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## **Australia's 2022 influenza season could be severe as cases increase**

Australia's influenza season has returned with a sharp increase in cases following a two-year drop due to pandemic measures designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

There were 409 lab-confirmed cases of the flu last month (March 2022), according to the National Notifiable Disease Surveillance System (NNDSS). This number is very high compared to the 598 cases that were recorded for the entire calendar year for 2021.

In the 2020 flu season, NNDSS recorded 21,266 influenza cases and 36 deaths. In 2019, there were 313,033 influenza cases and 906 deaths in Australia – and we could be set for another horror season of the flu now that restrictions have eased.

"Influenza cases were very low in 2020 and 2021 as people were social distancing, sanitising their hands and wearing masks. However, now that we've returned to a more normal way of life, the flu is making a return," says AusDiagnostics Director of Product and Business Development, Dr Dmitry Kuevda.

"This is consistent with what Europe experienced during their winter when they saw a resurgence in influenza cases after a two-year hiatus. One of the biggest challenges for laboratories for this flu season here in Australia (April to October) will be to quickly determine whether a patient has COVID-19 or influenza. In three hours, our TandemPlex<sup>®</sup> respiratory PCR panels can identify and differentiate between these viruses in addition to a dozen more respiratory viruses of different severity."

AusDiagnostics are now taking orders to help laboratories prepare for flu season.

### **About AusDiagnostics:**

AusDiagnostics Pty Ltd is a leading international company that designs, manufactures and markets a comprehensive suite of multiplexing molecular diagnostic assays and reagents. Founded in August 2006, AusDiagnostics also supports robotic instruments for *in vitro* diagnostics in the medical, veterinary, food and water, and environment industries. The company serves global customers through offices in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. In 2018, AusDiagnostics opened a manufacturing facility in the United Kingdom to support the supply of products to its growing network of distribution partners in more than 25 countries.

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