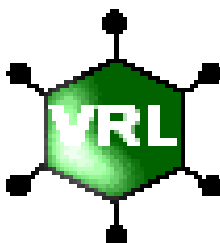


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 16 2002

Report produced: 25/04/2002

This report is produced in collaboration with the Departments of Public Health

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 16, the week ending the 21st of April 2002, the GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) has reached its lowest level this season. Two ILI cases were reported from sentinel general practices, corresponding to a consultation rate of 3 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 21 sentinel GPs, with 2 reporting ILI cases.

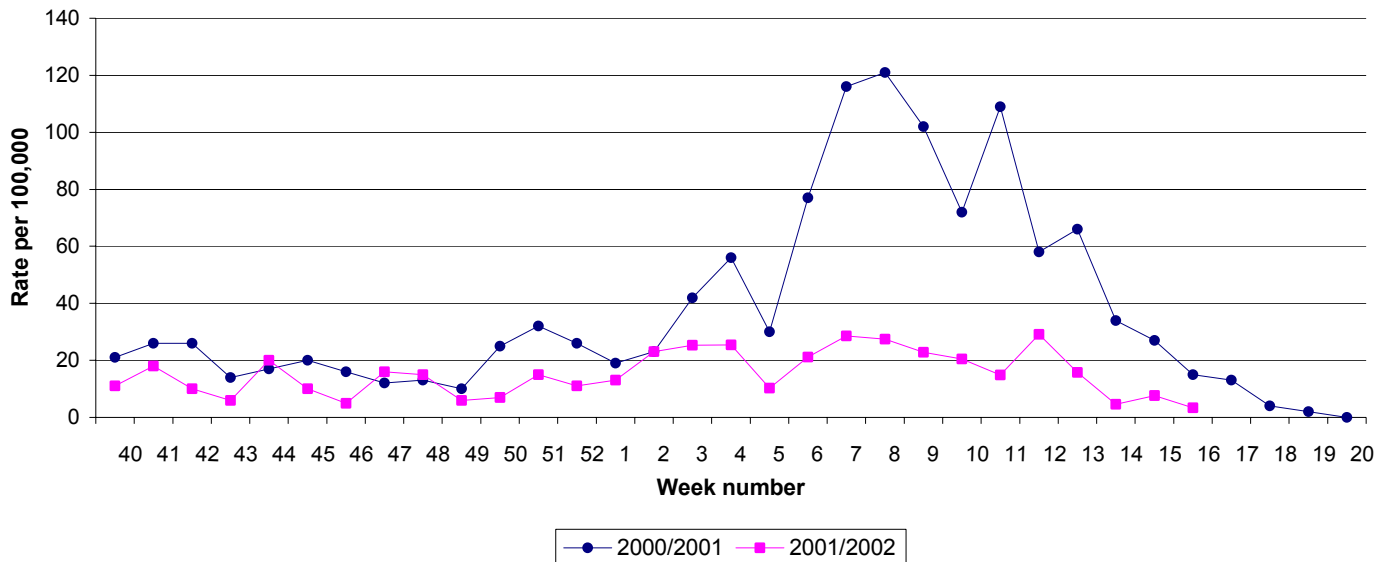


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

Virological Data from the Virus Reference Laboratory (VRL)

During week 16, 2 swabs were received from sentinel GPs; one of these was negative for influenza virus and the results of the other swab are pending. To date this season the VRL have tested 235 swabs for influenza virus, 65 (28%) were positive. Influenza A (H3N2) has been the predominant strain this season. Ten influenza A (unsubtyped), 2 influenza A (H1N1), 9 influenza A (H1N2), 43 influenza A (H3N2) and one influenza B viruses have been detected by the VRL this season.

The VRL have tested 634 respiratory specimens from non-sentinel specimens (hospitals and GPs) since the start of the influenza season. During week 15, 4 specimens were positive for RSV, bringing the total RSV cases detected this season to 200. Since October 2001, 2 adenoviruses, 1 parainfluenza type 3 virus, and 3 influenza A (unsubtyped) viruses have been identified from non-sentinel sources.

Table 1: Sentinel influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2001/2002

<i>Week number</i>	<i>Total swabs</i>	<i>Positive swabs</i>	<i>Percentage positive</i>	<i>A (unsubtyped)</i>	<i>A (H1N1)</i>	<i>A (H1N2)</i>	<i>A (H3N2)</i>	<i>B</i>
40	5	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
41	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
42	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
43	2	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
44	2	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
45	6	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
46	3	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
47	10	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
48	8	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
49	6	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
50	8	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
51	9	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
52	1	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
1	7	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
2	9	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
3	12	4	33%	0	1	0	3	0
4	14	6	43%	0	0	0	6	0
5	15	3	20%	0	0	2	1	0
6	15	10	67%	1	1	1	7	0
7	16	5	31%	0	0	0	5	0
8	13	6	46%	0	0	3	3	0
9	14	8	57%	0	0	1	7	0
10	14	7	50%	1	0	2	4	0
11	9	4	44%	2	0	0	2	0
12	12	7	58%	3	0	0	3	1
13	8	4	50%	2	0	0	2	0
14	2	1	50%	1	0	0	0	0
15	5	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
16	2	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
Total	235	65	28%	10	2	9	43	1

Influenza Activity by Health Board/Authority

Influenza activity is reported on a weekly basis from the Departments of Public Health. Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory confirmed cases of influenza, hospital admissions data, and/or school absenteeism levels. The influenza activity for weeks 15 and 16 will be reported in next weeks report.

Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland

The GP consultation rate for influenza and ILI was 0 and 15 per 100,000, respectively during week 15. In week 16, the GP consultation rate for influenza and ILI was 0.9 and 10.3 per 100,000, respectively. All swabs received during week 15 and 16 were negative for influenza virus. CDSC NI has now finished their weekly influenza surveillance reporting for this season.

Influenza Activity in England, Scotland and Wales

The PHLS has finished reporting influenza activity in the UK for the 2001/2002 influenza season. Surveillance of influenza activity, however, will continue and reports will be restarted if new activity emerges. If no further activity emerges the weekly influenza reports for next season will resume at the beginning of October.

Influenza Activity in Europe

During week 15, low or baseline levels of influenza activity were reported across Europe. In Denmark, Poland, Spain and Switzerland no influenza activity was reported. Eleven networks reporting to the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) reported sporadic influenza activity. Germany and Norway reported localised activity. Influenza A was the predominant virus reported in 6 networks reporting to EISS and 5 networks reported influenza B as the predominant virus.

Influenza Activity in Canada

No influenza surveillance report was available for week 15

Influenza Activity in the United States

During week 15, the overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for ILI was 0.8%, which is below the epidemic threshold. One state and territorial health department reported widespread influenza activity, 3 reported regional activity, 37 reported sporadic activity and 7 reported no influenza activity. During week 15, the WHO and NREVSS laboratories reported 8 positive specimens of influenza A (H3N2), 1 influenza A (H1N1), 7 influenza A (unsubtyped) and 39 influenza B viruses.

Influenza Activity Worldwide

No influenza activity was reported in Argentina, Iceland, Chile, French Guiana and Israel during week 15. Sporadic influenza activity was reported in Hong Kong, Latvia, Mexico, and the Russian Federation. Localised activity was reported in Finland and Norway.

This report was produced by Dr Lisa Domegan, Surveillance Scientist, NDSC.