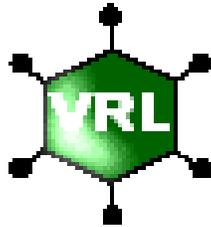


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report

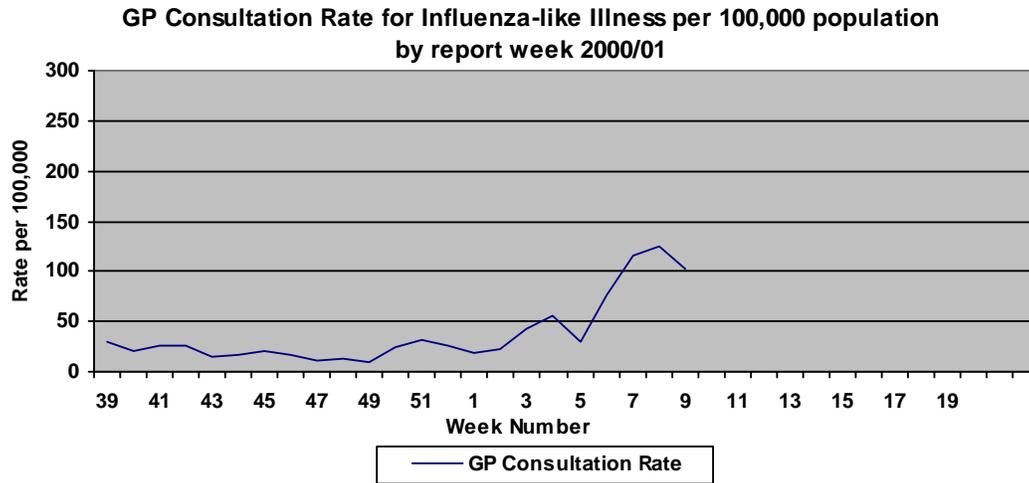


Week 9

Report produced: 07/03/01

Influenza activity in Ireland

For the week ending the 4th of March, week 9, influenza activity decreased for the first time since week 5. Sentinel general practices reported 53 cases of influenza-like illness. This corresponds to a rate of 102 cases per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 17 practices. 3 practices reported no influenza activity.



Virological data

Updated results for week 8, the week ending the 25th of February, reported 10 positive swabs from a total of 18 received. Of these 8 were influenza B isolates and 2 were influenza A (H1N1) isolates. Results are pending on 6 samples and will be updated next week.

For week 9, the week ending the 4th of March, 18 swabs were sent by sentinel practices. Of these 3 were positive for influenza B. Results are pending on 15 samples.

Serology results have been updated for the week ending the 25th of February, 100 tests were carried out, 8 were positive for influenza A and 2 were positive for influenza B. For the week ending the 4th of March, week 9, 80 serology tests were carried out, 3 were positive for influenza B and 1 was positive for influenza A.

Influenza positive results by serology may be due to:

- Influenza vaccination
- Infection with influenza virus 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 or 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)	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	3 (PCR, culture)

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

Week Number	Influenza A	Influenza B
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 04/03/01)	1	3

Influenza activity in England, Scotland and Wales

Influenza activity has continued to decrease in England, for the week ending the 25th of February, week 8. The GP consultation rate was at the lower end of the range for normal seasonal activity, with a rate of 58 per 100,000. The regional breakdown was as follows: 44 per 100,000 in the Southern region, 79 per 100,000 in the Central region and 47 per 100,000 in the Northern region. For Scotland the consultation rate has decreased also, to a rate of 48 per 100,000 for the week ending the 25th of February. This is within the baseline activity range. Influenza activity has increased in Wales to a rate of 17 per 100,000 for the week ending 21st of February, which was also within the baseline activity range.

Virological data for week 8 from the ENVRL reported 15 influenza A (H1N1) and 44 influenza B isolates. Influenza B remains the predominant circulating strain. The number of isolates appears to be declining, with the peak occurring in week 5, 2001. For Scotland there has been a sharp rise in influenza B. The current vaccine covers all isolates that have been typed.

Influenza activity in Northern Ireland

For the week ending the 25th of February, week 8, the consultation rate for combined influenza and influenza –like illness was 12 per 100,000. This was based on 11 practices.

Influenza activity in Europe

EISS has reported that most countries have reached their peak rates of influenza activity for the 2000/2001 influenza season. For the week ending the 25th of February, only the Danish and Swiss networks have reported regional activity. The Czech Republic, France, Ireland and Italy have reported local activity. All other networks reported sporadic activity, except Wales and The Netherlands, which had no activity. For most of Europe, influenza A (H1N1) was the dominant virus, with the exception of England, Scotland and Ireland where influenza B predominated and Spain where influenza A (H3N2) was the dominant influenza virus.

Influenza activity in Canada

During the week ending the 24th of February, 15 regions reported localised activity, 22 reported sporadic activity and 1 region reported no activity. The consultation rate was 23 cases of influenza –like illness per 1000 patient visits. 197 influenza specimens were positive for influenza B and 161 were positive for influenza A. Influenza B isolates continue to predominate in the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, and Manitoba, however influenza A now predominates in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

Influenza activity in United States

For the week ending the 24th of February, patient visits to sentinel GPs were within baseline levels (2%), in the US overall and in 7 out of 9 surveillance regions. 4 state and territorial health departments reported widespread activity, 23 reported regional activity and 22 reported sporadic activity. 216 specimens tested by the WHO and NREVSS laboratories were positive for influenza, of which 12% were influenza A (H1N1), 26% were untyped influenza A and 62% were influenza B.

Influenza activity Worldwide

For the week ending the 3rd of March, widespread activity was reported in Croatia and Iceland. Finland and Latvia reported regional activity. Local activity was reported in Romania and Denmark; and Australia, Portugal and Hong Kong reported sporadic activity.