

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

October 17, 2016

Bi-Weekly Zika Virus Update



Zika Virus Bi-Weekly Update

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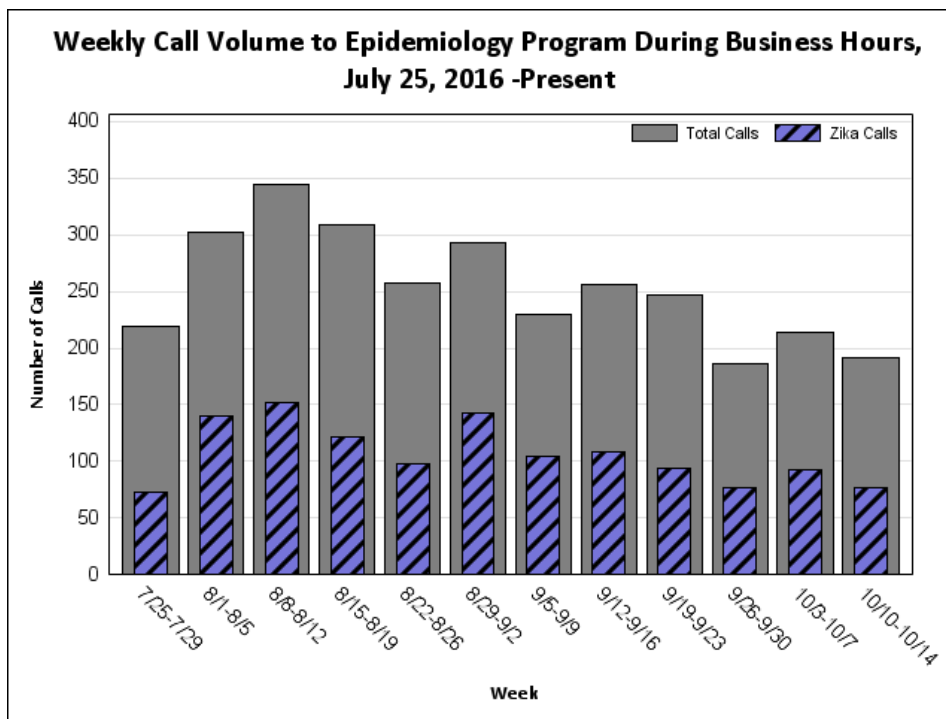
October 17, 2016
Report Number: 036

Significant Updates:

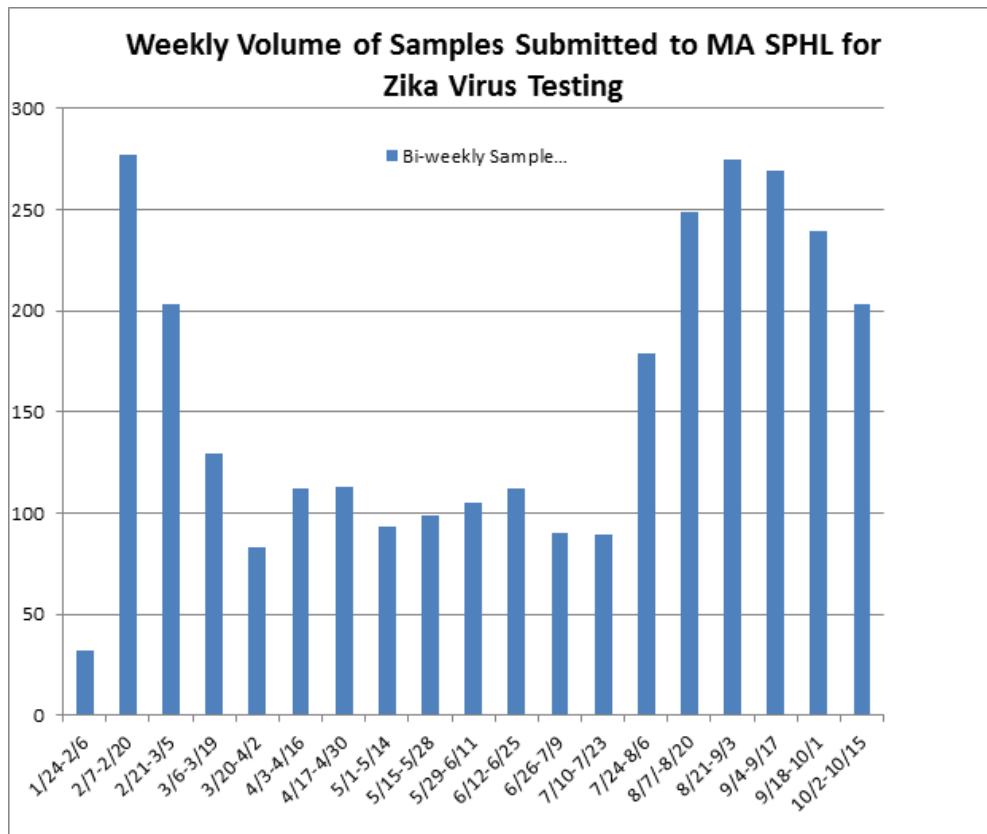
- Starting last week, the Zika Virus Report will be released on a bi-weekly schedule. If information becomes available during that two week period that should be shared immediately, that will occur using an abbreviated format of this report.

MDPH Activities Summary:

- The Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory completed validation on the confirmatory test type (plaque reduction neutralization test, PRNT) last week and has received approval from CDC to begin performing the test in-house. This means that most patients meeting the criteria for testing at MA SPHL can have their testing completed without the need forward samples to CDC.
- All questions related to Zika virus testing requests should be directed to the 24/7 Epidemiology line, 617-983-6800.
- The [MDPH Zika Virus web page](#) continues to be a resource for individuals looking for information about Zika virus. The web page includes a link to a 30 minute webinar “Zika Virus and the Massachusetts Response” which can be found under the subheading, Information for Healthcare and Public Health Partners, and the most current Zika Virus Clinical Advisory and Specimen Collection, Storage and Shipment for Zika Virus Testing.
- MDPH is working with a vendor to develop new outreach materials aimed particularly at populations that travel frequently between Massachusetts and places where active Zika transmission is occurring. Initial materials should be ready in the early fall when many people start to make their holiday travel plans.
- MDPH Epidemiology Staff continue to receive calls from clinicians, local health, and concerned residents regarding Zika virus and its public health implications in Massachusetts. The weekly call volume for the last 3 months regarding Zika is shown below.



- The MA State Public Health Laboratory (MA SPHL) uses a PCR test to detect the genetic material of Zika, dengue and chikungunya viruses and the Zika IgM MAC-ELISA to test for antibody response to infection. PRNT (confirmatory) testing is available on specimens that are IgM positive.
- Staff members of the Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences and the Bureau of Family Health and Nutrition Birth Defects Surveillance, and the Boston Public Health Commission, are collecting data on women and infants meeting criteria for enrollment in the U.S. Zika Pregnancy Registry.



- **All specimens for testing pregnant women for Zika virus should be sent to the Massachusetts State Public Health Laboratory.** For individuals not meeting the criteria for testing at the MA SPHL, providers should ensure that they are requesting the appropriate test (PCR or IgM ELISA) depending upon the presence or absence of symptoms and timing of specimen draw relative to illness onset or last possible exposure. Because the duration of viremia is quite brief in most instances, testing using both test types may be indicated.
- On September 29th the President signed a fiscal year 2017 continuing resolution that funds government agencies through December 9 and provides \$1.1 billion in supplemental funding to respond to the Zika virus outbreak. The funding appropriated by Congress will be used, in part, to supplement the \$25 million in Zika funding awarded earlier this year. As part of the original award, Massachusetts received \$281,525 to assure the readiness and response capability of the Department to respond effectively to Zika virus disease with a focus toward reducing the spread of Zika virus in MA associated with travelling and sexual transmission and to minimize maternal-fetal transmission of the virus. A funding opportunity announcement for a new, competitive award was released on October 7. MDPH staff are collaborating to identify funding priorities for the application which is due on November 11.

Laboratory Testing Summary:

- The MA SPHL tested 226 samples (99 serum, 126 urine, 1 CSF, 0 amniotic fluid) from 122 patients by PCR and 43 samples from 43 patients using the IgM ELISA test over the last two weeks. Positive PCR tests are confirmatory while positive IgM tests require further testing by PRNT.

New or Revised State Guidance: None

National Activities

CDC Updates:

- [Case Counts in the US](#)

Publications:

- [Early Growth and Neurologic Outcomes of Infants with Probable Congenital Zika Virus Syndrome](#)
- [Zika Virus Infection in the Central Nervous System and Female Genital Tract](#)
- [Guillain–Barré Syndrome Associated with Zika Virus Infection in Colombia](#)

Guidance:

- [Areas with Zika](#)
- [Advice for people living in or traveling to South Florida](#)

Educational materials:

- [ZIKA BASICS: FLIPBOOK FOR COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS](#)

For further information regarding Zika go to:

<http://www.mass.gov/zika>

Please share with colleagues and throughout your agency, organization and/or associations. If you have comments, questions or feedback, contact us at the 24/7 Epi Line (617) 983-6800 or by email at DPH.EmergencyPreparedness@state.ma.us