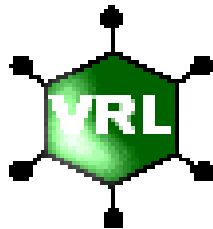


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



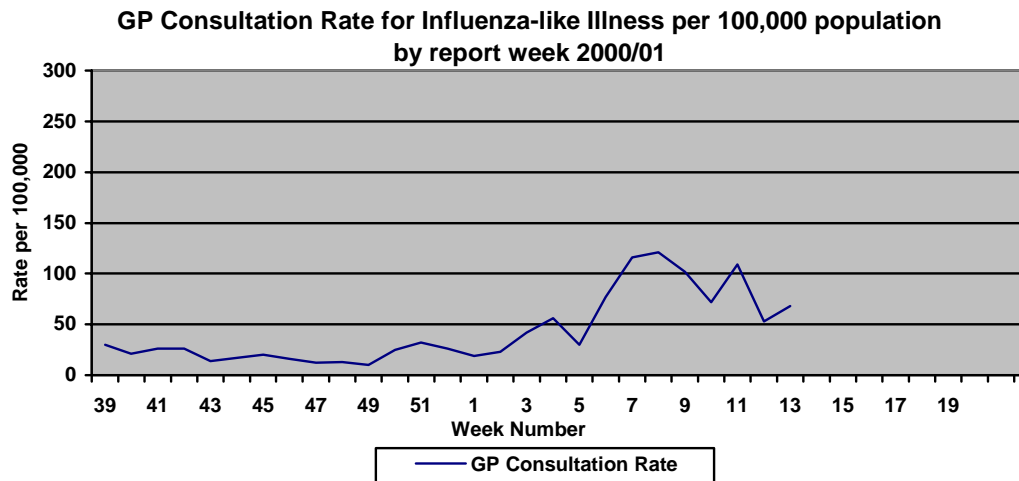
Week 13

Report produced: 04/04/2001

Influenza activity in Ireland

The GP consultation rate for week 12, week ending the 25th of March, has been updated to 53 cases per 100,000 population, following receipt of reports from 17 sentinel general practices. For week 13, week ending the 1st of April, influenza activity has increased slightly. Sentinel general practices have reported 36 cases of influenza-like illness, which corresponds to a consultation rate of 68 per 100,000. Reports were received from 18 practices, 6 of which reported no influenza activity.

Graph 1



Virological data

Results have been updated for weeks 9, 10, and 11. For week 9, week ending the 4th of March, 18 swabs were sent by sentinel physicians, 12 were positive for influenza B. For week 10, week ending the 11th of March, 21 swabs were received, of which 1 was positive for influenza A (H1N1) and 13 for influenza B. For week 11, week ending the 18th of March, 15 swabs were sent from sentinel practices, of these 7 were positive for influenza B. Results are pending on 2 samples from week 11. For week 13, week ending the 01/04/01, 17 swabs were received from sentinel physicians, of these 4 were positive for influenza B.

Serology results for week 13 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 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) | 5 | 4 (PCR, culture) | 1 | 10 (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 | 12 (PCR, culture) |
| 10 (w/e 11/03/01) | 1 | H1N1 | 0 | 13 (PCR, culture) |
| 11 (w/e 18/03/01) | Pending | Pending | Pending | 7 (PCR, culture) |
| 12 (w/e 25/03/01) | Pending | Pending | Pending | 2 (culture) |
| 13 (w/e 01/04/01) | Pending | Pending | Pending | 4 (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) | Pending | Pending |

Influenza activity in England, Scotland and Wales

Influenza activity has continued to decrease in England, Scotland and Wales. In England, during week 12, the GP consultation rate for influenza and influenza-like illness decreased to a rate of 28 per 100,000, which lies within the range of baseline activity. The regional breakdown for England was as follows: 18 per 100,000 in the Southern region, 33 per 100,000 in the Central region and 38 per 100,000 in the Northern region. In Wales and Scotland the GP consultation rate remained within the range of baseline activity, with a rate of 2.3 per 100,000 in Wales (week ending the 21st of March) and 35 per 100,000 in Scotland (week ending the 26th of March). ENVRL have characterised 19 isolates of influenza B, all of which were derived from hospital sources. The influenza B isolates were all antigenically similar to the WHO recommended vaccine strain B/Sichuan/379/99.

Influenza activity in Northern Ireland

No data is currently available for week 12.

Influenza activity in Europe

The majority of countries participating in the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme reported declining levels of influenza activity in week 12, week ending the 25th of March. The Czech Republic, Denmark, Ireland and Spain have all reported localised activity. Sporadic activity was reported in Belgium, France, Germany and Switzerland. Influenza B predominated in most European countries. In Italy influenza A (H1N1) was the dominant type.

Influenza activity in Canada

During week 12, week ending the 24th of March, there was no widespread activity reported. Localised activity was reported from 3 regions, 20 regions reported sporadic activity and 3 regions reported no influenza activity. Sentinel physicians reported 10 cases of influenza-like illness per 1000 patient visits. The Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control characterised 1524 specimens, of which 110 were positive for influenza virus, 31 were influenza A and 79 were influenza B. Influenza activity has been declining for several weeks in Canada, as indicated by decreases in influenza-like illness reporting rates, percentage of laboratory tests positive for influenza and regional activity levels.

Influenza activity in United States

The proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for influenza-like illness was 1%, which remains within baseline levels for week 12, week ending the 24th of March. Regional influenza activity was reported from 2 state and territorial health departments, 36 reported sporadic activity and 11 reported no influenza activity. For the 2000/2001 season the overall national percentage of respiratory specimens positive for influenza appears to have peaked at 24% at the end of January. During week 12, WHO and NREVSS laboratories reported 987 specimens tested for influenza viruses, of which 12 were untyped influenza A, 2 were influenza A (H3N2) and 42 were influenza B. The CDC has characterised 485 influenza viruses since October 1st 2000, the current WHO vaccine covered all isolates.

Influenza activity Worldwide

For the week ending the 31st of March, no widespread or regional influenza activity was reported. Denmark and Sweden reported localised activity; sporadic activity was reported in Germany, Latvia, Romania, UK and France. No influenza activity was reported from Croatia, Spain and Poland.

2001/2002 influenza vaccine composition:

The composition of the Northern Hemisphere influenza vaccine for 2001/2002 has been decided and communicated to vaccine manufacturers by the World Health Organisation (WHO), following agreement on its content by international experts at a WHO meeting held in Geneva, Switzerland. The influenza vaccine for 2001/2002 will contain the following 3 components:

- an A/New Caledonia/20/99 (H1N1)-like virus
- an A/Moscow/10/99 (H3N2)-like virus
- a B/Sichuan/379/99-like virus.

WHO: <http://www.who.int/inf-pr-2001/en/pr2001-08.html>

