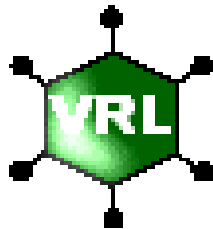


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



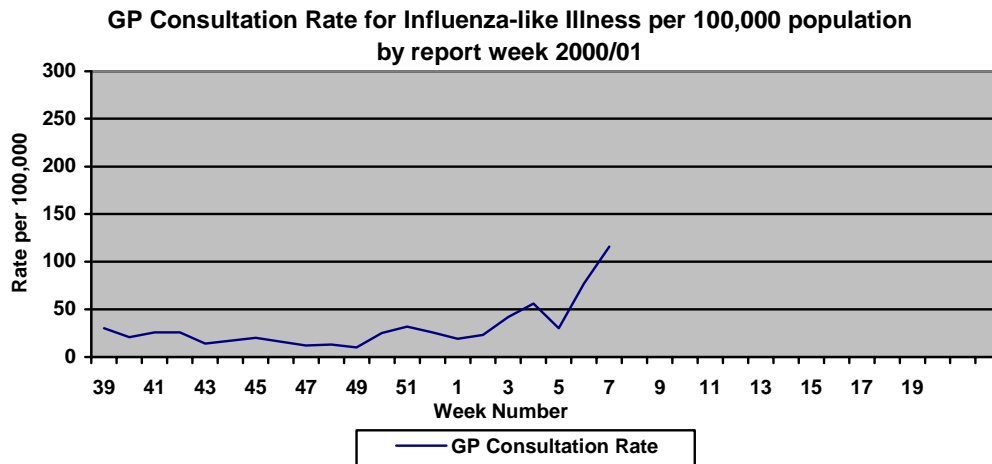
Week 7

Report produced: 21/02/01

Influenza activity in Ireland

For the week ending the 18th of February, week 7, influenza activity increased further. Sentinel general practices reported seeing 61 cases of influenza-like illness. This corresponds to a rate of 116 cases per 100,000. This has increased from a rate of 77 cases per 100,000 for the previous week. Reports were received from 18 practices. Only two practices reported no influenza activity.

Graph 1.



Virological data

For the week ending the 17/02/01, 19 samples were sent from sentinel practices. Of these ten were positive for influenza. Influenza B isolates accounted for 9 of the 10 positive samples. The remaining sample was identified as influenza A (H1N1). Results by PCR are pending on 7 samples.

Updated results for week 6, week ending the 11th of February, report 4 samples were positive for influenza A (H1N1) and three were positive for influenza B.

Serology results for week 6, report 2 positive samples for influenza A. Results on the 86 serology samples received for analysis for week 7, report that 6 samples were positive for influenza. Of these 5 were identified as influenza A and 1 sample as influenza B.

Influenza positive results by serology may be due to:

- Influenza vaccination
- Infection with influenza virus
- 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

Week number	Influenza A	Influenza A (H1N1)	Influenza A (H3N2)	Influenza B
40 (w/e 07/10/00)	2	1 (PCR,culture)	1(PCR)	0
41 (w/e 14/10/00)	0	0	0	0
42 (w/e 21/10/00)	0	0	0	0
43 (w/e 28/10/00)	0	0	0	0
44 (w/e 04/11/00)	0	0	0	1
45 (w/e 11/11/00)	0	0	0	0
46 (w/e 18/11/00)	0	0	0	0
47 (w/e 25/11/00)	0	0	0	0
48 (w/e 02/12/00)	2	0	0	0
49 (w/e 09/12/00)	1	1 (PCR)	0	0
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)	1	1 (PCR, culture)	0	9 (PCR, culture)

Table 2

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

Influenza activity in England, Scotland and Wales

Influenza activity in England for the week ending the 11th of February was reported to lie within normal seasonal activity range. The overall consultation rate was 70 cases per 100,000.

Wales also reported an increase in activity but this increase still remained below baseline activity for week 6, week ending the 7th of February.

Scotland reported a rate of 50 cases per 100,000 for the week ending the 19th of February. There has been an increase in the number of Influenza B isolates in Scotland for the same period.

The ERNVL laboratory reports an increase in influenza B isolates. For the week ending the 11th of February 37 isolates were identified as influenza A (H1N1) and 40 isolates as influenza B. Both the influenza A (H1N1) strains and the influenza B strains identified by the ERNVL to date are covered by the current vaccine strain.

Influenza activity in Northern Ireland

The consultation rate for Northern Ireland showed an increase from 18.3 cases per 100,000 to 34.5 cases per 100,000 for flu and flu-like illnesses for the week ending 16/02/01. There have been no further positive isolations of influenza since week 5, when 2 cases of influenza B were identified.

Influenza activity in Europe

Widespread activity was reported to European Influenza Surveillance Scheme for the week ending 11th of February in Germany, the Czech Republic and Denmark. This activity was related to influenza A (H1N1). In France and the Netherlands activity levels fell.

Influenza activity in the United States

Ten state and territorial health departments reported widespread activity, 26 reported regional influenza activity, and 13 reported sporadic activity.

The WHO and NREVSS laboratories since October 1, have tested over 43,000 specimens for influenza, 12% of which were positive. Two thirds of the positive samples were identified as influenza A, predominantly influenza A (H1N1), and the other third were typed as influenza B. Antigenic characterisation of influenza A and B isolates circulating are covered by this year's vaccine strains.

Influenza activity in Canada

Canada continues to report widespread activity in 11 regions, with localized activity in 15 regions and sporadic activity in 19 regions. Influenza B isolates have predominated for most of the season, but detection of influenza A has increased. For the week ending the 10th of February week 6, 357 specimens were positive for influenza, comprising of 175 influenza B isolates and 182 influenza A isolates. Over 97% of influenza A and B isolates characterized to date are covered by this year's vaccine.

Influenza activity Worldwide

For the week ending the 17/02/01 widespread activity was reported in Switzerland, Croatia, Finland and Denmark. Latvia and Norway report regional levels and Romania and Italy report activity at local levels.