

The influenza season is unpredictable. Vaccination is important

Every year, timing and severity of the influenza season can vary. It is difficult to predict and is impacted by a number of factors including the virus itself, subtypes of the circulating virus and the susceptibility of the population. Figure 1 below from the Australian Influenza Surveillance Report¹ details the number of notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza during the period 1 January 2017- 9 October 2022 and it highlights the yearly variations.

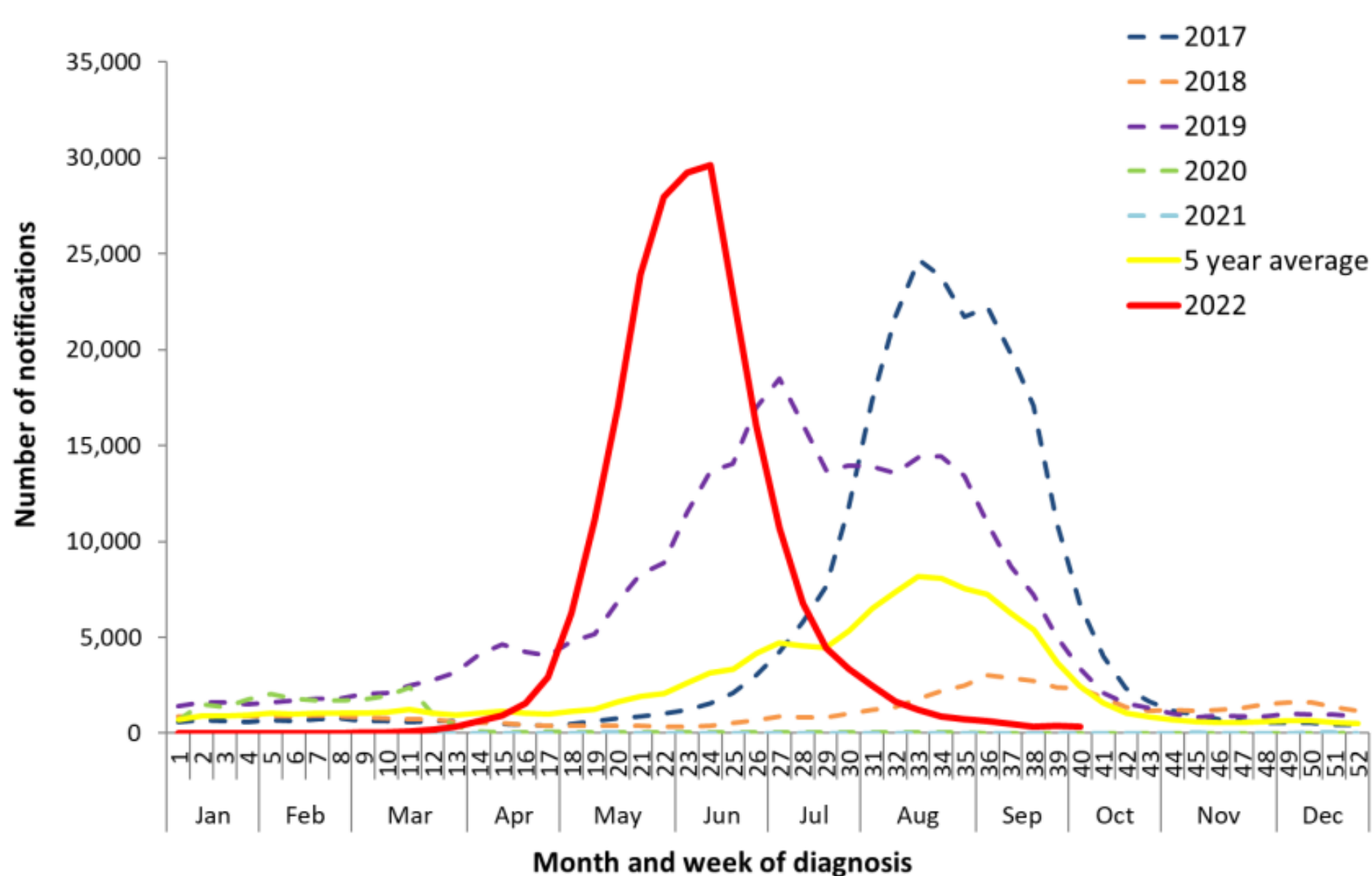


Figure 1: Notifications of laboratory-confirmed influenza, Australia, 01 January 2017 to 09 October 2022, by month and week of diagnosis¹

Due to the unpredictability of the influenza season, annual vaccination is considered the most important way to prevent influenza and its complications and is recommended for all people age 6 months of age and older. Annual vaccination should occur before the onset of the influenza season which typically peaks between June and September. People planning travel overseas should also be vaccinated before departure. Influenza vaccines can be co-administered with other vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines and other routine childhood vaccinations.

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Clinical guidance, resources, safety data and patient information is now available to support vaccination for the 2023 influenza season.

Further information and resources

[ATAGI advice on seasonal influenza vaccines in 2023](#)

[2023 influenza vaccination – program advice for vaccination providers](#)

[Australian Immunisation Handbook – Influenza chapter](#)

[SKAI Communications package](#)

- [Information factsheet](#) - Is an influenza vaccine recommended for my child?
- [Information factsheet](#) – Why does my child need a flu shot?
- [Information factsheet](#) – The influenza vaccine for pregnant women

[AusVaxSafety : Influenza vaccines](#)

[National Immunisation Program schedule](#) (updated to incorporate influenza vaccination across the schedule to ensure eligible patients can be easily identified)

¹Australian Government, Department of Health and Aged Care. Australian Influenza Surveillance Report. No. 14, 2022. <https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/2022/10/aisr-fortnightly-report-no-14-26-september-to-9-october-2022.pdf>. Accessed 7 March 2023.