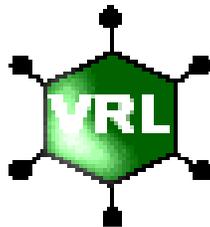


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 40

Report produced:

11th October 2001

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

Introduction

This is the first weekly influenza surveillance report of the 2001/2002 influenza season. This report is produced by the National Disease Surveillance Centre, in collaboration with the Virus Reference Laboratory, the Irish College of General Practitioners and the Departments of Public Health. The report will be produced weekly throughout the influenza season (October 2001 to May 2002). This year the influenza surveillance scheme has expanded to include 38 sentinel general practices and will also in the forthcoming weeks include influenza activity by region.

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 40, week ending the 7th of October 2001, influenza activity was low. Sentinel general practices reported 5 cases of influenza-like illness (ILI), corresponding to a consultation rate of 14 per 100,000 population (figure 1). Reports were received from 18 sentinel general practices, 9 of which reported no cases.

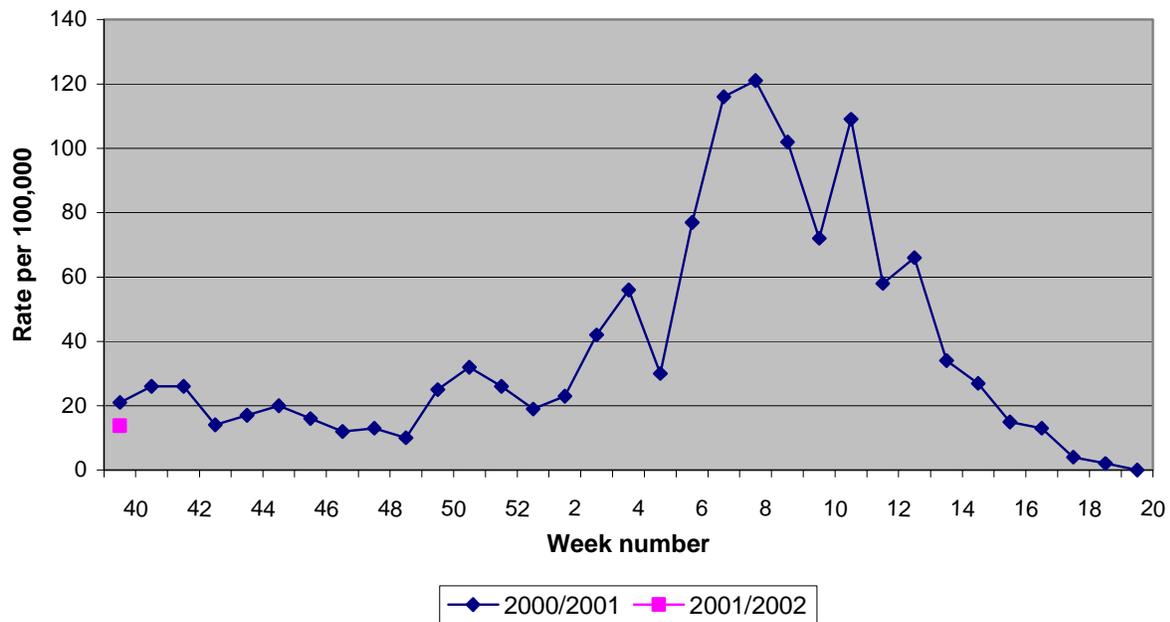


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

Virological Data

During week 40, 2001, the Virus Reference Laboratory received 4 swabs from sentinel general practices, none of these were positive for influenza.

Influenza activity in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales

In England, GP consultations for influenza and ILI increased from a rate of 7 per 100,000 in week 38 to 16 per 100,000 during week 39. This is well below the upper level set for base-line activity, of 50 per 100,000. In Wales, the GP consultation rate remained little changed with a rate of 0.9 per 100,000 in week 38 and 0.5 per 100,000 in week 39. No data is available yet from the Scottish and Northern Ireland influenza sentinel surveillance schemes. No influenza isolates have been confirmed by the PHLS Enteric, Respiratory, and Neurological Virus Laboratory during week 39.

Influenza activity in Europe, Canada and the United States

Ireland contributes data from clinical ILI consultations and laboratory confirmed influenza to the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS). EISS presents virological and clinical data concerning influenza in 14 European countries, acting as an early warning system for influenza epidemics. The first weekly EISS bulletin for the 2001/2002 influenza season will not be available until the 19th of October 2001.

No data is available yet from the influenza surveillance schemes in Canada and the United States.

Influenza activity Worldwide

During week 40, Hong Kong reported sporadic activity. Three influenza A(H1N1) and 2 influenza B viruses were isolated. In Poland, the incidence of ILI was 5.1 per 100,000 population. No influenza strains have been isolated in Poland so far this season.