

Now You Can Help With...

OUTPATIENT INFLUENZA-LIKE ILLNESS SURVEILLANCE NETWORK (ILINet) for the 2009-2010 Influenza Season

...In Only a Few Minutes a Week!

What is the influenza sentinel surveillance program?

Influenza sentinel surveillance is an initiative conducted by the Pennsylvania Department of Health in collaboration with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to monitor the levels of influenza-like illness (ILI) occurring in outpatient doctor-visit settings. Participation in ILINet is voluntary, and includes providers from a variety of subspecialties. Approximately, 150 providers are currently enrolled in the ILINet program in Pennsylvania, [click here](#) to view a map of Pennsylvania ILINet providers.

This program is an invaluable component of influenza surveillance, allowing the tracking and responding to the ever-changing epidemiology of influenza and is a key part of surveillance to detect and monitor pandemic influenza. Our recent experience with novel H1N1 influenza has further reinforced the degree to which we rely on surveillance to track influenza activity and monitor for important trends.

Who can be an ILINet Provider?

Providers of any specialty in any type of practice are eligible to be ILINet providers.

- ☐ Emergency Medicine
- ☐ Internal Medicine
- ☐ Student Health
- ☐ Family Practice
- ☐ OB/GYN
- ☐ Urgent Care
- ☐ Infectious Disease
- ☐ Pediatrics

Practice settings that are **not eligible** are elementary, middle, or high school health centers, and any type of institutional setting such as nursing homes or prisons.

What data do ILINet providers collect? How and to whom are data reported?

ILINet providers report each week the total number of patients seen for any reason and the number of doctor-visits attributed to ILI by age group; (0-4 years, 5-24 years, 25-49 years, 50-64 years, >65 years). Data reported by ILINet providers, in combination with other influenza surveillance data, provide a statewide and national picture of influenza virus and ILI activity in the U.S. [Click here to view the current data](#) reported by ILINet providers.

Influenza-like Illness (ILI) Case Definition
Fever (100 F [37.8 C], oral or equivalent
-And-
cough and/or sore throat

Data are submitted electronically every Monday to the CDC via a secure website or by fax. Most providers report that it takes them **less than 30 minutes a week** to compile & report their data. In addition, ILINet providers can submit specimens from a subset of patients for virus isolation **free of charge**.

Why Volunteer?

Influenza viruses are constantly evolving and cause substantial morbidity and mortality (an average of 36,000 deaths) every year. **ILINet data is important for monitoring the course of influenza-related illnesses at local, state, and national level.** Also, ILINet data, in combination with other influenza surveillance data, can be used to guide prevention and control activities, vaccine strain selection, and patient care. And most importantly, ILINet data are critical for informing rapid public health interventions.

Other influenza sentinel surveillance programs

In addition to ILINet providers, Pennsylvania Department of Health has implemented other influenza sentinel surveillance systems including;

1. Sentinel schools to track influenza-related school absenteeism and ILI. For further information on sentinel schools, you may contact Chandra Marriott at cmariott@state.pa.us or call 717-787-3350.
2. Sentinel surveillance in long term care facilities to monitor ILI and types of flu viruses circulating among the people over 65 years of age and residents of long term care facilities.

For more information on the US Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) or sentinel surveillance in long term care facilities, please contact [Owen Simwale](#) or Dr. [Kumar Nalluswami](#) at 717-787-3350; or [download, complete and return the enrollment form](#) to participate.