vaccine-preventable-diseases/news/online/%7B0383b369-71bc-4024-8157-182cd3dd73e0%7D/video-recognizing-women-in-vaccinology>

Australian pharma to export flu vaccines from Argentina

As the flu season is about to begin in the southern hemisphere, Seqirus launches its brand in Argentina. The company plans to make Argentina a hub in the region for its products and business, and soon to be exporting from there. CEO Gordon Naylor explains that Seqirus has had a presence in the region for years, as it acquires Novartis' flu vaccine arm, which had a deal with Sinergium Biotech already.

<https://noticiasprotagonistas.com/actualidad/laboratorio-australiano-planea-exportar-vacunas-antigripales-desde-la-argentina/>

Industry News

More than 80 cases now before High Court over swine flu vaccine

In Ireland, the solicitor handling many of the cases involving people who allegedly developed narcolepsy after receiving the swine flu vaccine has said more than 80 cases have now been lodged before the courts in relation to Pandemrix. Legal proceedings in two more cases were issued during the week. One case, involving a woman, is listed for trial on 8 October next. The other case involves an underage boy. The defendants in both cases are the Minister for Health, the HSE, GSK and the Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA).

<https://www.thejournal.ie/swine-flu-narcolepsy-court-cases-4578353-Apr2019/>

Pandemic Influenza News

China's Inner Mongolia reports human infection of H7N9 bird flu virus: Xinhua

China's Inner Mongolia region reported on Saturday a case of human infection with the H7N9 bird flu virus, the official Xinhua news agency reported. The same bird flu strain killed almost 300 people in the country during the winter of 2016/2017. The patient, an 82-year-old man, was receiving treatment and local authorities disinfected his home and the surrounding area. The local government said people who had had contact with the man had shown "no abnormalities", Xinhua reported.

<https://uk.reuters.com/article/us-china-health/chinas-inner-mongolia-reports-human-infection-of-h7n9-bird-flu-virus-xinhua-idUKKCN1RI0DE>

Additional sources: ([Outbreak News Today](#)) ([New York Times](#))

Academic studies

Rapid flu test could save lives and slash needless hospital admissions, study finds

A new flu test which is able to detect the most common strains of influenza within two hours could save lives and help stop the spread of the viral infection, Australian researchers say. Researchers have called for the test to be rolled out nationally after a successful trial in four emergency departments in New South Wales. The rapid Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) swab test can produce an influenza diagnosis up to 24 hours quicker than a conventional flu test.

<https://www.theage.com.au/healthcare/rapid-flu-test-could-save-lives-and-slash-needless-hospital-admissions-study-finds-20190407-p51bn6.html>

Additional sources: (Sydney Morning Herald)

NIH begins first-in-human trial of universal influenza vaccine candidate

The first clinical trial of an innovative universal influenza vaccine candidate is examining the vaccine's safety and tolerability as well as its ability to induce an immune response in healthy volunteers. Scientists at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) developed the experimental vaccine, known as H1ssF_3928. H1ssF_3928 is designed to teach the body to make protective immune responses against diverse influenza subtypes by focusing the immune system on a portion of the virus that varies relatively little from strain to strain. The vaccine candidate was developed as part of a broader research agenda to create a so-called "universal" influenza vaccine that can provide long-lasting protection for all age groups from multiple influenza subtypes, including those that might cause a pandemic.

<http://www.pharmabiz.com/NewsDetails.aspx?aid=115051&sid=2>

Additional sources: (Bloomberg Law) (CBS Boston) (Medscape) (Healthline)

Food additive may influence how well flu vaccines work

Michigan State University scientists have linked a common food preservative to an altered immune response that possibly hinders flu vaccines. The study conducted in mice, presented at the 2019 Experimental Biology meeting, offers up a new potential factor in vaccine effectiveness. A second phase of the study showed the additive hindered the immune system's ability to remember how to respond to the flu virus, particularly when another strain was introduced at another time. This resulted in a longer recovery and additional weight loss in the mice.

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2019-04/msu-fam040419.php

British doctors create revolutionary nose drops that could protect against flu, meningitis and pneumonia

British doctors have developed revolutionary nose drops that could protect against flu. Just a few squirts up each nostril also has the potential to keep meningitis, pneumonia and ear infections at bay. University Hospital Southampton is already trialling the meningitis spray in people, with the others set to follow within a year. All have proven effective in lab tests. Prof Robert Read genetically modified a type of "friendly" bacteria to help it stick in the nose and throat.

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8811555/nose-drops-flu-meningitis-pneumonia/>

Pediatric influenza news

Child Care Centers—Many in Queens—Get Health Violations for Having Unvaccinated Students

In New York City, a change in city law now requires children attending city-regulated child care or school-based programs to get annual flu shots. Some centers, though, are finding it difficult to comply with the new law because they face strong resistance from parents who disapprove of their children getting the vaccine. As a result, many child care centers across the city have accumulated serious health violations—there are 353 open violations, some dating back to November, related to the immunizations for influenza, among other diseases, at New York City child care centers, according to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene child care inspection data.

<http://nycitylens.com/2019/04/child-care-centers-most-of-them-in-queens-get-critical-violations-for-having-too-many-unvaccinated-students/>

Parents protest bills eliminating religious exemption for vaccines

Some parents rallied against proposed bills in Albany that would eliminate religious exemptions for vaccines. They were fuming over three bills that would drop an exemption from vaccinations due to religious beliefs. The bills would also require preschoolers and children in day care to get flu shots
<http://longisland.news12.com/story/40261590/parents-protest-bills-eliminating-religious-exemption-for-vaccines>

CDC flu report: 5 more children have died

In the U.S., five more children have died of flu, and the virus continues to be widespread in 33 states, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The additional pediatric deaths bring the total to 82 during what's shaping up to be an unusually long season. About 3.2% of outpatient clinic visits were for flu during the week ending March 30, down from 3.8% the week before but still well above the baseline of 2.2%, according to CDC data.

<https://www.aappublications.org/news/2019/04/05/flu040519>

Over 65's influenza news

October may be best time for older adults to receive flu shot

It may be best for older adults to wait until October to receive their flu vaccine, unless that delay would cause them to skip getting their flu shot altogether, according to a study published in the April issue of the American Journal of Preventive Medicine. Kenneth J. Smith, M.D., from the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and colleagues developed a model to compare influenza likelihood in older adults with either status quo vaccination (August to May) to maximize vaccine uptake or vaccination compressed to October to May (to decrease waning vaccine effectiveness impact).

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-04-october-older-adults-flu-shot.html>

General Influenza News

Destined For Dump - Thousands Of Flu Vaccines In Danger Of Being Discarded Because Of Low Take-Up Rate

In Jamaica, five of the 116 people who have tested positive for influenza A (H1N1) in less than four months have died, but with only 35 per cent of the vaccines dispatched locally to fight the deadly flu, thousands might be discarded later this year, as Jamaicans have been reluctant to get vaccinated. According to data from the Ministry of Health, 18,500 doses of flu vaccine have been dispatched locally since October 2018, but up to Tuesday of last week, only 3,771 doses had been administered in the public sector and 2,636 at private medical facilities.

<http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20190407/destined-dump-thousands-flu-vaccines-danger-being-discarded-be-cause-low-take>

'Room for improvement' over flu jabs for Shropshire hospital workers

The uptake in flu vaccinations for frontline healthcare workers at Shropshire's hospitals has room for improvement, according to non-executive directors on the trust's board. More than three quarters of frontline healthcare workers at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Telford's Princess Royal Hospital received the flu vaccination this year. Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust's flu campaign for 2018/19 was taken up by 75.37 per cent of frontline staff. Chief executive Simon Wright previously said the uptake had increased significantly during his time at the trust.

<https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/health/2019/04/05/room-for-improvement-over-flu-jabs-for-shropshire-hospital-workers/>

HCWs can be convinced to get flu vaccine without making it mandatory

Researchers found that health care workers can be convinced to get vaccinated against influenza

without making it mandatory. "We saw in a previous study that only 40% of our health care workers are vaccinated, so we wanted to increase vaccination in order to prevent health care workers from being a vector for transmission to patients or elderly who are staying in long-term care facilities," Lise Boey, MSc, a PhD student at Leuven University Vaccinology Center in Belgium, told Infectious Disease News at the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases' Annual Conference on Vaccinology Research.

<https://www.healio.com/infectious-disease/influenza/news/online/%7B47355180-5d67-423d-8afd-e442f198bd44%7D/hcws-can-be-convinced-to-get-flu-vaccine-without-making-it-mandatory>

Why we need to start listening to vaccination warnings

Stephanie Bedo writes about vaccine preventable infections: "Just last week, I wrote about how a colleague's newborn baby was rushed to the emergency department and in hospital for three nights, forced to undergo all sorts of tests which ultimately revealed he had influenza. Six-week-old Seth Ritson was only days from getting his shots. His mum Marion suspected his older brother brought the bug home from daycare." She calls for people to get their flu shot

<https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/health/health-problems/why-we-need-to-start-listening-to-vaccination-warnings/news-story/b6dedec5cf57fb19057ffd5c608e6ac3>

William Schaffner, MD, Shares Highlights From NFID Annual Conference on Vaccinology Research

Experts from around the world converged on Baltimore, Maryland, for the 2019 National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) Annual Conference on Vaccinology Research. William Schaffner, MD, medical director of NFID and an infectious disease specialist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, discusses the highlights from the conference, including novel delivery mechanisms in the works for vaccines, antimicrobial resistance, vaccine hesitancy, how to prepare for "Pathogen X", and what the biggest challenges in the field of vaccinology are right now

<https://www.contagionlive.com/news/william-schaffner-md-shares-highlights-from-nfid-annual-conference-on-vaccinology-research>

Social media's battle against bogus vaccine claims

Like health officials facing measles outbreaks, internet companies are trying to contain vaccine-related misinformation they have long helped spread. So far, their efforts at quarantine are falling short. Richard Carpiano, a professor of public policy and sociology at the University of California, Riverside, who studies vaccine trends, noted that even with anti-vaccination activists getting a large share of the public's attention, much more common are parents who are merely hesitant or concerned about immunization. Understandably, they seek out information — and a lot of what they find is false. "It is a misinformation campaign," he said. "Often couched in 'oh we are for choice, understanding, education,'" he said. "But fundamentally it is not open to scientific debate."

<https://www.wraltechwire.com/2019/04/05/social-medias-battle-against-bogus-vaccine-claims/>

Give us the NIP: Queensland Guild

Queensland pharmacists are now able to vaccinate 16-year-olds, amid an early start to this year's flu season. Trent Twomey, Queensland branch president of the Pharmacy Guild, welcomed the Queensland Government's decision to allow community pharmacists to vaccinate patients aged 16 and over, from Friday 5 April. The decision arose from last year's Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry into community pharmacy, he said. "This week, we have seen the strain on emergency departments throughout Queensland with unprecedented diagnoses and admissions of influenza," he said.

<https://ajp.com.au/news/give-us-the-nip-queensland-guild/>

Timing is important: Flu vaccinations available soon

In Australia, staff at Kendal Street Medical Centre are urging residents to be patient when it comes to the flu shot, with vaccination clinic dates to be held in the near future. The Medical Centre is

following the Department of Health guidelines with regard to the issuing of the flu vaccine to their patients. Kendal Street Medical Centre Manager, Maryann Wood, said the Public Vaccine Centre/ Public Health Unit has not released the vaccinations to the practice as yet, and there are five age specific vaccines available free of charge under the government programs in 2019 for eligible people.

<https://www.cowraguardian.com.au/story/5982333/timing-is-important-flu-vaccinations-available-soon/>

Burden of disease

Flu cases still high as first human universal vaccine trial begins

Most U.S. states are seeing an unusually high number of flu patients as the season comes to a close. Meanwhile, the very first human experiments with a new universal flu shot have begun at the NIH. Five children died of flu-associated causes during the week ended March 30, bringing total number of childhood deaths for the season to 82; overall, as many as 50,900 total deaths due to flu have occurred this season. The experimental vaccine, called H1ssF_3928, was developed by scientists at NIAID in the hopes that it will provide long-lasting protection against multiple flu virus strains, including those that might cause a pandemic.

<https://www.cnn.com/2019/04/05/health/flu-numbers-universal-vaccine-cdc-nih/index.html>

Additional sources: (Local News8.com)

Man with flu symptoms dies in immigration detention center, ICE says

A Mexican man who was exhibiting flu-like symptoms died in an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention center this week, immigration officials said Friday. Abel Reyes-Clemente, 54, died at the Florence Service Processing Center in Arizona two days after he was treated for flu symptoms, officials said

<https://thehill.com/latino/437685-man-with-flu-symptoms-dies-in-immigration-detention-center-ice>

Additional sources: (KTAR News) (Washington Post) (Huffington Post)

US flu winding down, but 5 new deaths reported in kids

The US flu season trails on, and though influenza activity decreased since last week, it remains relatively high for this time of year, the CDC said in its weekly FluView update. Despite signs of a dwindling flu season, the CDC recorded five more pediatric deaths from flu-related complications, raising the total number of pediatric flu deaths for the 2018-19 season to 82. The CDC said it expects flu to circulate still for a number of weeks. Of the 18.1% positive lab samples, 92.8% were influenza A, and 7.2% were influenza B. Of subtyped influenza A specimens, 26.4% were H1N1 and 73.6% were H3N2. Of subtyped influenza B specimens, 75% were Victoria lineage.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2019/04/us-flu-winding-down-5-new-deaths-reported-kids>

Additional sources: (MassLive.com) (Beckers Hospital Review)

More people in critical condition because of flu virus

In Vietnam, Deputy Head of Contagious Disease Ward of the National Children Hospital in Hanoi Dr. Do Thien Hai said there has been a drastic increase in the number of flu kid inpatients in the hospital. Physicians found that many of them have been infected with flu but they have been taken to the hospital late and some of them have even been taking antibiotic for mistakenly diagnosed with sore throat. The National Tropical Disease Hospital also admitted flu adult inpatients; many of them contracted with virus A/H1N1 while some had H3N2 virus and others got B flu virus

<http://sggpnews.org.vn/national/more-people-in-critical-condition-because-of-flu-virus-81225.html>

Over 8,000 flu-positive lab results in CT and 7 more deaths

The flu remains widespread across Connecticut with more than 8,000 overall confirmed flu-positive lab results and seven more flu-related deaths, according to the Connecticut Department of Public Health. The seven flu-related deaths in Connecticut in the 13th week of the year pushed the total of

deaths linked to the flu this season to 64. Of those 64, 42 were people over the age of 65, 17 were people between the ages of 50 and 64, four were people between the ages of 25 and 49 and one was a person between the ages of 5 and 17.

<https://www.ctpost.com/local/article/Over-8-000-flu-positive-lab-results-in-CT-and-6-13743159.php>

Hospitals restricting visitation as flu continues pushing through N.L.

In Canada, it's the late-season push for infectious germs and sicknesses such as influenza, and Newfoundland's west coast appears to be bearing the brunt of the outbreak. "We have it. It's everywhere. Three or four weeks ago the activity was higher in Labrador, but now it's on the island," Dr. Claudia Sarbu, chief medical officer of health, told CBC Radio's Newfoundland Morning. "Nationally, influenza activity continues to be reported in almost all regions, but it's circulating in higher levels in eastern regions."

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/hospital-restricting-visitation-influenza-1.5085883>

State: Influenza A still raging; 2018-2019 flu season now has 2nd highest number of cases

In Delaware, the 2018-2019 flu season has tallied the second-highest number of influenza cases in state-recorded history — and likely isn't going to go away for weeks, state officials said. Delaware officials have seen an increase in cases involving H3N2, a particularly virulent flu strain, in the past month. It can often cause a more severe illness in older adults, officials said.

<https://eu.delawareonline.com/story/news/health/2019/04/04/state-flu-season-could-last-weeks-due-increase-h-3-n-2/3364591002/>

Flu News: April 5, 2019

According to new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 5 additional influenza-associated pediatric deaths were reported during the 2018-2019 season. Separately, the World Health Organization reported on April 1, 2019, that seasonal influenza A viruses accounted for the majority of detections. In Europe, influenza activity decreased across the continent. Both influenza A viruses co-circulated.

<https://www.precisionvaccinations.com/82-influenza-associated-pediatric-deaths-confirmed-during-2018-2019-flu-season>

Flu Kills Three In Martinique

The flu has killed three people in Martinique since an epidemic began in October 2018, local reports say. Martinique 1ere reports that two of the patients died in March, while the flu is the cause of eight hospitalisations in intensive care.

<https://stluciatimes.com/flu-kills-three-in-martinique/>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

UAE bans bird imports from Mexico

Dubai: The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCA) announced on Sunday that it has banned all bird imports from Mexico due to an outbreak of bird flu (H5N8) in the Mexican district of Acolman.

<https://gulfnnews.com/uae/health/uae-bans-bird-imports-from-mexico-1.63179693>