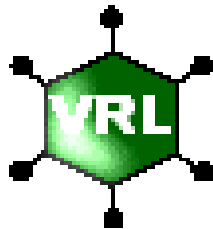


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



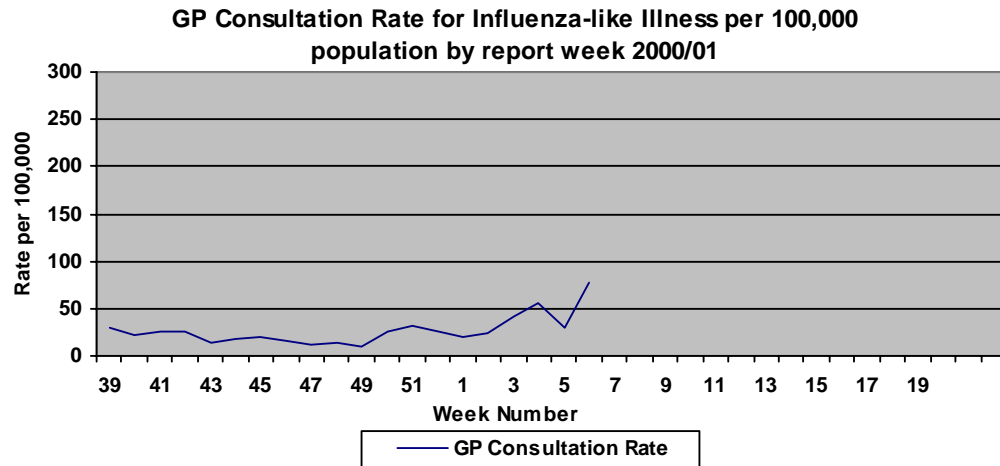
Week 6

Report produced: 14/02/01

Influenza activity in Ireland

Influenza activity has increased substantially this week. For the week ending the 11th of February, sentinel physicians saw 44 cases of influenza-like illness. The majority of cases seen were in the 15-45 year age group. This corresponds to a rate of 77 cases per 100,000 population. Reports were filed from all 20 participating practices. Of these, 5 practices reported no influenza-like activity. Cases were concentrated in Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, Malahide, Co. Dublin and Mulhuddart, Dublin 15.

Graph 1.



Virological data

For week 5, week ending the 4th of February, 12 samples were received from sentinel physicians. Influenza A (H1N1) was isolated in 7 samples in total.

For week 6, week ending the 11th of February, 11 samples were received, of which 6 were positive for influenza. Three cases were confirmed as influenza A (H1N1) and the remaining three as influenza B. Results are pending on two further samples.

Serology results are pending for week 6.

Antigenic Characterisation

The Virus Reference Laboratory referred four influenza A (H1N1) virus isolates to the World Health Organization Laboratory in London for antigenic characterisation. Three samples were identified as being antigenically similar to the current vaccine strain A/New Caledonia 20/99. The other isolate is closely related to an older H1N1 strain, A/Bayern/07/95. Although A/Bayern-like viruses are antigenically distinct from the A/New Caledonia-like viruses, the A/New Caledonia/20/99 vaccine strain produces high titres of antibody that cross-react with A/Bayern/07/95-like viruses. Both of these H1 isolates have been identified in other European Countries as well as in the United States this season.

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	0
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)	5	5	0	1 (PCR)
5 (w/e 03/02/01)	7	7 (PCR, culture)	0	0
6 (w/e 10/02/01)	3	3 (PCR, culture)	0	3 (PCR, culture)

Influenza activity in England, Scotland and Wales

Influenza activity increased to an overall rate of 64 cases per 100,000 population in week 5 week ending the 4th of February. In all three regions the rate exceeded 50 cases per 100,000. The highest consultation rates occurring in the 5-14 and the 15-44 year age groups.

Influenza activity in Northern Ireland

A consultation rate of 18.3 cases per 100,000 for combined influenza and influenza – like illness was recorded for the week ending the 10th of February. Reports were filed from 12 of the 16 participating practices. Influenza B was isolated for the first time in the previous week, week ending the 3rd of February. Results are pending on samples received for week 6.

Influenza activity in Europe

The European Influenza Surveillance Scheme reports that influenza activity is increasing across Europe. For the week ending the 4th of February, activity was reported as widespread in Germany, the Czech Republic and France. Denmark and Switzerland reported activity at regional levels. Influenza A (H1N1) continues to be identified as the main isolate, however, detection of influenza B is on the increase in Central England.

Influenza activity in Canada

Widespread activity was reported in 12 regions, localised activity in 16, and sporadic activity in 22 regions for the week ending the 3rd of February. Influenza B continues to be the predominant virus circulating however, Influenza A isolates are increasing.

Influenza activity in the United States

Influenza activity was reported at widespread levels in eleven state and territorial health departments, 26 reported regional influenza activity and 13 reported sporadic activity. Visits to sentinel physicians were recorded at 4% (above baseline levels of 0-3%) and exceeded baseline levels in 8 of 9 surveillance regions. Influenza A viruses have predominated in 7 regions, influenza B viruses have predominated in the Mid-Atlantic regions and the Pacific region has reported equal numbers of influenza A and B isolates this season.

Influenza activity Worldwide

For the week ending 3rd of February, widespread influenza-like activity was reported in Germany, Finland, Switzerland and the Czech Republic. Croatia reports widespread activity for the week ending 10/02/01, with regional activity levels in Denmark and the Slovak Republic.

