

Seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in older people in Ireland, September-October 2016

Introduction

Influenza vaccination (both vaccine and administration) is free for all medical cardholders and GP visit cardholders in Ireland. From mid-2001 to the end of 2008, all individuals aged 70 years and older were eligible for a medical card. Since 1st January 2009, automatic entitlement to a medical card for the over 70s no longer applied. All those aged over 70 who applied for a medical card were subject to a means test based on income. GP visit cards have been available since mid-2006. From 5th August 2015 everyone aged 70 or over, ordinarily resident in Ireland, is eligible for free GP care regardless of income again. All people aged 70 or over who do not have a Medical Card or GP Visit card can register to access this service.

This report analyses data obtained from the Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS), HSE-Finance Shared Services on the number of registered medical cardholders and GP visit cardholders aged 65 years and older, as well as the number of patients vaccinated with influenza vaccine (by age group and HSE, CHO and LHO Area). Data refers to GP returns received by the PCRS during the months September-October 2016. Influenza uptake rates by age group and HSE/CHO/LHO area were calculated based on the average number (and median) of registered patients with medical cards and GP visit cards during this time period. Please note that figures are dependent on GPs' claims for reimbursement and are **provisional data only**.

Results

The average uptake for influenza vaccination nationally during the period September-October 2016 in those aged 65 years and older was **41.2%**. This uptake rate is slightly less than the same period for the 2015/16 season (43.2%) and is below average (45.2%) for 2004/05-2015/16 (table 1). Variation in vaccination coverage was observed between age groups, with the highest uptake (46.0%) in those aged 75 years or older (table 2). Slight variation in vaccination coverage was also observed between HSE areas, ranging from 32.8% in HSE-NW to 45.2% in HSE-SE (figure 1). The variation in uptake between HSE/CHO/LHO areas and different age groups are presented in figures 2, 2a and 3.

Table 1: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] aged 65 years and older by season, Ireland, September-October 2016

September - October	16/17	15/16	14/15*	13/14	12/13	11/12	10/11	09/10	08/09	07/08	06/07	05/06	04/05
No. vaccinated	216993	215201	NA	209623	220584	215485	199544	181907	200248	187976	173797	173018	147538
No. card holders [†]	527241	498449	NA	452706	453437	439527	427406	414388	426453	415921	401833	391756	381815
% Uptake	41.2	43.2	NA	46.3	48.6	49.0	46.7	43.9	47.0	45.2	43.3	44.2	38.6

*Data for September-October 2014/15 season not currently available

[†] The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-October 2016.

Table 2: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] by age group (in years), Ireland, September-October 2016

Age group (years)	≥65	≥70	≥75	70-74	65-69	65-74
Number vaccinated	216993	183100	123937	59163	33893	93056
Median number card holders*	527241	424367	269712	154655	102874	257529
% Uptake	41.2	43.1	46.0	38.3	32.9	36.1

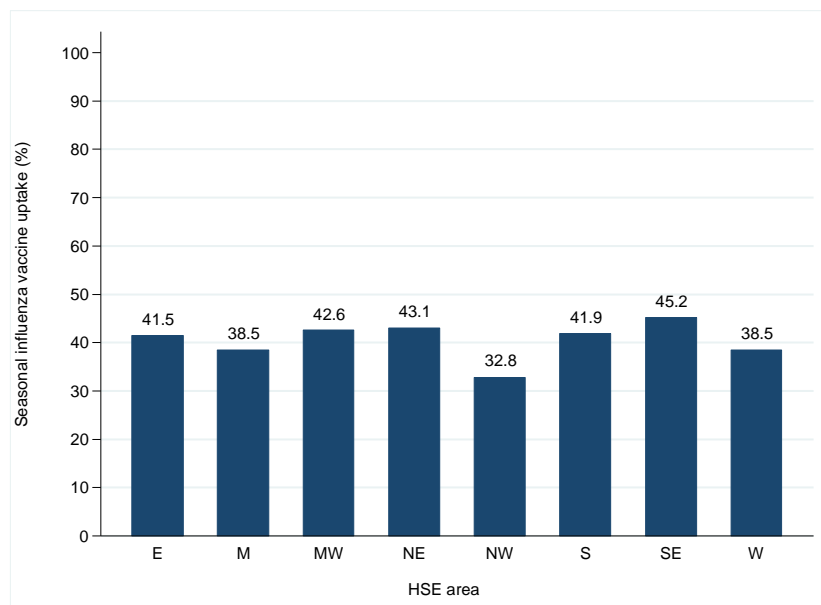


Figure 1: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] aged 65 years and older by HSE-Area attending GP and pharmacies, Ireland, September-October 2016.

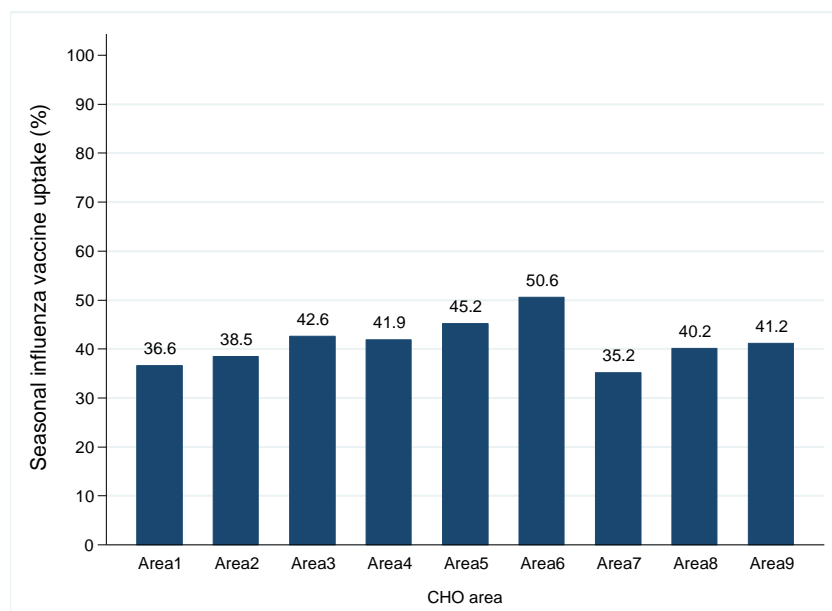


Figure 1a: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] aged 65 years and older, by CHO-Area attending GPs and pharmacies, Ireland, September-October 2016.

[†] The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-October 2016.

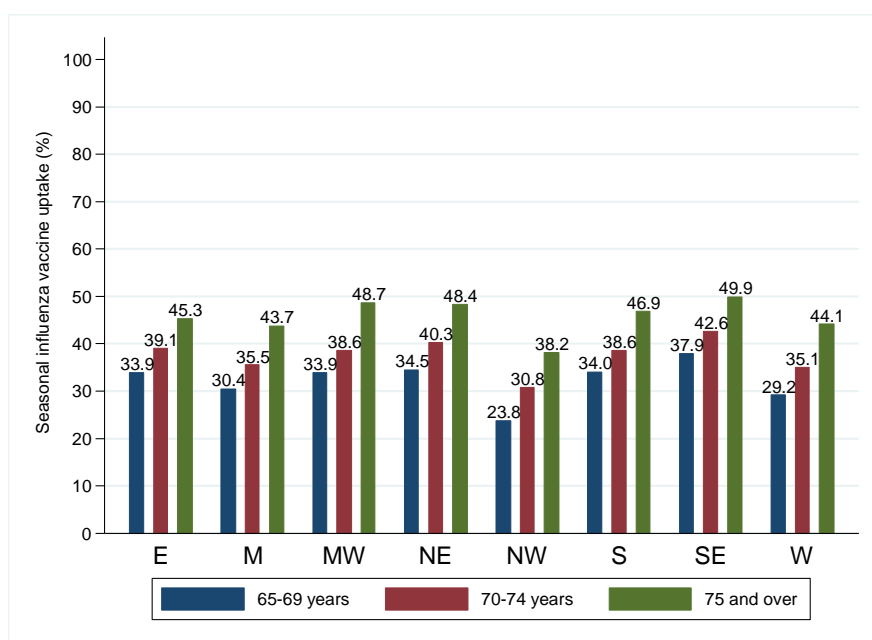


Figure 2: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] by age group, by HSE-Area attending GPs and pharmacies, Ireland, September-October 2016.

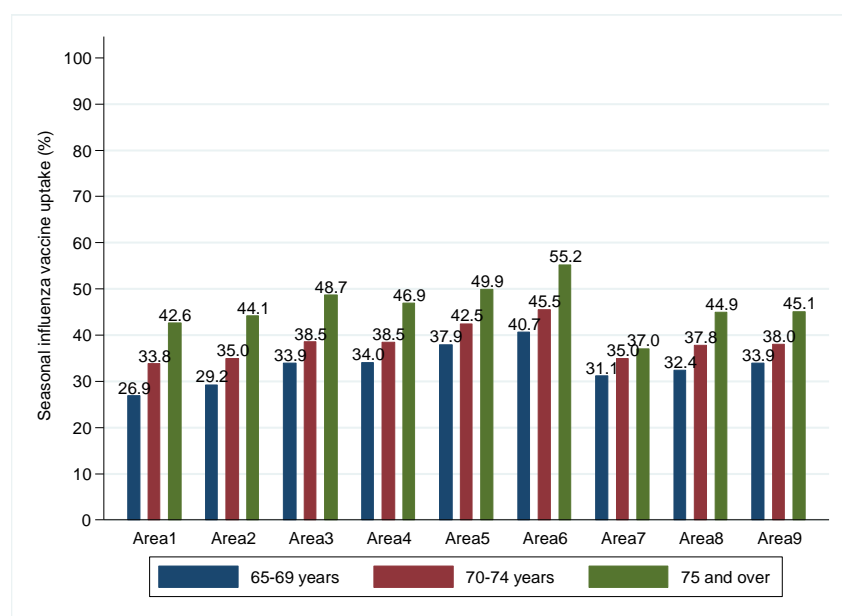


Figure 2a: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] by age group, by CHO-Area attending GPs and pharmacies, Ireland, September-October 2016

[†] The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-October 2016.

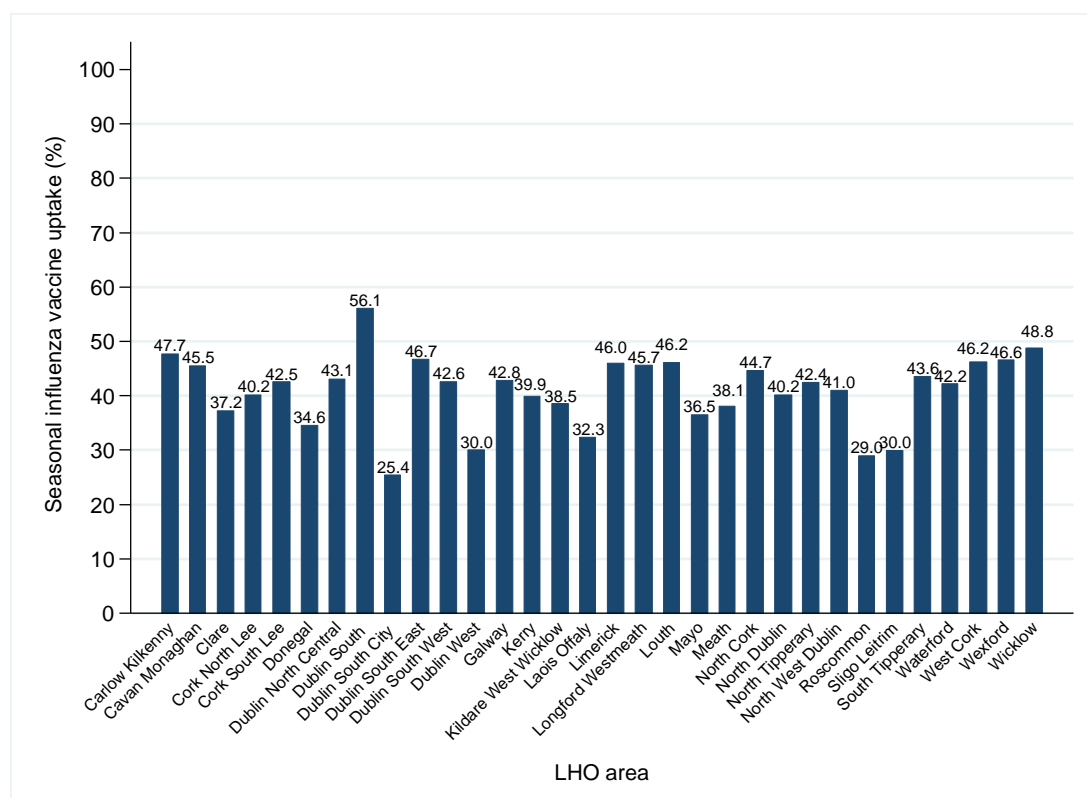


Figure 3: Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders[†] aged 65 years and older attending GPs and pharmacies by LHO Area, Ireland, September-October 2016

[†] The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-October 2016.