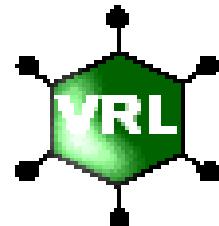


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 48

Report produced: 05/12/2001

This report is produced in collaboration with the Departments of Public Health

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 48, week ending the 2nd of December 2001, 9 influenza-like illness (ILI) cases were reported from sentinel general practices. This corresponds to a consultation rate of 13 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 24 sentinel general practices, 6 of which reported ILI cases. The GP consultation rate for week 47 has been updated to 16 per 100,000, following receipt of reports from 27 sentinel GPs.

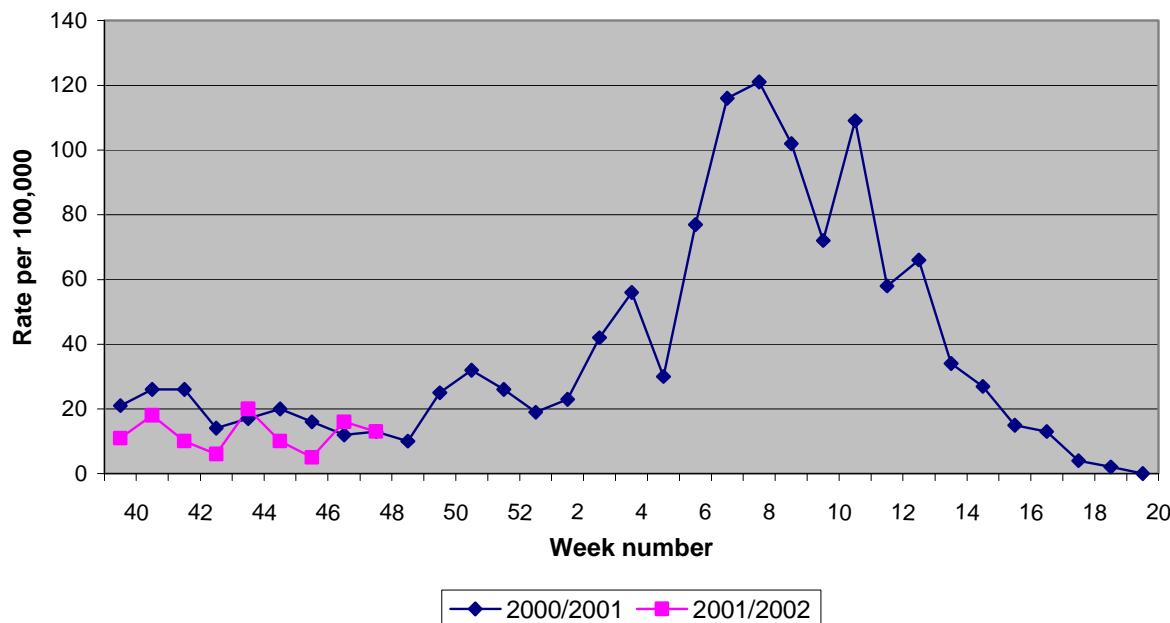


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

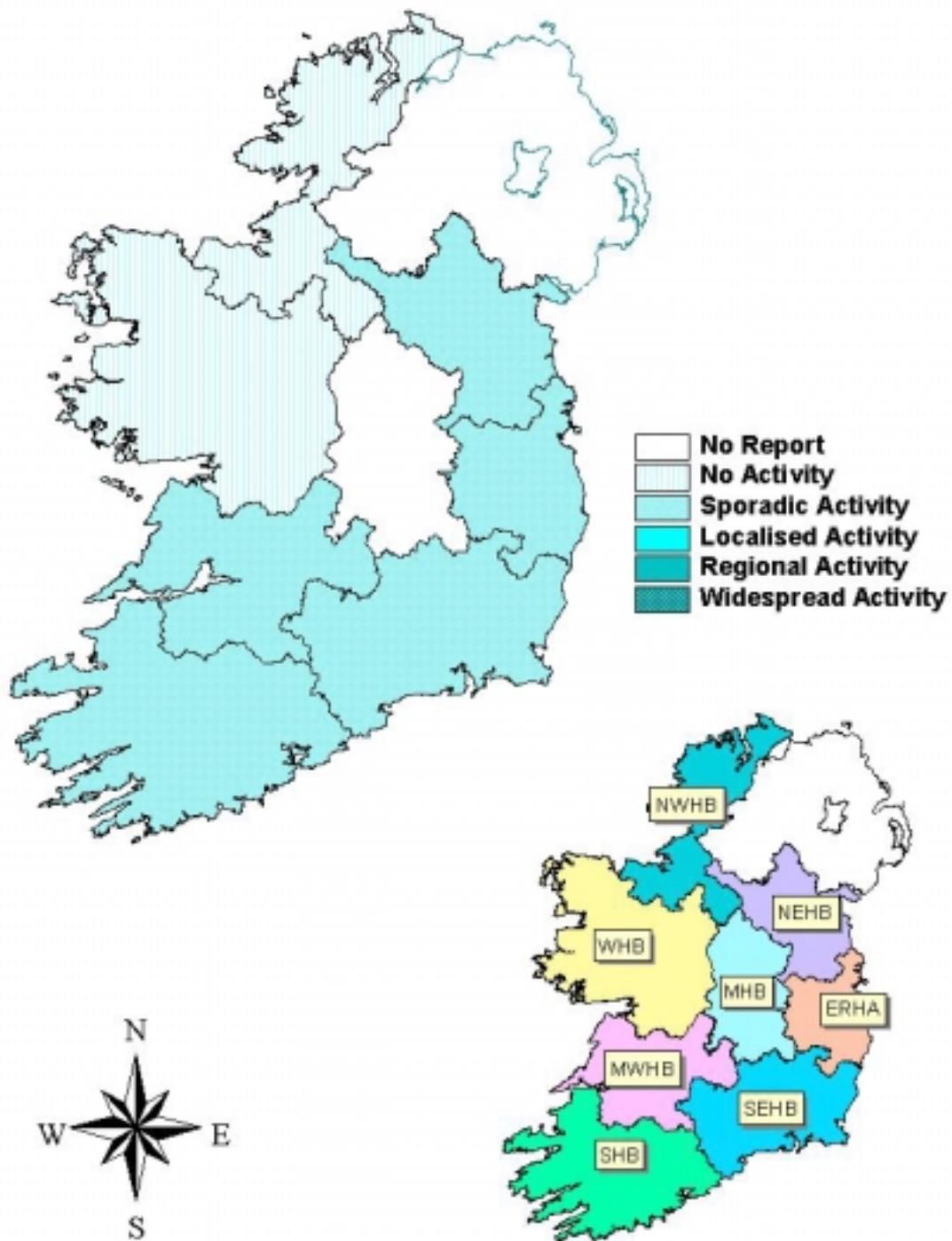
Virological Data from the Virus Reference Laboratory (VRL)

The VRL received 8 swabs from sentinel GPs, 7 were negative for influenza virus and the results are pending on the remaining swab. There have been no laboratory confirmed cases of influenza through the sentinel surveillance system, during the 2001/2002 influenza season.

Influenza Activity by Health Board/Authority

Influenza activity for week 47 (week ending the 25th of November 2001) was reported from the Departments of Public Health. Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory confirmed cases of influenza, school absenteeism levels and hospital admissions data.

Influenza Activity - Week 47



Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales

During week 47, the consultation rate for influenza and ILI in Northern Ireland decreased to a rate of 18 per 100,000. In England and Wales, the consultation rates remain little changed during week 47, with a rate of 16 per 100,000 and 0.5 per 100,000, respectively. In Scotland, the GP consultation rate decreased to a rate of 17 per 100,000. The rates for England, Scotland and Wales remain well below the upper level set for baseline activity. No influenza deaths were registered with the Office for National Statistics during week 46. Only one influenza isolate, influenza A (H3N2), has been identified since week 40 2001.

Influenza Activity in Europe

Fourteen networks reported no influenza activity to the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) in week 47. Sporadic activity was reported in France and Spain. Only France confirmed an influenza B virus during this period. The level of influenza-like illness and acute respiratory infection remain well below threshold levels throughout Europe. Influenza viruses detected since week 40, 2001, resemble the strains in the vaccine for this season.

Influenza Activity in Canada

In Canada, during week 47, 48 regions reported no influenza activity and five regions reported sporadic activity. Sentinel physicians reported 12 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits. The Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control received 773 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: none were positive.

Influenza Activity in the United States

In the US during week 47, the proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for ILI was 1.4%, less than the national baseline of 1.9%. One state and territorial department reported regional influenza activity, 20 reported sporadic influenza activity and 18 reported no influenza activity. Three of the 717 respiratory specimens tested by the WHO and NREVSS laboratories were positive for influenza. Two were influenza A (H3N2) and one was influenza B virus.

Influenza Activity Worldwide

During week 47, 15 countries worldwide reported no influenza activity. Sporadic influenza activity was reported in Hong Kong, Israel and France. Four influenza A isolates were detected in Hong Kong, 2 influenza A (H3N2) and 2 influenza A (unsubtyped). In France, one influenza B virus was isolated. In the Jerusalem area in Israel, 2 influenza A (H3N2) viruses were detected; the patients were aged 11 and 22.