

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



DHHS Updates

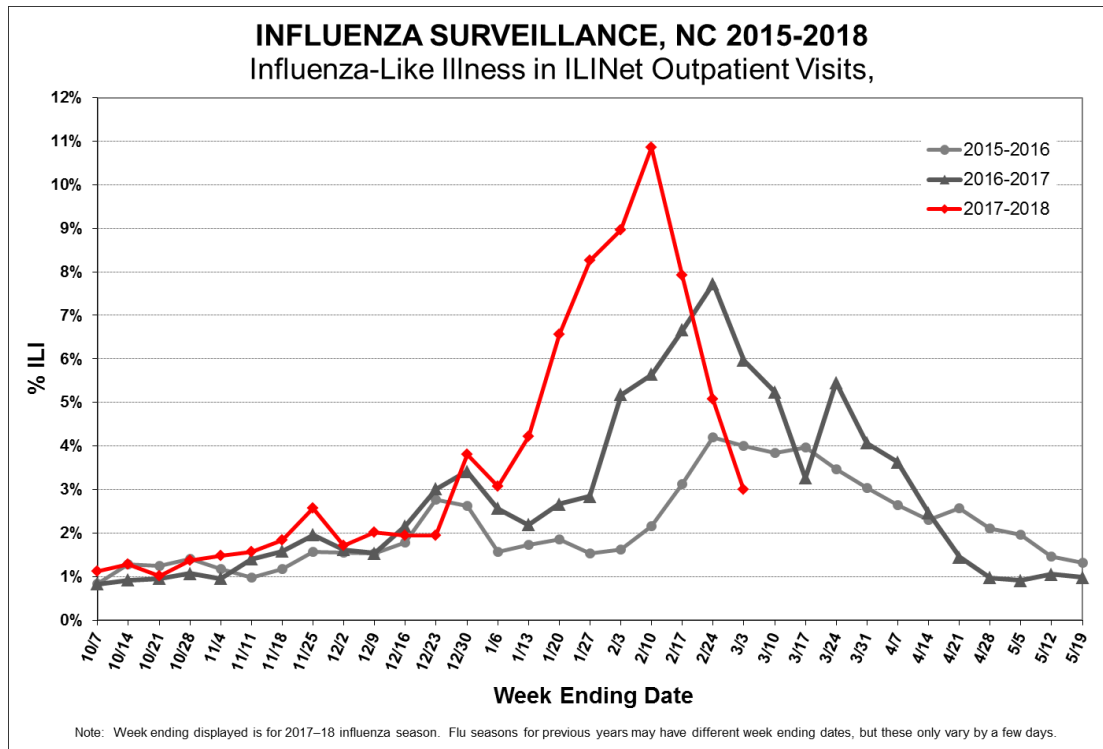
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Department of Health and Human Services

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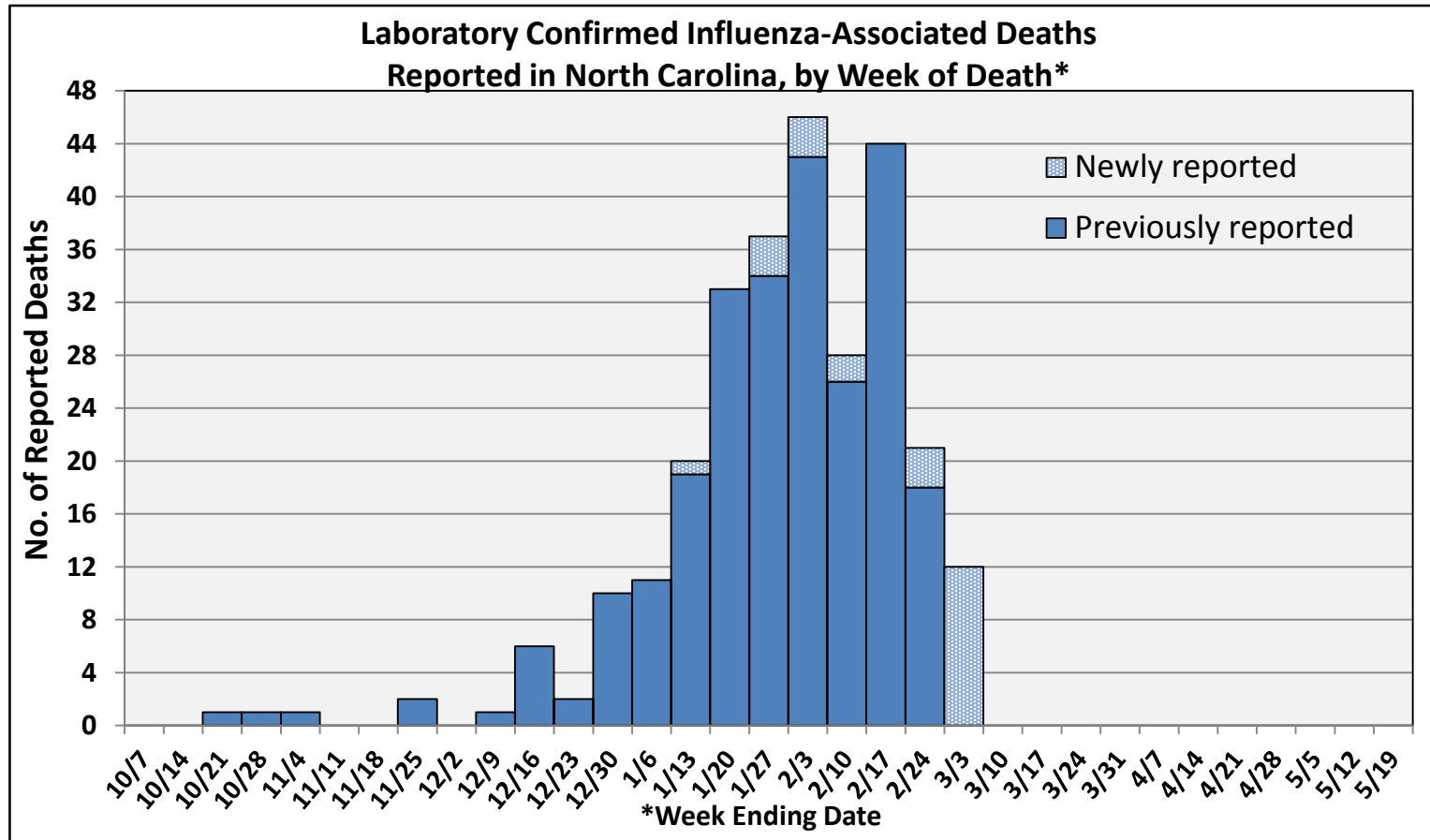
2017–18 NC Influenza Season: Update

- Activity peaked during week ending February 24



- Higher peak than recent seasons
- Influenza B infections still circulating

NC Influenza-Associated Deaths: 2017–18 Season



- Most deaths in persons ≥ 65 years of age
- Reporting lags behind other measures of flu activity
- Total deaths 276

SOURCE: www.flu.nc.gov

Flu Vaccine Effectiveness: Interim Estimates

- **Overall effectiveness at 36%**
 - Lower against H3N2, higher against other flu viruses
 - **59% effective for children 6 months–8 years**
 - **Similar to 2016-17 flu season (39% effective)**
- **Reduced risk of getting sick and having to go to the doctor for flu by about one-third**
 - **Best available way to prevent influenza illness and complications**
 - **Underscores need for better vaccines**

Flu Messages

- **Not too late to get vaccinated**
 - High levels of flu expected for coming weeks
 - Flu B tends to increase in spring
- **If you think you have the flu, call your doctor**
 - Prescription antiviral drugs are important second line of defense
 - Especially important for those at high risk for complications
- **Remember common sense prevention actions**
 - Hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette
 - Stay home from school/work when sick