

Influenza monthly update

In September 2021 (weeks 35–39), 14 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) reported data to FluNet and EMFLU, namely Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates.

Out of the 4805 enrolled cases in the Region during this month, 4286 specimens were tested for influenza, of which only 318 specimens tested positive.

Influenza activity by subtype

- In the northern Africa influenza transmission zone, influenza A(H3) virus was detected predominantly in Egypt along with influenza B. In Tunisia, however, there has been no influenza virus detected.
- In the western Asia influenza transmission zone, influenza A(H3) was the only detected influenza virus in Lebanon and Oman. In Qatar, influenza A(H3), influenza A (not subtyped), influenza B (lineage not determined) and influenza A (H1N1) pdm09 circulated with the predominant presence of influenza A(H3). In Saudi Arabia, both influenza A and B were detected without determination of subtypes or lineages. Bahrain has detected only one influenza A virus (unsubtyped). Iraq, Jordan, Syrian Arab Republic and United Arab Emirates reported no influenza activity.
- In the southern Asia transmission zone, influenza A(H3) virus was the only detected subtype in Pakistan. In Afghanistan and Iran, however, there has been no influenza activity detected.

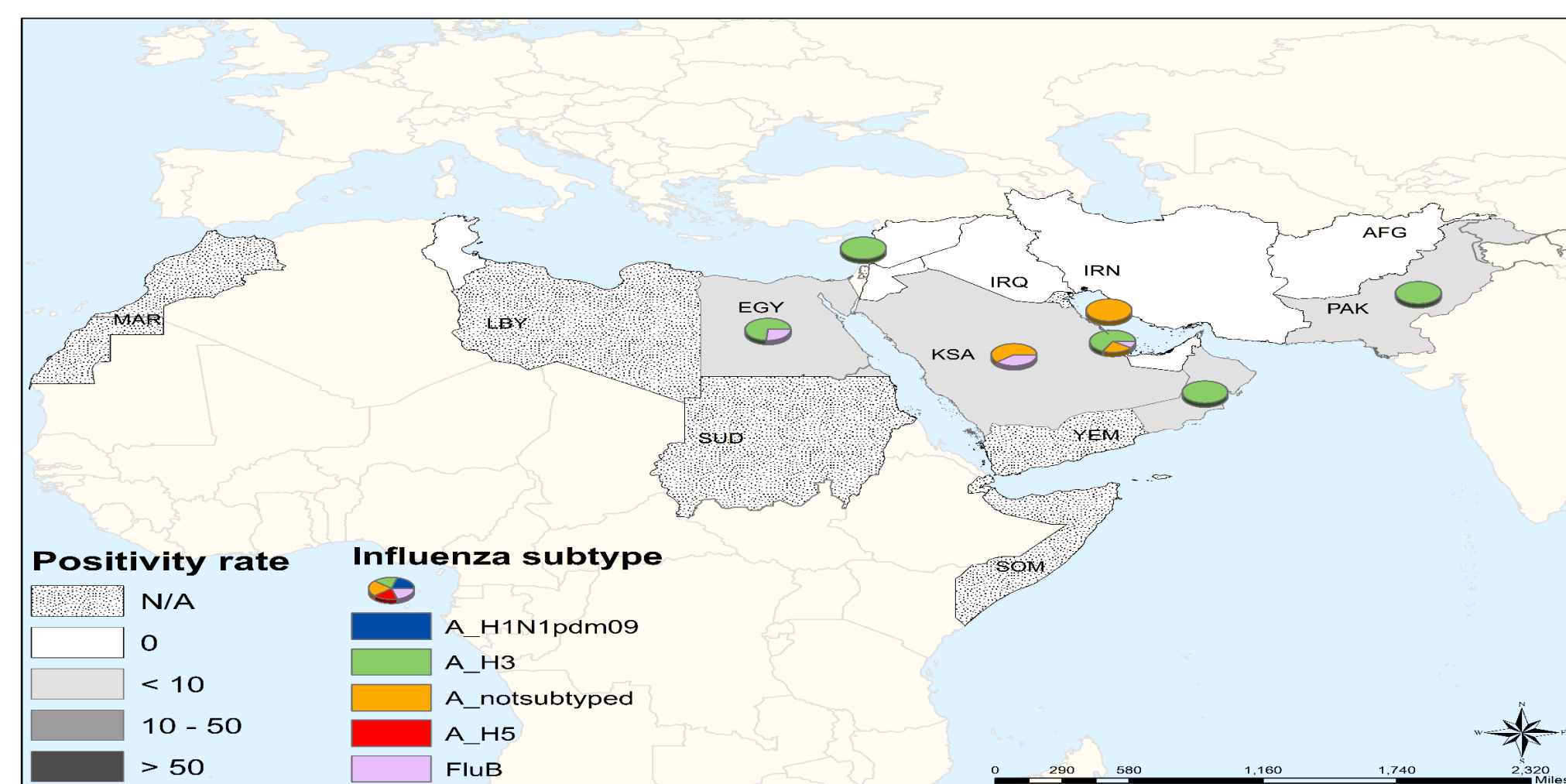
Circulating influenza viruses by subtype

- During September 2021, national influenza centres and influenza laboratories in the Region tested 89.2% of the total enrolled cases. The Region's influenza positivity reached 7.4% with Qatar recording the highest influenza positivity in the Region (14.7%).
- Genetic and antigenic testing: Out of the 318 subtyped specimens, 222 specimens (70%) were influenza A(H3), 63 specimens (20%) were influenza A (not subtyped), 31 specimens (10%) were influenza B (lineage not determined), and two specimens were influenza A (H1N1) pdm09.

Source of data: FluNet and EMFLU

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Figure 1. Influenza geographic distribution/circulation, EMR, September 2021

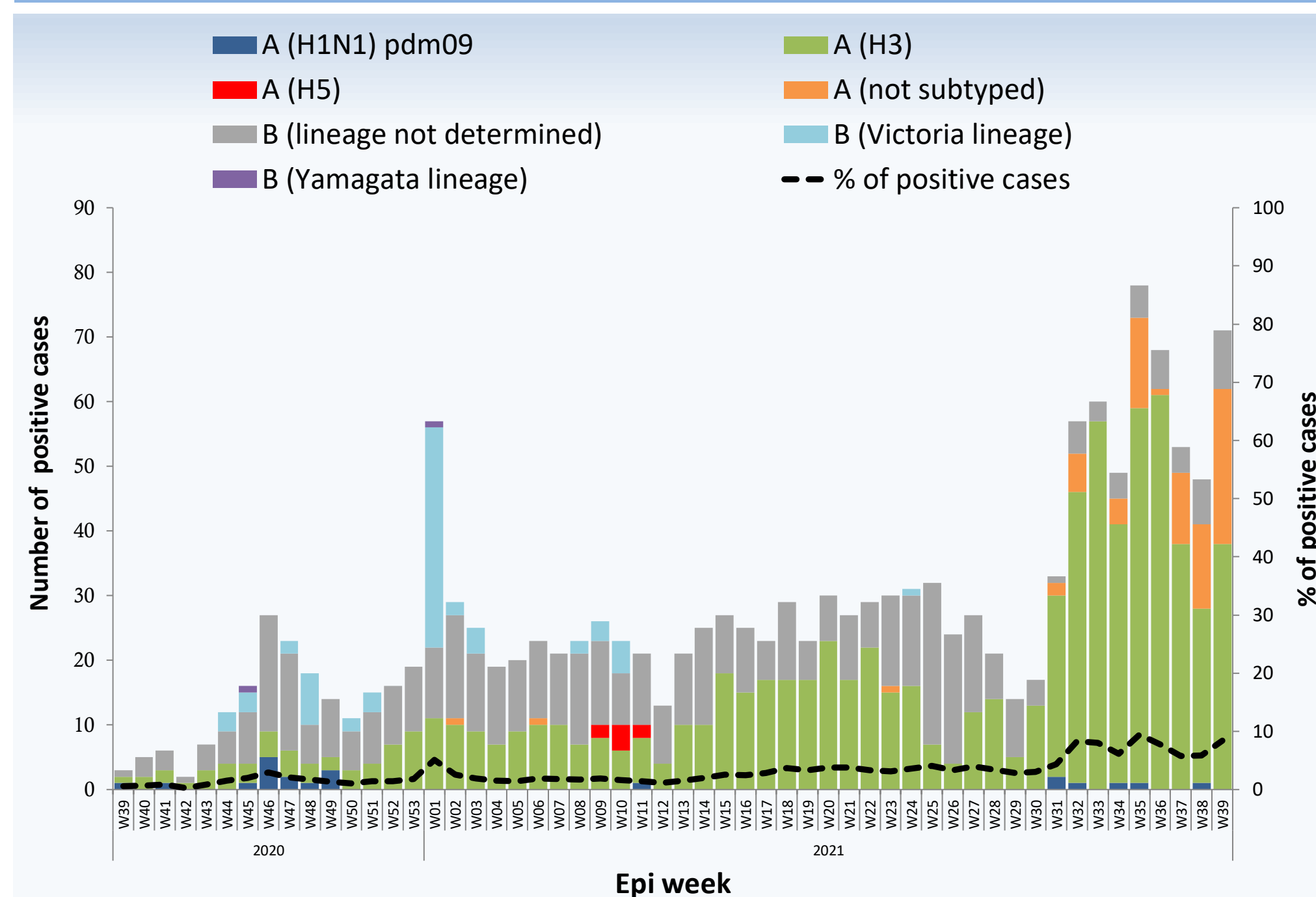


Figure 2. Number of positive influenza cases by subtyped viruses and percentage of positive cases by week, EMR, September 2021

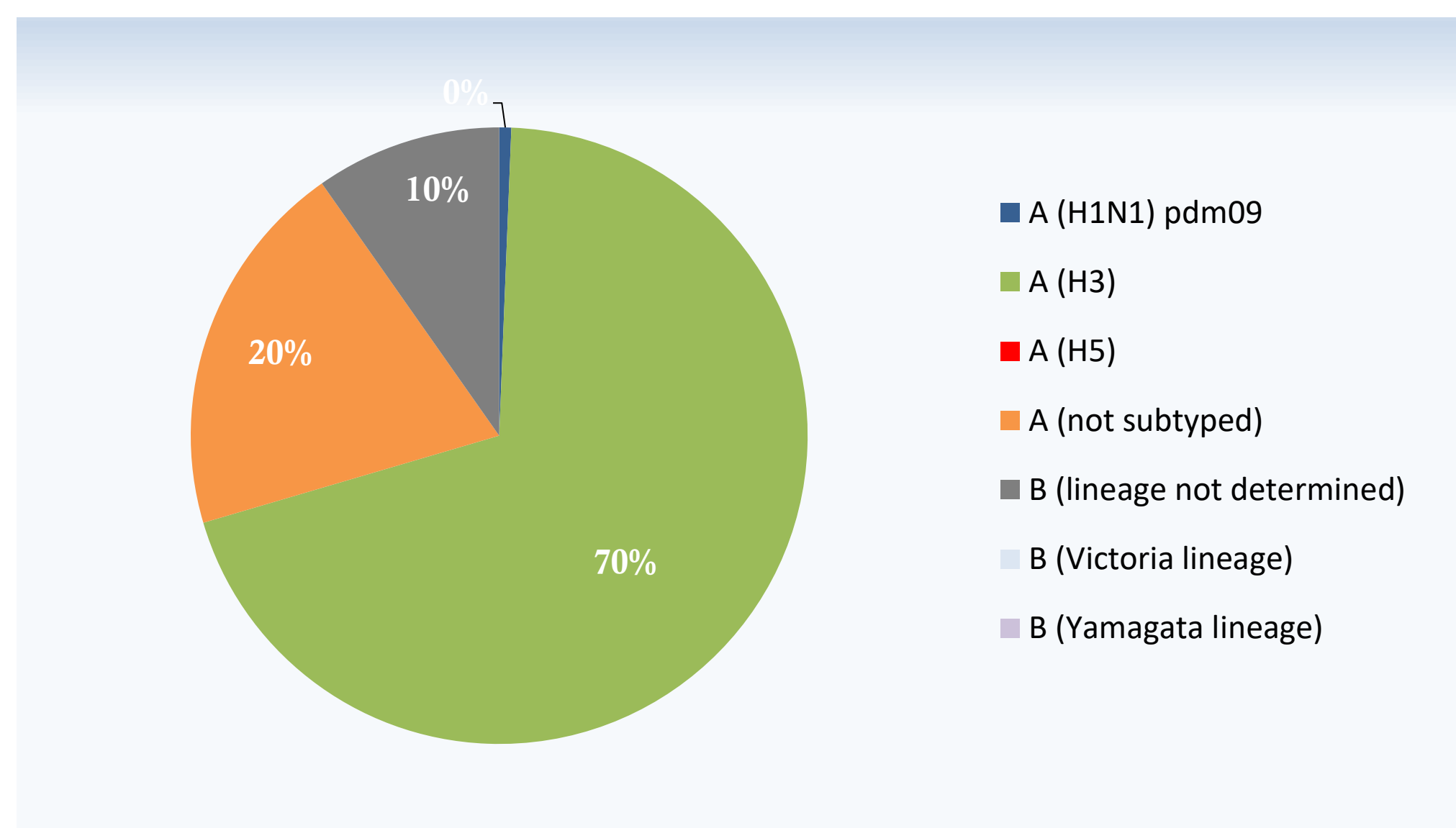


Figure 3. Subtyped influenza viruses, EMR, September 2021