

## Seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in older people in Ireland, September-December 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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-December 2016. Influenza uptake rates by age group and HSE/CHO/LHO area were calculated based on the 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-December 2016 in those aged 65 years and older was **52.2%**. This uptake rate is slightly less than the same period for the 2015/16 season (53.5%) and is also below average (56.1%) for 2004/05-2015/16 (table 1). Variation in vaccination coverage was observed between age groups, with the highest uptake (57.0%) in those aged 75 years or older (table 2). Variation in vaccination coverage was also observed between HSE areas, ranging from 42.5% in HSE-NW to 57.0% in HSE-SE (figure 1). The variation in uptake between HSE/CHO/LHO areas and different age groups are presented in figures 1a, 2, 2a and 3.

**Table 1:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> aged 65 years and older by season, Ireland, September-December 2016

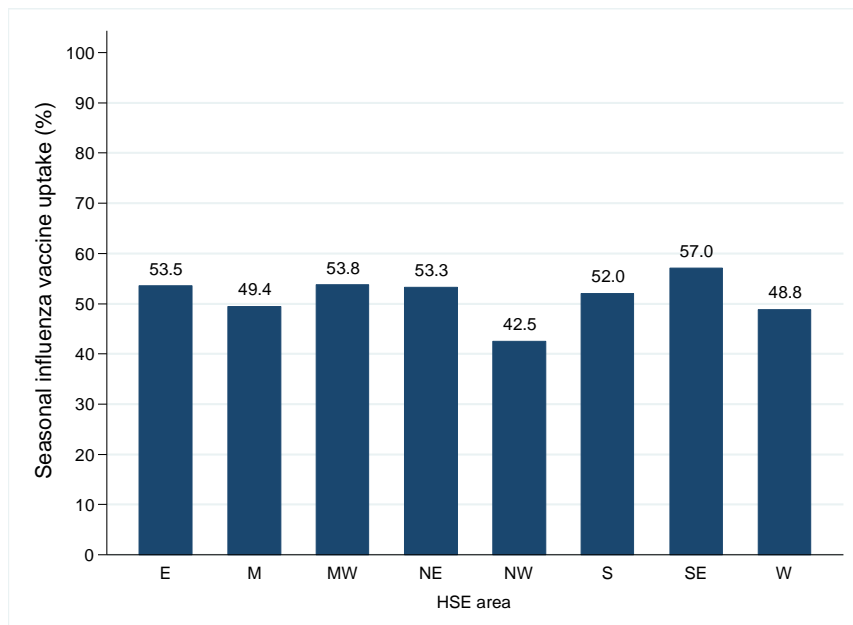
September - December	16/17	15/16	14 /15 *	13/14	12/13	11/12	10/11	09/10	08/09	07/08	06/07	05/06	04/05
No. vaccinated	275972	270687	NA	264462	250670	245995	246061	210359	237993	230373	232560	236375	222643
No. card holders <sup>†</sup>	528550	505859	NA	452931	453419	439980	428795	414662	425836	416940	402960	393037	382501
% Uptake	52.2	53.5	NA	58.4	55.3	55.9	57.4	50.7	55.9	55.3	57.7	60.1	58.2

\*Data for September-December 2014/15 season not available

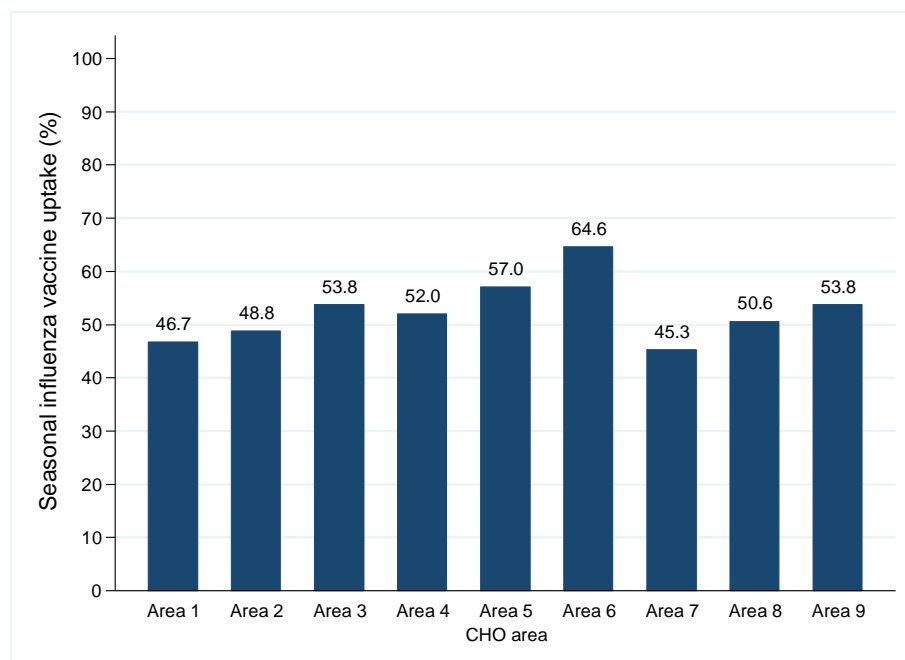
<sup>†</sup> The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-December 2016.

**Table 2:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> by age group (in years), Ireland, September-December 2016

Age group (years)	≥65	≥70	≥75	70-74	65-69	65-74
Number vaccinated	275972	231714	154144	77570	44258	121828
Median number card holders <sup>†</sup>	528550	425661	270265	155396	102874	258285
% Uptake	52.2	54.4	57.0	49.9	43.0	47.2

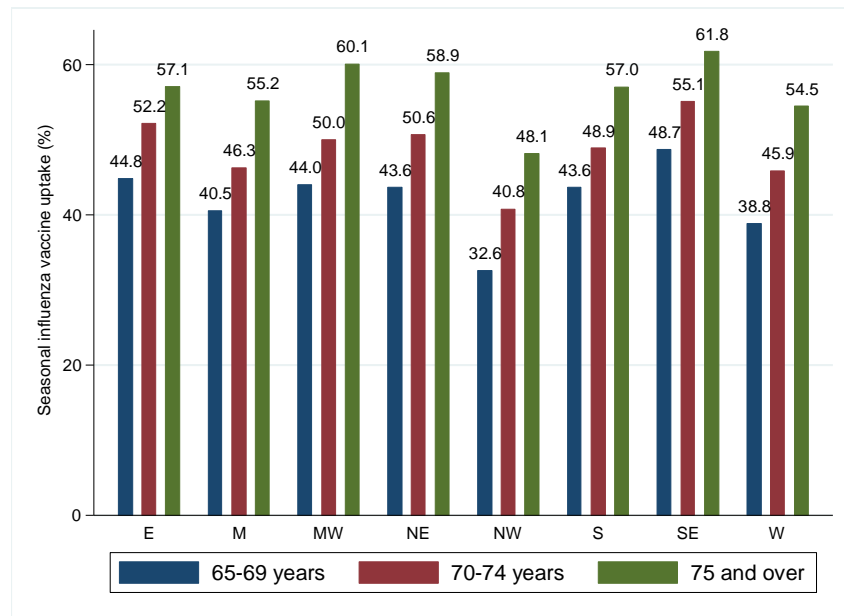


**Figure 1:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> aged 65 years and older by HSE-Area attending GP and pharmacies, Ireland, September-December 2016.

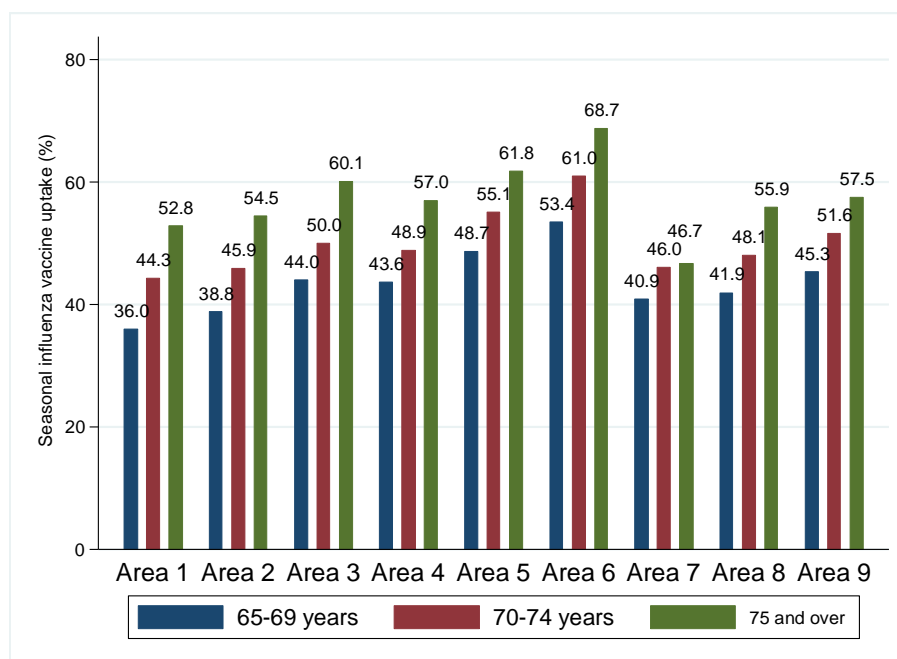


**Figure 1a:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> aged 65 years and older, by CHO-Area attending GPs and pharmacies, Ireland, September-December 2016.

<sup>†</sup> The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-December 2016.

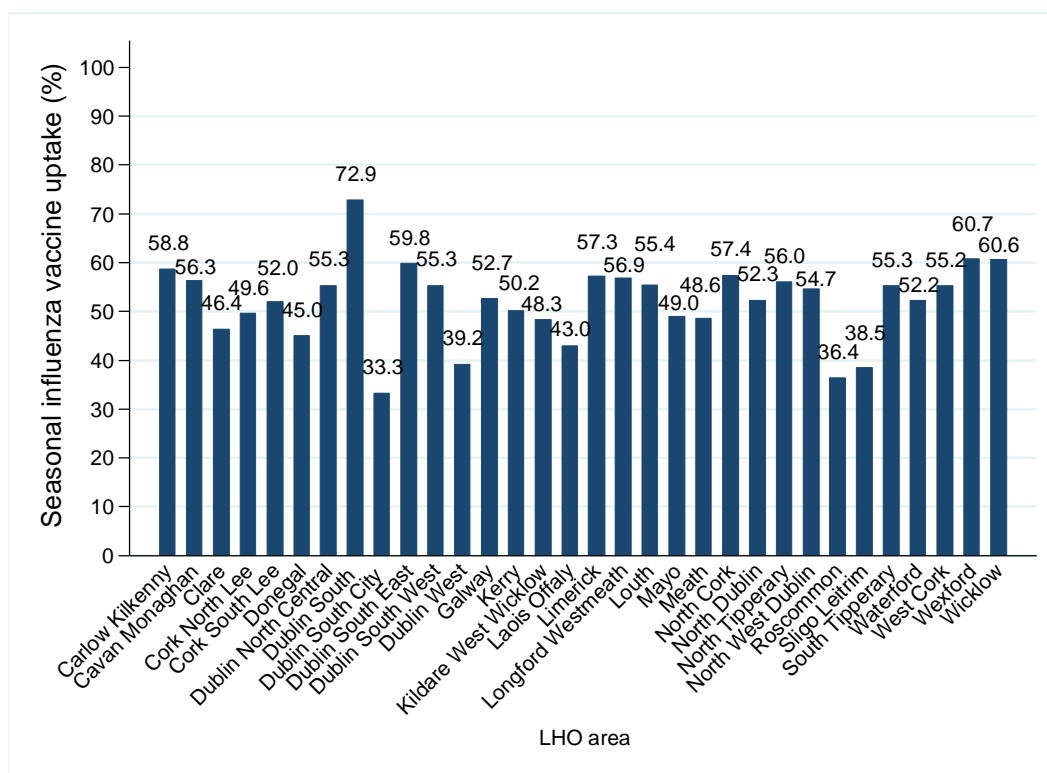


**Figure 2:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> by age group, by HSE-Area attending GPs and pharmacies, Ireland, September-December 2016.



**Figure 2a:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> by age group, by CHO-Area attending GPs and pharmacies, Ireland, September-December 2016

<sup>†</sup> The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-December 2016.



**Figure 3:** Cumulative percentage seasonal influenza vaccine uptake in card holders<sup>†</sup> aged 65 years and older attending GPs and pharmacies by LHO Area, Ireland, September-December 2016

<sup>†</sup> The number of card holders includes GP visit and medical card holders and represents number of card holders in September-December 2016.