



BOSTON PUBLIC HEALTH COMMISSION (BPHC)

Communicable Disease Control Division

1010 Massachusetts Ave - Boston, MA 02118

Phone: (617) 534-5611 - Fax: (617) 534-5905

Boston Influenza Report - For the Week Ending 1/4/2019 (MMWR Week 1)

9/29/2019-1/4/2020 (MMWR Week 1)

Reported Cases (Boston Residents)	# (% of total)
Influenza A	271 (48.5%)
Influenza B	284 (50.8%)
Influenza A and B	4 (0.7%)
Influenza (type unspecified)	0
TOTAL (season-to-date)	559

Boston ED ILI Surveillance*	
This Week ILI% (Week 1)	2.65%
Last Week ILI% (Week 52)	2.14%
State/National ILI Surveillance**, +	
This Week Massachusetts ILI% (Week 1)	4.06%
This Week National ILI% (Week 1)	5.78%

Season-To-Date Hospitalization (through MMWR WK 1)		
SEASON	# HOSPITALIZED	% HOSPITALIZED
2019-2020	62	11
2018-2019	95	17

Summary: As of 1/4/2019, a total of 559 cases of laboratory-confirmed influenza in Boston residents have been reported to the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) since 9/29/2019. Sixty-two cases (11%) have been hospitalized. No influenza-associated deaths have been reported to date. Emergency department visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) comprised 2.65% of all Emergency Department (ED) visits this week. Geographic distribution of influenza activity in Massachusetts is *widespread*. Intensity of ILI in the State is *high*.

Providers should continue to offer vaccine to all persons ≥6 months of age until May.

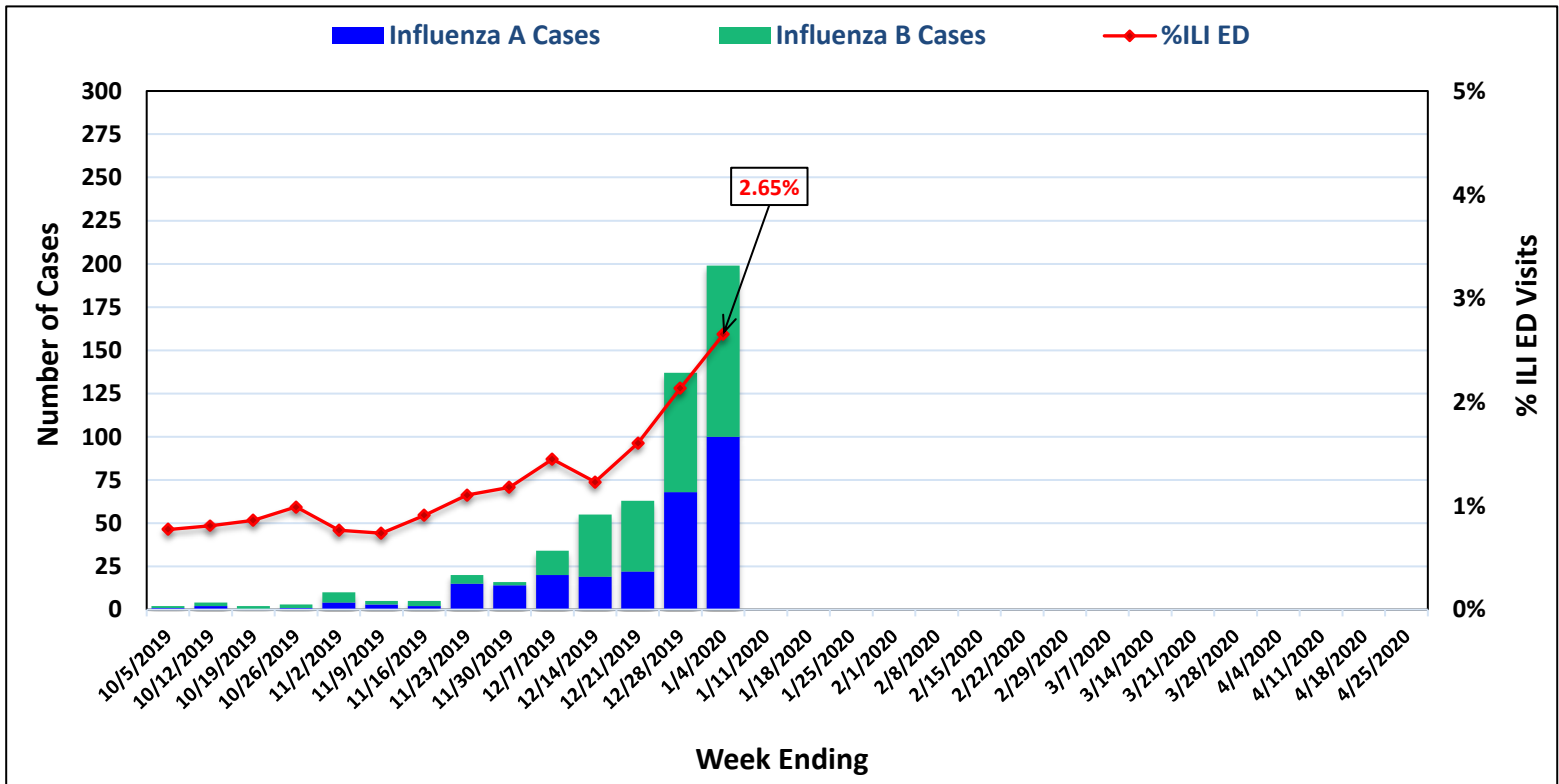
Cases of influenza diagnosed in Boston and confirmed by any laboratory test must be reported to BPHC by calling (617) 534-5611 or faxing reports to (617) 534-5905. [For case report forms Click Here.](#)

*Influenza-like illness (ILI) is defined as "flu" OR "fever AND (cough OR sore throat)" in ED chief complaint data captured by BPHC Syndromic Surveillance System.

**Massachusetts and CDC employ a different methodology than the City of Boston to calculate %ILI. Both Massachusetts and National ILI data are calculated using ILInet outpatient surveillance data from sentinel sites. [For more information Click Here.](#)

+State & national ILI data obtained from CDC's FluView Report. [Click Here for FluView.](#)

Figure 1. Weekly Reported Influenza Cases (in Boston Residents) and % ILI ED Visits, 2019-2020 Season



For the week ending 1/4/2020, ILI accounted for 2.65% of ED visits, an increase of 0.51% from the prior week.

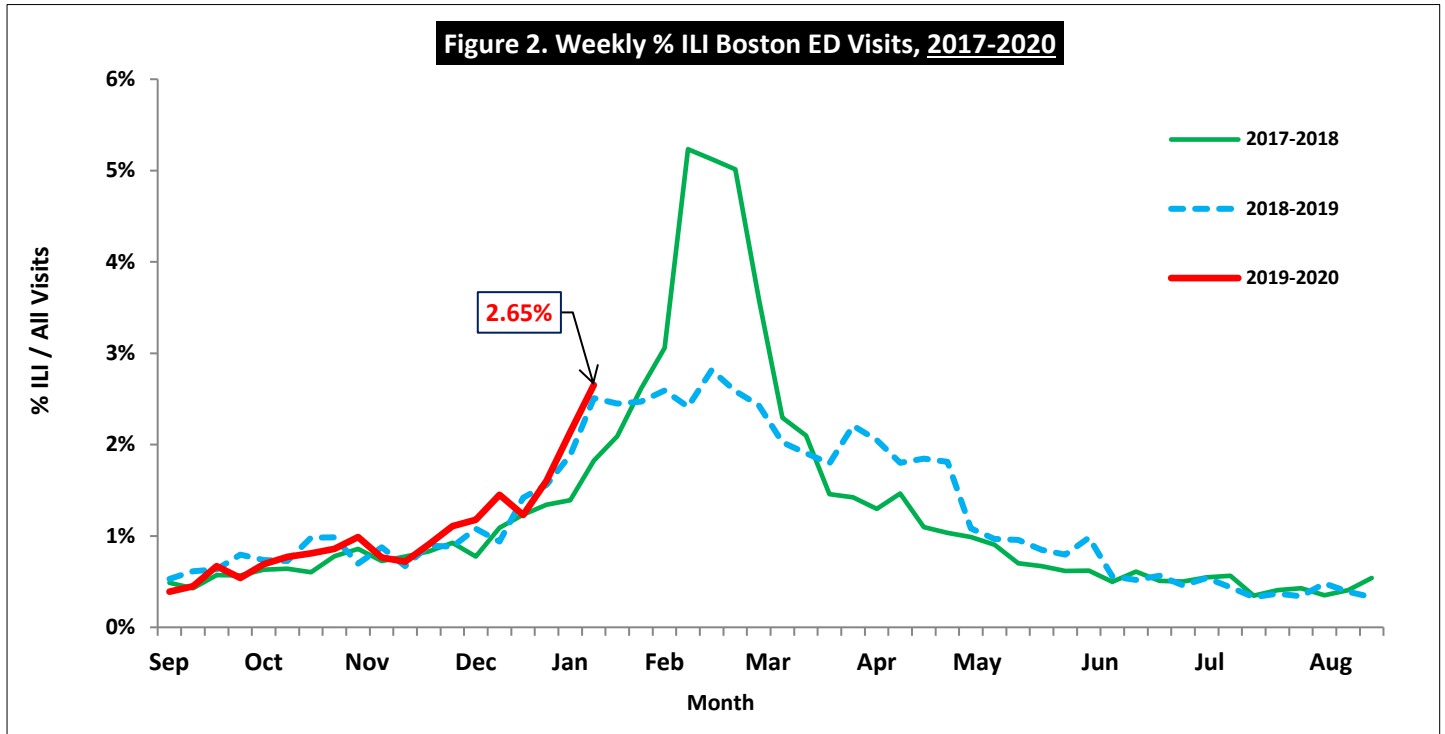


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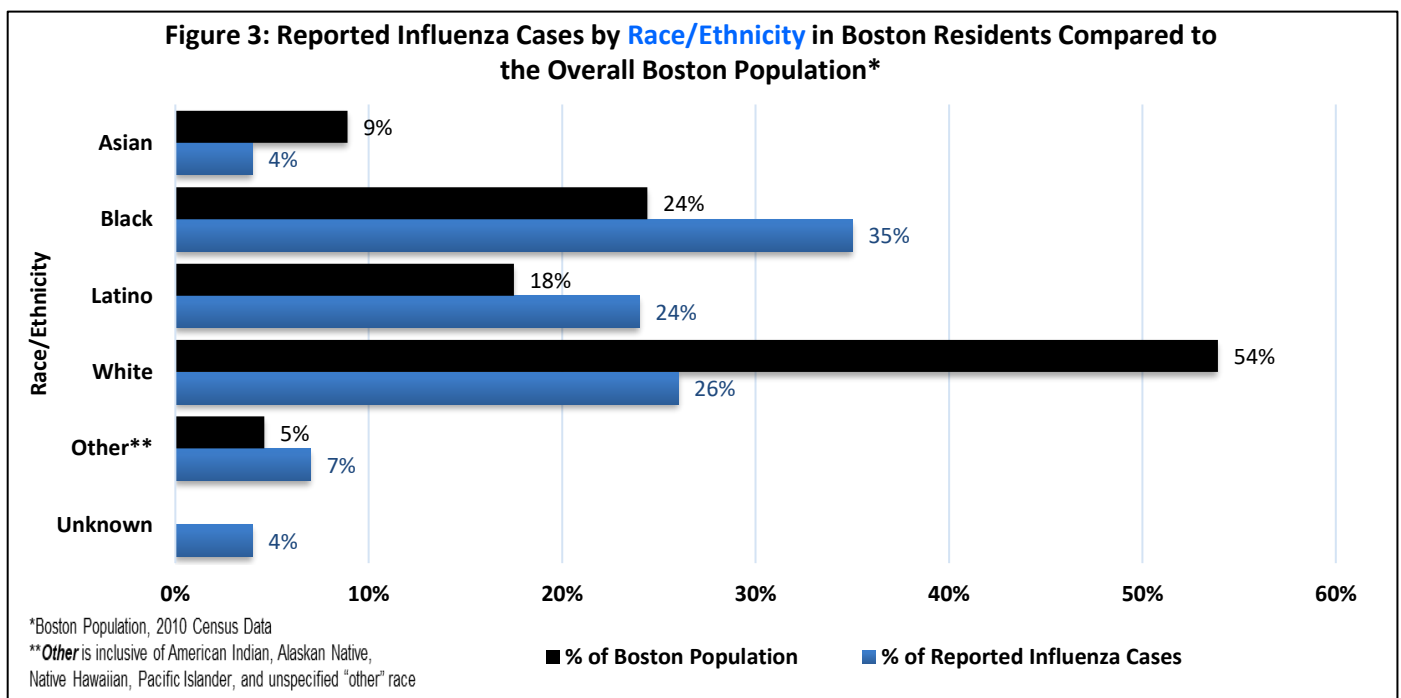
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Weekly ILI ED visits are shown from the 2017-2018 season to present. For the week ending 1/4/2020, ILI accounted for 2.65% of ED visits, an increase of 0.51% from the prior week.

Race/Ethnicity Through Week Ending 1/4/2020



Black and Latino Boston residents, who account for 42% of all Boston residents, continue to be disproportionately impacted by influenza, representing a total of 59% of all confirmed cases reported to BPHC.



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Figure 4a. Age Distribution of Confirmed Influenza Cases, Boston Residents
 2019-2020 Season Through MMWR Week 1

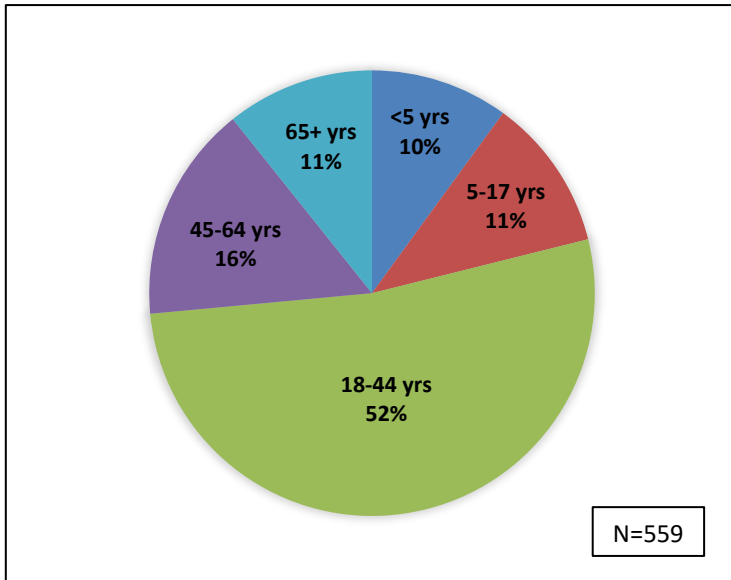
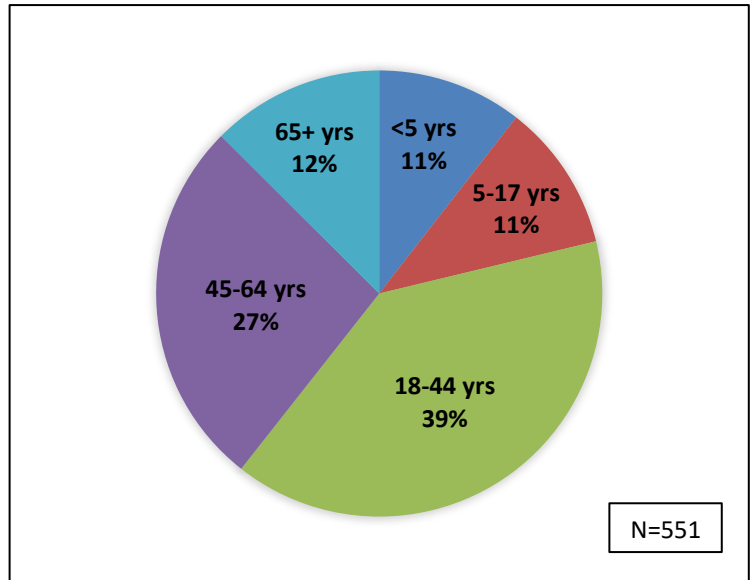
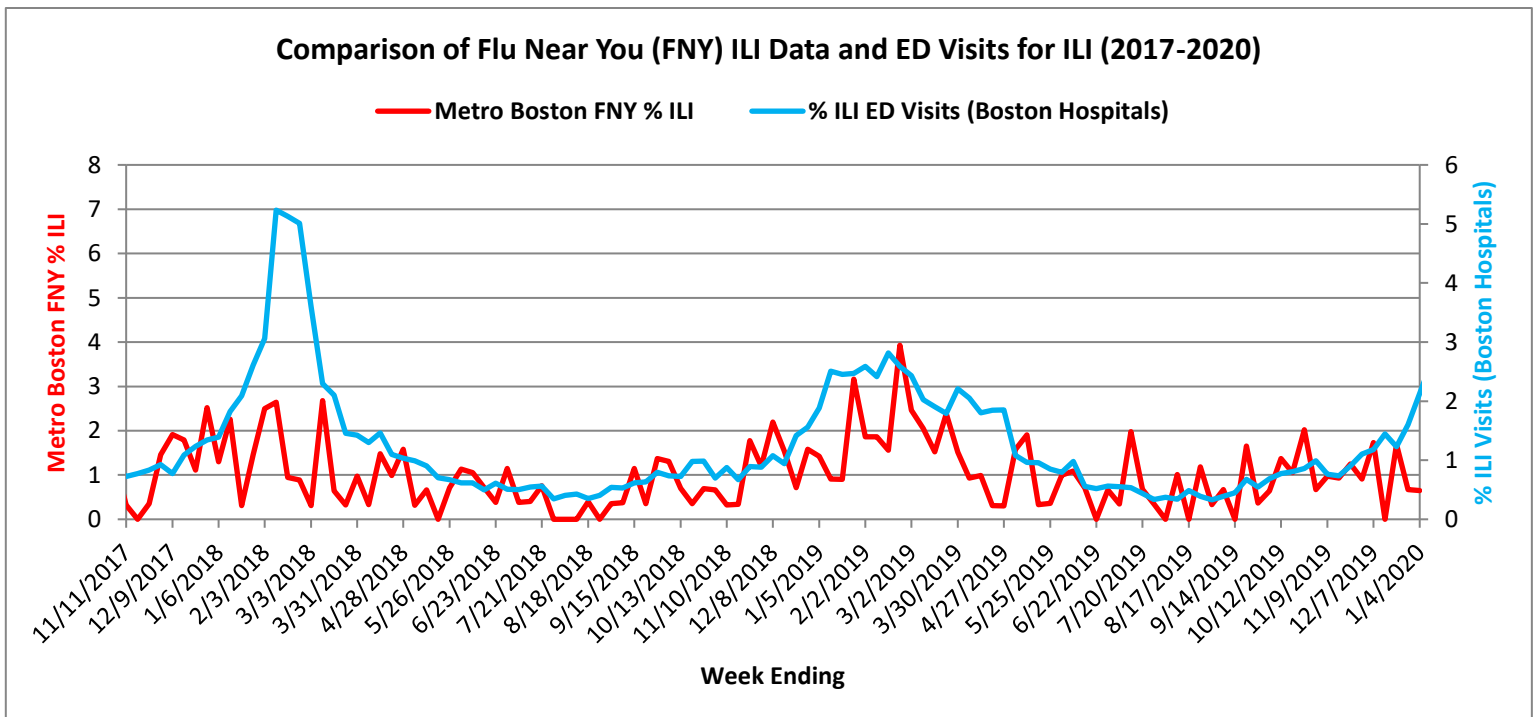


Figure 4b. Age Distribution of Confirmed Influenza Cases, Boston Residents
 2018-2019 Season Through MMWR Week 1



For the 2019-2020 season through MMWR week 1, persons 18-44 years of age accounted for 52% of confirmed influenza cases compared to 39% for the 2018-19 season through MMWR week 1. This is likely due to the national predominance of influenza B/Victoria and influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses which are more likely to affect children and younger adults than the elderly. Because the majority of hospitalizations and deaths occur among people age 65 and older, with fewer illnesses among that group it is anticipated that there will be fewer flu-related hospitalizations and deaths. Hospitalization rates and percent of deaths due to pneumonia and influenza currently remain low.

Figure 5. Comparison of ILI Using *Flu Near You (FNY)** ILI Data and ED Visits for ILI, 2017-2020



**Flu Near You (FNY)* compiles weekly data of ILI activity in the United States. The data come from short, weekly internet-based surveys completed by voluntary participants who indicate whether they are healthy or have experienced any of a short list of symptoms.

The public may participate by enrolling in FNY at: <https://flunearyou.org/>