

4.1 Non-IID Zoonotic Diseases

Leptospirosis

Twenty-two cases of leptospirosis were notified in 2007, compared to 20 in 2006 and 15 in 2005. All except one case this year was male. Age range 20-73 years (mean age =41 years, median age=38 years). Ten cases required hospitalization, four were reported as GP patients, and patient type was not available for the remaining 8 patients. Over three quarter of all cases (n=17) were notified in the last half of the year.

Ten cases were believed to have acquired their illness occupationally –through contact with farm environments. Seven cases were reported as having recent contact with river water including three cases who were exposed in Asia (Laos for one case and Thailand for two cases). No risk factor information was available for the remaining 5 cases.

Four cases in 2007 were infected with *Leptospira interrogans hardjo*, including three farming-related cases. One occupational case who had worked on a farm silage pit was reported as being infected with *Leptospira interrogans icterohaemorrhagiae*. Species was not reported for the remaining 17 cases.

Activities that have been associated with leptospirosis risk include farming, occupations that involve contact with wet rodent-infested environments, recreational activities such as water sports, and flooding.

In the last 2 years, travel to Asia (in particular Thailand) has emerged as a risk factor for leptospirosis in Ireland. This has been noted previously in the United Kingdom.

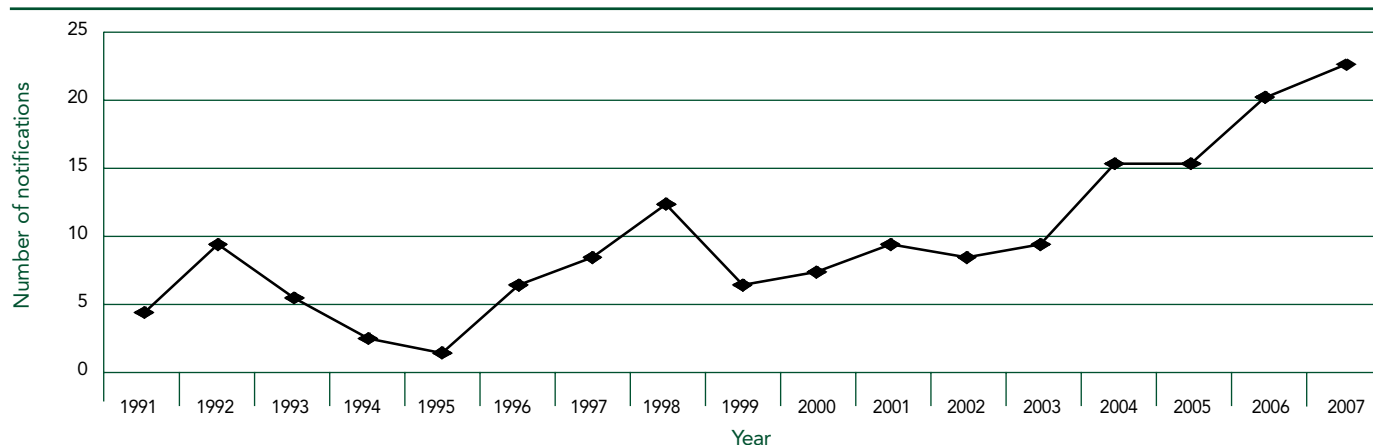


Figure 1. Annual number of leptospirosis notifications, Ireland 1991-2007 (data source: CIDR)