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TARRANT WATCH VIRAL

November 2025 Newsletter

TARRANT News & Updates

Greetings Sentinels!

2025-26 Season Study Materials Amendment

We have an update for you regarding the study materials for the 2025-26 season, which began on November 1st, 2025.

We were required to amend the 2025-26 Patient Consent Form. The University of Calgary's Research Ethics Board has changed its standardized consent processes. Consequently, we had to update the language in this

document. It **does not** affect requirements for consent or the process for enrolling patients.

We have sent out new study materials packages for the 2025-26 season that include the updated Patient Consent Forms and requisitions in the colour “**Cherry Pink**”. Please immediately cease using the current Patient Consent Forms you previously received, which are **lilac purple** and begin using the pink forms, which should be arriving at your clinic **Wednesday, November 19th, 2026**.

If you have already submitted samples using the **lilac purple** consent requisition form, thank-you for being proactive in switching over to using the 2025-26 study materials! We will still compensate you for submitting these sample to us, although we unfortunately will be unable to use the patient data and laboratory results accompanying these swabs. We know this last-minute switch of study materials is inconvenient, as the influenza season has started, so we will compensate sentinels for swabs that were submitted using the old **lilac purple** 2025-26 study materials until **Wednesday, November 26th, 2026**. After this date, we will not compensate sentinels unless they submit swabs using the **cherry pink** Patient Consent Forms.

If you have any questions or require clarification on the amendment of the study materials, please do not hesitate to contact us at tarrant@ucalgary.ca and we will respond within 24h.

Epidemic in northern hemisphere

In the UK the epidemic is earlier than usual, mainly H3N2, compared with the past few seasons that have had dominant H1N1 strains. The big question is whether the current vaccine is effective against this H3N2 epidemic since it

shows signs of being a new variant, not structurally well-matched to the vaccine. However, initial signs are that the vaccine is as effective as usual: within the range of 40 to 60% for the H3N2 component.

Japan is also showing signs of an early epidemic, H3N2 dominant.

These follow the southern hemisphere, where Australia had a winter season worse than usual, comprising mainly H3N2 infections.

With return of children to schools, and cold weather, meaning they will be indoors much of the time, we can expect the epidemic to arrive here shortly. So happy swabbing!

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-reports-2025-to-2026-season/national-flu-and-covid-19-surveillance-report-6-november-2025-week-45>

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/australian-respiratory-surveillance-report-20-october-to-2-november-2025?language=en>

As always, thank you for your participation in the Tarrant Viral Watch Program. We could not do it without you!

Regards,

The Tarrant Viral Watch Team



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