

# Northwest Regional Healthcare Coalition Spotlight December, 2019

## Coalition Influenza Preparedness 2019-20

### Background

Across the US late fall, and winter are the seasons that begin the increase of viral occurrences including influenza activity. The past flu season was moderate severe, with 2018-19 having two waves influenza A activity of similar magnitude during the season: from October 2018 to mid-February 2019, and increased from mid-February through mid-May.



### Key Points

- The 2019-2020 flu season is underway for most of the country, however some parts of the country are still seeing lower levels of flu activity.
- Activity is being caused mostly by influenza B/Victoria viruses, which is unusual for this time of year. H1N1 viruses are the next most common, followed by H3N2 viruses, which are decreasing in proportion.
- The flu season is just getting started; elevated flu activity is expected to continue for weeks. It's not too late to get vaccinated. Flu vaccination is the best way to reduce the risk from flu and its potentially serious complications.

*Centers for Disease Control, December 2019*

### Preparedness

There are steps facilities can take to prepare for surge and to initially mitigate the effects.

- Get vaccinated and if possible offer or encourage vaccination to staff and their families. In partnership with [vaccines.gov](https://vaccinefinder.org/), [hhs.gov](https://hhs.gov), and [cdc.gov](https://cdc.gov) you can locate the nearest provider for flu vaccine:  
<https://vaccinefinder.org/>
- Routinely clean frequently touched objects and surfaces, including doorknobs, keyboards, and phones, to help remove germs.
- Make sure your workplace has an adequate supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes.
- Keep your hands clean by washing thoroughly with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Train others on how to do your job so they can cover for you in case you or a family member gets sick and you have to stay home.
- If you begin to feel sick while at work, go home as soon as possible and stay home until you have been fever-free for 24 hours without using a fever-reducing medication

### Resources

<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/influenza-flu-in-virginia/>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

[https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs\\_laboratory/en/](https://www.who.int/influenza/gisrs_laboratory/en/)