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Mr M Kelly (Editor), HPSC



### Health Protection Surveillance Centre

25-27 Middle Gardiner St  
Dublin 1, Ireland

Ph +353 1 876 5300

Fx +353 1 856 1299

E info@hpsc.ie

www.hpsc.ie

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# Record number of Cryptosporidiosis cases reported in 2007

**New figures show that the number of cryptosporidiosis cases reported in 2007 was the highest recorded since the disease became notifiable in 2004.**



*"Work on upgrading Group Water Schemes under the Rural Water Programme should lead to a reduction in waterborne illness in Ireland"*

Overall, there were 609 cases notified to the Health Protection Surveillance Centre, up 66% when compared with 2006, as illustrated in table 1. The main reason for the 2007 increase was the very high number of notifications in the HSE-W due to a large outbreak linked to public water supplies in the spring which accounted for almost 50% of all cases reported.<sup>1</sup>

Cryptosporidiosis incidence rates in other HSE areas were largely below average, with four HSE areas – Midlands, North East, North West and South - reporting their lowest annual numbers of cases since the disease became notifiable.<sup>2-4</sup>

Cryptosporidiosis causes severe watery, non-bloody, diarrhoea in otherwise healthy people and is a relatively common gastroenteric disease in Ireland. Normally, symptoms last about two weeks. However, in people with weakened immune systems it can cause long lasting severe diarrhoea.

The crude incidence (CIR) and age standardised incidence (ASIR) rates by HSE area for 2007 are reported in table 1. As in previous years, the HSE-E reported the lowest crude incidence rate. When looking at the figures it is important to bear in mind that regional incidence rates may be affected by screening and case finding policies in local laboratories, as well as reflecting a real difference in disease risk.

The number of cases in 2007 peaked slightly earlier than in previous years with 62% occurring between March and May, as shown in figure 1. However, this was largely due to the outbreak in the HSE-W. When the HSE-W cases are excluded, the seasonal pattern is similar to previous years, with a peak in April-June.

*Table 1. Number of notified cases, crude incidence rate and age-standardised incidence rate cryptosporidiosis by HSE area, 2007, and annual number of cryptosporidiosis notifications and crude incidence rate, Ireland 2004-2006*

| HSE area   | Number of notifications | CIR (95% CI)*    | ASIR (95% CI)*   |
|------------|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| ER         | 22                      | 1.5 (0.9-2.1)    | 1.4 (0.8-2.0)    |
| M          | 34                      | 13.5 (9.0-18.1)  | 12.8 (8.5-17.1)  |
| MW         | 57                      | 15.8 (11.7-19.9) | 16.0 (11.9-20.2) |
| NE         | 24                      | 6.1 (3.7-8.5)    | 5.6 (3.3-7.8)    |
| NW         | 25                      | 10.5 (6.4-14.7)  | 10.6 (6.4-14.7)  |
| SE         | 79                      | 17.1 (13.4-20.9) | 16.9 (13.1-20.6) |
| S          | 60                      | 9.7 (7.2-12.1)   | 9.9 (7.4-12.4)   |
| W          | 308                     | 74.4 (66.1-82.7) | 75.8 (67.3-84.2) |
| Total 2007 | 609                     | 14.4 (13.2-15.5) | -                |
| Total 2006 | 367                     | 8.7 (7.8-9.5)    | -                |
| Total 2005 | 570                     | 13.4 (12.3-14.5) | -                |
| Total 2004 | 431                     | 10.2 (9.2-11.1)  | -                |

\*Rates calculations based on CSO census 2006, and may differ from rate published previously based on 2002 census





