

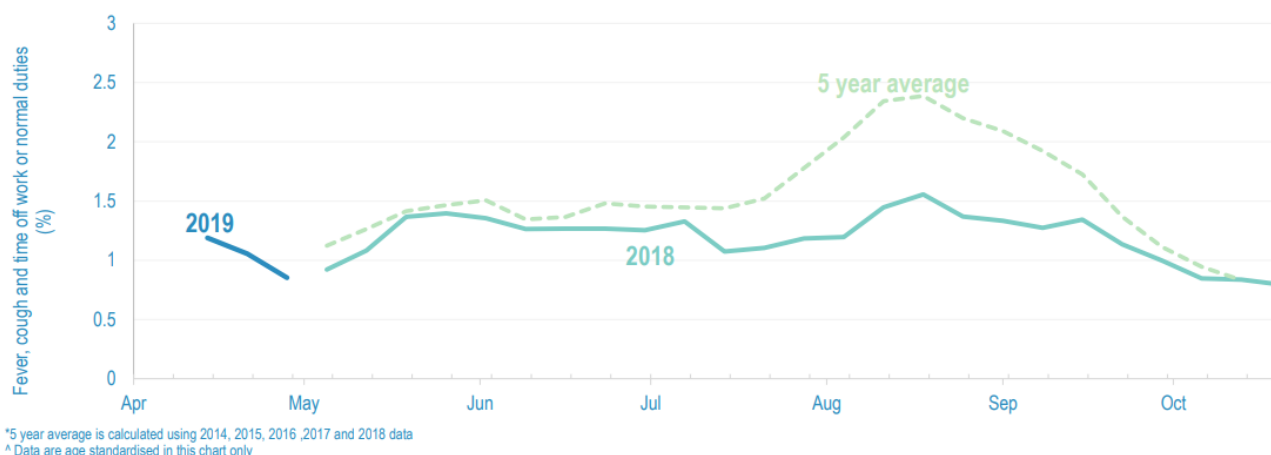
Hunter New England and Central Coast Public Health Units Communicable Diseases Report April 2019

Flutracking Influenza Immunisation Meningococcal disease

Flu Tracking:

The Flutracking influenza surveillance system has commenced for 2019. Currently over 40,000 flutrackers report each week by completing a 15 second weekly survey asking if you have had an influenza like illness (ILI). You can help track flu in your area by joining [Flutracking](#) and download [weekly reports](#) and view [interactive maps](#) of ILI activity. As of 28 April, 2019, flutracking indicates typical pre-season levels of ILI (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Flu symptom activity (fever, cough, and time off work or normal duties, week ending 28 April, 2019).



Influenza:

Influenza activity continues to decrease in the northern hemisphere and is at inter-seasonal levels in the southern hemisphere. In North America and Europe, the dominant virus was influenza A(H3N2). In NSW, higher than usual influenza activity has been observed during the first quarter of 2019.

Influenza virus can persist on surfaces and remain infectious for up to 16 hours. Control measures include regular surface cleaning, handwashing and encouraging sick people to wear a mask and avoid vulnerable people such as children, older people or people in hospital or aged care.

Immunisation

Influenza vaccine is currently available and recommended to reduce influenza risk. The latest immunisation information can be obtained from the HNE's [To the Point Newsletter](#) and the [NSW Health Immunisation](#) website.

Meningococcal disease

Historically winter and spring have been the peak seasons for meningococcal disease, however cases can occur year round. Infants, small children, adolescents and young adults are most at risk. Meningococcal disease is caused by infection with *Neisseria meningitidis* of which there are various serogroups: A, B, C, W and Y. Between 5 and 25 per cent of people carry meningococcal bacteria at the back of the nose and throat without showing any illness or symptoms.

Immunisation is the best protection against meningococcal disease. NSW Health is offering meningococcal vaccine for the four strains (A, C, W and Y) to students in Year 10 in 2019. Students who miss school clinics, or young people aged 15-19 years who are not attending school, can see their GP for free meningococcal ACWY vaccine. Vaccines are also available for infants against the B strain through general practitioners on a private prescription.

For further information, visit the NSW Health [Meningococcal Disease webpage](#).

Infectious Disease Alerts

- [Salmonella Enteritidis outbreak linked to eggs](#)
- [Measles alerts - NSW Health](#)
- [Measles advice for travellers – Australian Dept Health](#)
 - There is increased measles activity in many countries with significant outbreaks in Ukraine, Madagascar, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Yemen, Brazil, Nigeria, Thailand and DRC.

Communicable disease notifications

Table 1. Summary of selected notifiable conditions (YTD* by year), 2015 – 16 April 2019

Condition	Hunter New England# (YTD*)					Central Coast# (YTD*)				
	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Cryptosporidiosis	47	35	89	47	64	6	14	17	36	15
Gonorrhoea	177	172	127	117	98	55	81	59	30	41
Syphilis	28	26	23	15	13	6	7	12	9	17
Chlamydial Infection	963	917	898	978	814	320	328	343	303	283
Meningococcal Inf'n	2	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Pertussis	296	183	233	476	256	41	24	31	219	45
Ross River Virus	48	29	207	41	189	18	3	24	6	46
Salmonellosis	160	160	167	159	166	49	69	134	56	65

*YTD, Year to date for each year (reporting delays may result in changes to 2019 figures)

Hunter New England population: 920,000 # Central Coast population: 350,000

Population Health contact details (note, 1300 066 055 will find your local PHU)

Hunter New England: Wallsend Office 4924 6477 - Tamworth Office 6764 8000

Central Coast Public Health Unit: Gosford Office 4320 9730

This [Communicable Disease Report](#) and previous editions are available on the internet

Public Health contact HNELHD-PHEenquiries@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au