

TARRANT VIRAL WATCH

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Dear Colleague,

We invite you to join TARRANT Viral Watch, a sentinel based infectious disease surveillance network for Alberta. This network detects and measures influenza, and influenza vaccine effectiveness as it occurs in the community. New this year, we will also be measuring COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness. The resulting data assists understanding of which vaccines work for which people against which infections. With concerns about variants you can contribute to understanding vaccine effectiveness and thereby implementation of health care strategies.

We are part of an international network: data you collect is sent to Alberta Health, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the World Health Organization. Our cross-provincial network publishes papers that measure the effectiveness of vaccines and how to improve them. At intervals through our newsletters, we will send you information about how your data assists the progress of viral surveillance in Alberta, Canada and around the world.

The following page provides more detailed information about our program. If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact us. We would be happy to send sample copies of forms and test kits with more detailed information about the studies.

We provide compensation for all studies at \$5.00 for the TARRANT weekly reports, and \$15.00 for each Vaccine Effectiveness specimen. TARRANT Weekly reporting is also eligible for CME credits.

Thank you for your interest. We appreciate the commitment and time of our sentinels.



Jim Dickinson
TARRANT Director
Professor of Family Medicine

COVID-19 & Influenza Surveillance and Vaccine Effectiveness

This project monitors COVID-19 and influenza activity in our communities, characterizes the dominant strains in epidemics and annually estimates effectiveness of the seasonal flu vaccine. This year, we will be estimating the effectiveness of the different COVID-19 vaccines as well.

- **Surveillance Data:**
 - Each week, you submit a report showing the total number of patients seen and the number presenting with clinical signs of respiratory infection. The report is submitted online, we will send you or your designated staff member an e-mail link each week.
 - Alternatively, you may access your own personal “Survey Queue” at anytime from anywhere you have internet access.
- **Laboratory Diagnosis**
 - We ask you to obtain consent, then a nasopharyngeal swab for all consenting patients presenting with influenza-like-illness or acute respiratory illness. You then complete a combined laboratory requisition form/questionnaire indicating the patient’s demographic information and clinical & COVID-19/ influenza vaccine history.
 - The laboratory sends you reports in the usual way. We also receive a copy for epidemiological surveillance. We provide you with the test kits which include swab/media and requisition forms.

Surveillance data gives us information to follow the development of epidemics across the province. Our data combines with data from institutions and school absenteeism to give the provincial epidemiology group a picture of the effect of COVID-19/influenza across the population. The immunization effectiveness research enables us to measure how well vaccines are working.

Please kindly sign up by providing your name and email address in the sheet by clicking the link below

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1UapktP-t_cIFF7DUWmi7ZqGQY6_xkrzNQ5JJ0Vp7jVA/edit?usp=sharing