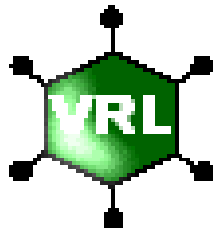


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



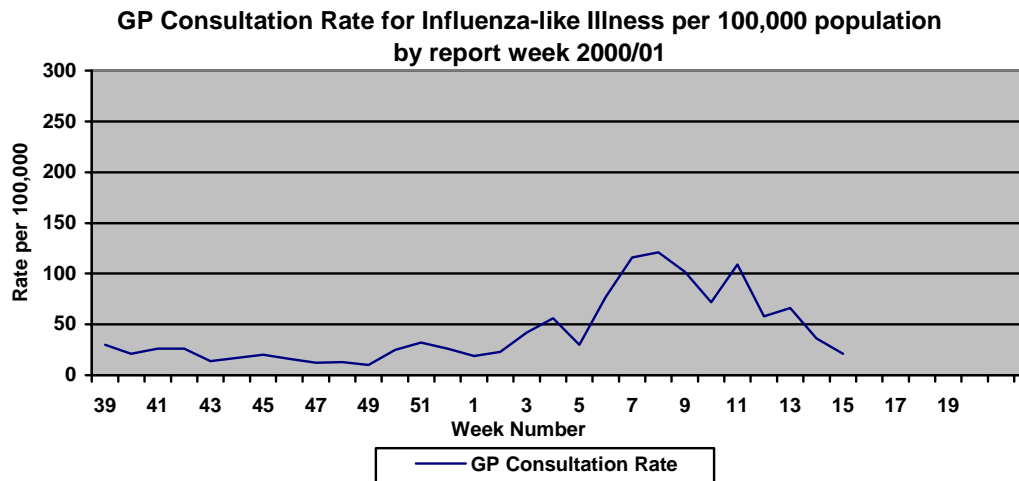
Week 15

Report produced: 18/04/2001

Influenza activity in Ireland

For week 15, week ending the 15th of April, influenza activity has continued to decrease, reaching its lowest level since week 1. Sentinel general practices have reported 11 cases of influenza-like illness, which corresponds to a consultation rate of 21 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 18 practices. No influenza activity was reported from 12 practices.

Graph 1



Virological data

During week 15, 10 swabs were received from sentinel general practices, 2 were positive for influenza B. Results are pending on 4 swabs. Serology results for week 14 have been updated, 67 tests were carried out, 6 of which were positive for influenza A and 7 for influenza B. Serology results for week 15 are pending. Influenza positive results by serology may be due to:

- Influenza vaccination
- Infection with influenza or
- Both

Therefore these results are used as indicators of the presence of influenza in the community in the same way that consultation rates for respiratory symptoms are used. Most importantly samples received from hospitals are not paired and therefore a rising and a falling titre cannot be determined.

Table 1

Influenza positive results by cell culture and / or polymerase chain reaction (PCR) by type and subtype by report week for 2000/2001

<i>Week Number</i>	<i>Influenza A</i>	<i>Influenza A (H1N1)</i>	<i>Influenza A (H3N2)</i>	<i>Influenza B</i>
50 (w/e 16/12/00)	2	1 (PCR)	1 (PCR)	0
51 (w/e 23/12/00)	3	2 (PCR, culture)	1 (PCR)	0
52 (w/e 30/12/00)	1	1 (PCR, culture)	0	0
1 (w/e 06/01/01)	2	2 (PCR, culture)	0	1 (PCR, culture)
2 (w/e 13/01/01)	5	5 (PCR)	0	0
3 (w/e 20/01/01)	7	7 (PCR)	0	1 (PCR)
4 (w/e 27/01/01)	7	7	0	2 (PCR)
5 (w/e 03/02/01)	7	7 (PCR, culture)	0	0
6 (w/e 10/02/01)	4	4 (PCR, culture)	0	3 (PCR, culture)
7 (w/e 17/02/01)	6	5 (PCR, culture)	1	11 (PCR, culture)
8 (w/e 24/02/01)	2	2 (PCR, culture)	0	8 (PCR, culture)
9 (w/e 04/03/01)	0	0	0	13 (PCR, culture)
10 (w/e 11/03/01)	1	1	0	13 (PCR, culture)
11 (w/e 18/03/01)	0	0	0	8 (PCR, culture)
12 (w/e 25/03/01)	0	0	0	3 (PCR, culture)
13 (w/e 01/04/01)	0	0	0	4 (PCR, culture)
14 (w/e 08/04/01)	0	0	0	2 (culture)
15 (w/e 15/04/01)	0	0	0	2 (PCR, culture)

Table 2

Influenza positive results by serology by type and by report week for 2000/2001

<i>Week Number</i>	<i>Influenza A</i>	<i>Influenza B</i>
40 (w/e 07/10/00)	0	0
41 (w/e 14/10/00)	0	0
42 (w/e 21/10/00)	5	0
43 (w/e 28/10/00)	2	1
44 (w/e 04/11/00)	3	0
45 (w/e 11/11/00)	3	0
46 (w/e 18/11/00)	0	0
47 (w/e 25/11/00)	1	0
48 (w/e 02/12/00)	4	0
49 (w/e 09/12/00)	4	0
50 (w/e 16/12/00)	2	0
51 (w/e 23/12/00)	3	0
52 (w/e 30/12/00)	0	0
01 (w/e 06/01/01)	0	0
02 (w/e 13/01/01)	4	0
03 (w/e 20/01/01)	4	0
04 (w/e 27/01/01)	3	0
05 (w/e 03/02/01)	6	0
06 (w/e 10/02/01)	2	0
07 (w/e 17/02/01)	5	1
08 (w/e 24/02/01)	8	2
09 (w/e 03/03/01)	1	3
10 (w/e 10/03/01)	1	0
11 (w/e 17/03/01)	3	3
12 (w/e 24/03/01)	3	3
13 (w/e 31/03/01)	3	4
14 (w/e 07/04/01)	6	7

Influenza activity in England, Scotland and Wales

Influenza activity continued to remain at low levels and within the range of baseline activity across England, Wales and Scotland, for week 14. In England the GP consultation rate for influenza and influenza-like illness remained low with a rate of 20 per 100,000 in week 13 and 17 per 100,000 in week 14. The regional breakdown for week 14 in England was as follows: 18 per 100,000 in the Southern region, 19 per 100,000 in the Central region and 12 per 100,000 in the Northern region. In Wales, the consultation rate remained almost stationary, with a rate of 4 per 100,000 in week 13 and 2 per 100,000 in week 14. In Scotland, the consultation rate decreased slightly from 24 per 100,000 in week 13 to 19 per 100,000 in week 14. During week 14, ENVRL characterised 12 isolates of influenza B, 7 of these were from Scotland, and all were derived from hospital sources. Since week 40/2000, 723 samples from community-based surveillance have been tested. Of the 250 samples that were positive for influenza, 85 were influenza A (H1N1) and 165 were influenza B.

Influenza activity in Northern Ireland

Consultation rates for influenza and influenza-like illness decreased slightly from 84 per 100,000 in week 13 to 78 per 100,000 in week 14. No swabs submitted to date have been positive by PCR for influenza or RSV.

Influenza activity in Europe

For week 14, countries participating in the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) confirmed the trend of declining or stationary low levels of influenza activity in recent weeks. Influenza activity decreased in Ireland, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Italy, Spain and Wales. In England and Slovenia the rates remained unchanged. Germany was the exception reporting increasing activity. England, Wales and Slovenia reported no influenza activity; the remaining countries participating in EISS reported sporadic activity. Influenza B virus was predominating in most European countries, during week 14.

Influenza activity in Canada

No widespread, regional or localised activity was reported during week 14. Sporadic activity was reported in 16 regions and 10 regions reported no influenza activity. Sentinel physicians reported 14 cases of influenza-like illness per 1000 patient visits. The Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control reported 57 specimens positive for influenza virus; 24 were influenza A and 33 were influenza B.

Influenza activity in United States

During week 14, the proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for influenza-like illness was 1%, within the range of baseline levels in all 9 surveillance regions. For this season the proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians has peaked at 4% in mid to late January. During week 14, 37 state and territorial departments reported sporadic activity and 17 reported no influenza activity. The WHO and NREVSS laboratories characterised 25 specimens positive for influenza, 24 were influenza B and 1 was untyped influenza A. During the past 3 weeks (weeks 12-14) influenza B virus has predominated in all 9 surveillance regions. The CDC has antigenically characterised 588 influenza viruses from US laboratories since October 2000, all of which have been covered by the current vaccine.

Influenza activity Worldwide

For the week ending the 14th of April, there was no widespread, regional or localised influenza activity reported. Sporadic activity was reported in Iceland, Latvia, Sweden, Hong Kong, France, Finland and Germany. Romania, the Slovak Republic, Switzerland and Chile reported no activity.