Objective: To determine the incidence of RSV in Acute Lower Respiratory Infections (ALRIs) and to identify the seasonal pattern and clinical features of RSV infection in children admitted to Sabah Women and Children’s Hospital (SWACH).

Methods: Nasopharyngeal aspirates for respiratory viruses were taken for all children admitted with ALRIs from June 2008 to July 2010. Case notes of those positive for RSV infections were retrieved and analyzed retrospectively.

Results: The incidence of RSV infection is 23.4% during the study period. A distinct peak in RSV infection was seen from October to February in 2008 - 2010 and this occurs 2 to 3 months after the onset of rainy season. A total of 75 children with RSV infection during the study period were reviewed, and there were 47 (62.7%) males. Majority 43 (57.3%) were less than 6 months old, 17 (22.7%) were 6-12 months and 15 (20%) of them were more than 1 year old. 8 (10.6 %) patients had underlying medical condition whereby 7 (9.3%) had history of prematurity and 1 patient is syndromic.

The most common presenting features were cough (96%) and rapid breathing (81.3%). The average length of stay was 4.5 days. Eight patients (10.7%) required intensive care for severe RSV disease, where 4 had underlying medical condition. Four patients were ventilated and there were no deaths from RSV disease during the study period.

Conclusions: RSV is a significant pathogen of acute lower respiratory tract infection of children in SWACH. A definite RSV season is seen consistently from October to February, 2 to 3 months after the rainy season. Majority of the patients were less than 6 months of age and a significant proportion require ICU care.