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January 5, 2018

Update for Ohio News Media

Seasonal Flu Hospitalizations Top 2,000

It's not too late to get the flu vaccination; Plenty still available across Ohio

- The Ohio Department of Health continues to alert the public about the importance of flu vaccination as flu-associated hospitalizations continue to increase across the state as kids head back to school from winter break.
- Week 52 had 925 new flu-associated hospitalizations which increased from 554 during Week 51. That is compared to 157 at this same time last year.
- Ohio is now reporting 2,104 flu-associated hospitalizations for the 2017-18 flu season, compared to 369 at this same time last year.
- Ohio has not reported any flu-associated pediatric deaths so far for the 2017-18 flu season (adult flu-associated deaths are not required to be reported to public health agencies).
- The start of this year's flu season in Ohio appears to be similar to the start of the 2014-15 flu season when:
 - There were 973 new flu-associated hospitalizations during Week 52 (almost 50 more than reported this year)
 - There were 2,892 total flu-associated hospitalizations through Week 52 (almost 800 more than reported this year)
- The Ohio Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that everyone six months and older get a flu shot as soon as possible as vaccination is the best protection against seasonable flu viruses.
- It takes about two weeks after vaccination for protection against the flu to set in.
- The flu vaccine is never 100 percent effective, and some people who get vaccinated may still get the flu but their symptoms are likely to be less severe.

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