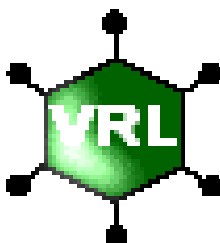


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 15 2002

Report produced: 17/04/2002

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

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 15, the week ending the 14th of April 2002, the GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) has increased slightly but still remains at low levels. Four ILI cases were reported from sentinel general practices, corresponding to a consultation rate of 8 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 22 sentinel GPs, with 4 reporting ILI cases.

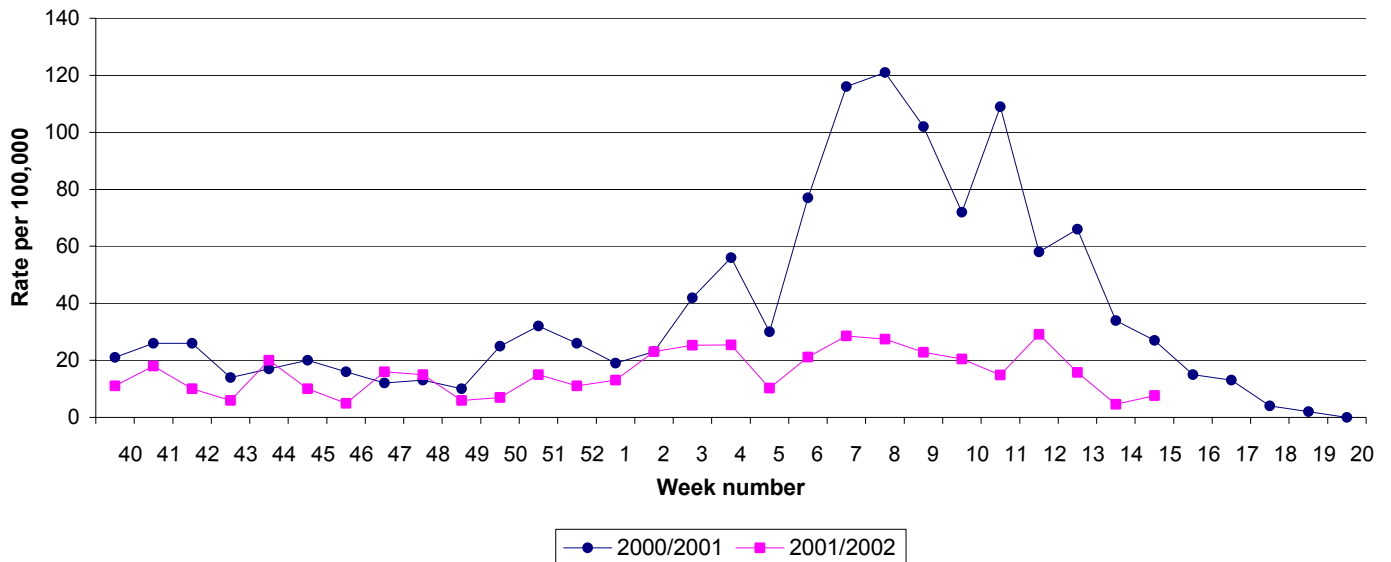


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

Virological Data from the Virus Reference Laboratory (VRL)

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.

During week 15, 5 swabs were received from sentinel GPs; four of these were negative for influenza virus and the results of one swab are pending. To date this season the VRL have tested 233 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.

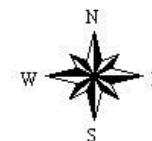
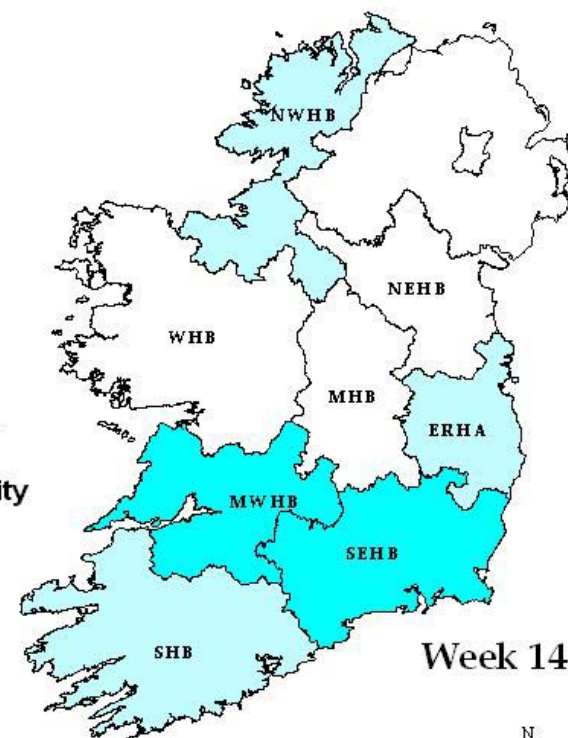
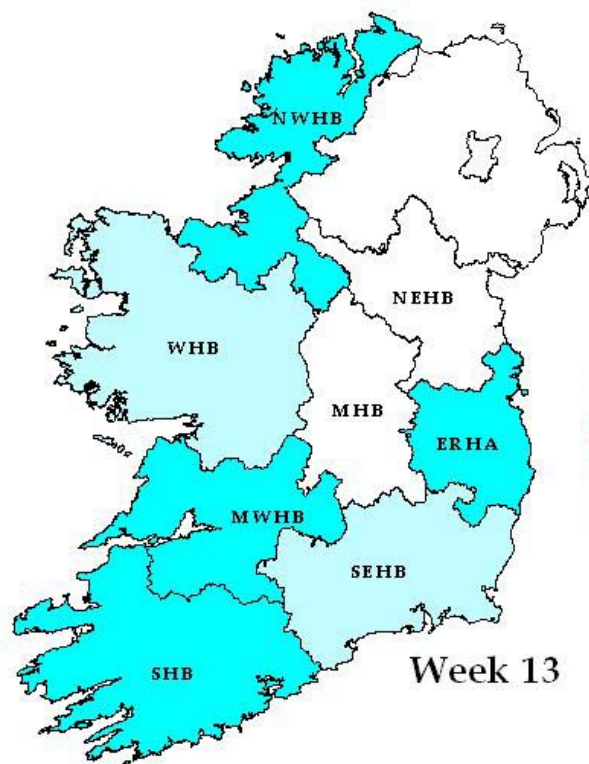
Table 1: Sentinel influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2001/2002

<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
Total	233	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. During weeks 13 and 14, influenza activity remained at low levels. Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory confirmed cases of influenza, hospital admissions data, and/or school absenteeism levels.

Influenza Activity - Weeks 13 and 14



Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland

The next influenza surveillance report for Northern Ireland will be produced during week 16.

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 14, low or declining levels of influenza activity were reported across Europe. No influenza activity was reported in Poland, Portugal, and Spain. The majority of countries participating in the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) reported sporadic activity. Germany and Norway reported regional influenza activity. Influenza activity was above the national baseline level in the North and West of Norway. In Germany it was higher in the East and Northeast. During week 14, the number of sentinel specimens that tested positive for influenza A or B in Europe declined to 18%. Influenza A was the dominant virus across Europe, however in Belgium, France, Italy and Slovenia influenza B was more common.

Influenza Activity in Canada

In Canada, the number of reported outbreaks is declining. Sentinel physicians reported 24 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits, which is the expected rate for the time of year. Regions of Nova Scotia reported widespread influenza activity and localised activity was reported in regions of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. Health Canada received 1697 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: 307 were positive for influenza and 16 were positive for influenza B.

Influenza Activity in the United States

During week 14, the overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for ILI was 1.4%, which is below the national baseline. The proportion of deaths attributed to pneumonia and influenza was also below the epidemic threshold for week 14. Eight state and territorial health departments reported regional activity, 33 reported sporadic activity, and 8 reported no influenza activity. The WHO and NREVSS laboratories reported 123 (11.7%) positive specimens for influenza virus. Three influenza A (H3N2), 32 influenza A (unsubtyped) and 88 influenza B viruses were detected during week 14.

Influenza Activity Worldwide

No influenza activity was reported in Argentina and Chile during week 14. Sporadic activity was reported in Iceland, Hong Kong and the Russian Federation. In Hong Kong, influenza A (H3N2) was predominating. Levels of ILI were low in the Russian Federation.

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