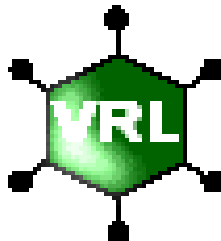


# Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



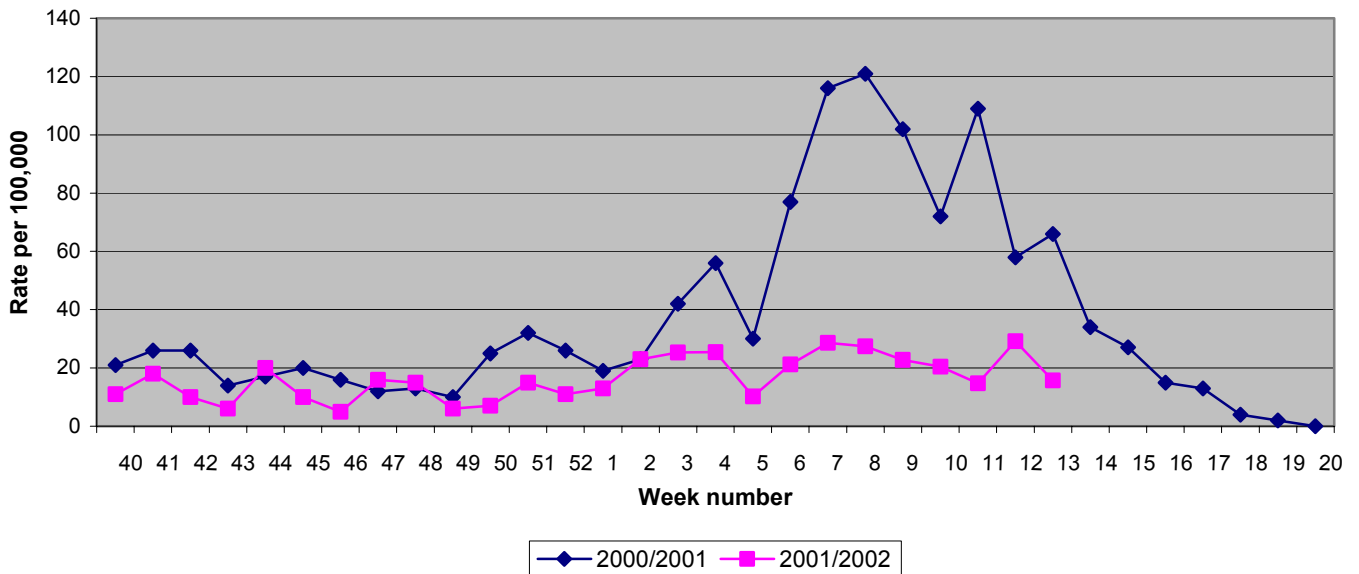
**Week 13 2002**

**Report produced: 04/04/2002**

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

### Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 13, the week ending the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2002, the GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) has decreased compared with the level reported last week. Six ILI cases were reported from sentinel general practices, corresponding to a consultation rate of 16 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 20 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 597 respiratory specimens from non-sentinel specimens (hospitals and GPs) since the start of the influenza season. During week 13, two specimens were positive for influenza A bringing the total influenza cases detected from non-sentinel specimens to three. Six specimens were positive for RSV, bringing the total RSV cases detected this season to 190. To date, no influenza B has been detected from non-sentinel specimens.

During week 13, 6 swabs were received from sentinel GPs and three of these were positive for influenza A (unsubtyped). In an update to week 12, the VRL have reported the first positive specimen of influenza B for this season. To date, the VRL have received 234 swabs from sentinel GPs. Twenty-seven percent of the swabs were positive for influenza virus: 18 were positive for influenza A (unsubtyped), two were positive for influenza A (H1N1), 9 were positive for influenza A (H1N2), 33 were positive for influenza A (H3N2) and one was positive for influenza B.

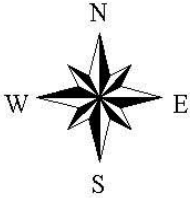
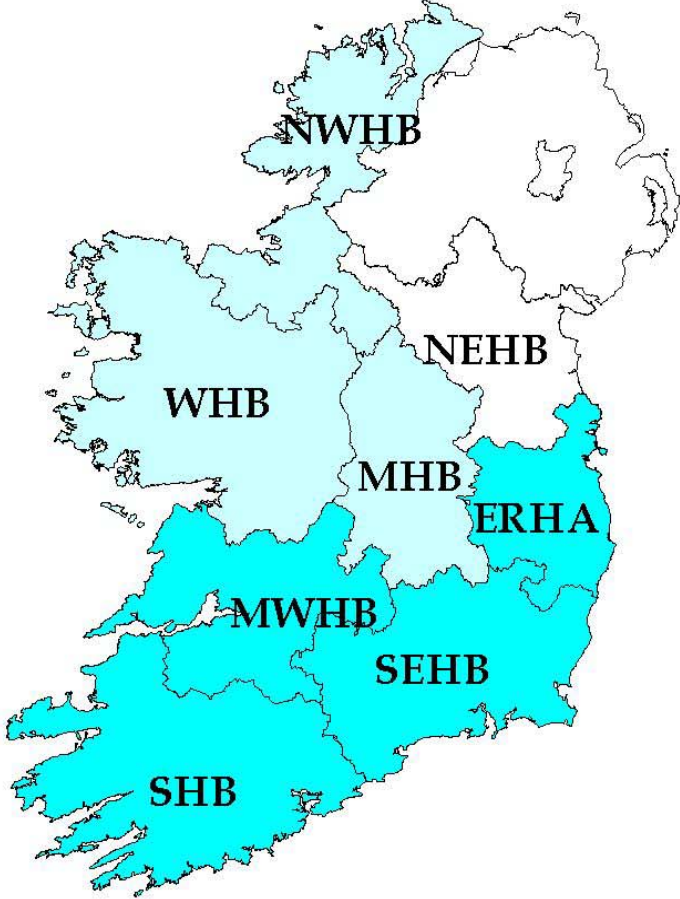
**Table 1: Sentinel influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2001/2002**

<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%	4	0	2	1	0
11	8	4	50%	4	0	0	0	0
12	11	5	46%	6	0	0	0	1
13	6	3	50%	3	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1</b>

**Influenza Activity by Health Board/Authority**

Influenza activity for week 12 (week ending the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2002) was reported 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. During week 12, 3 health boards reported no influenza activity and 4 reported sporadic influenza activity.

# Influenza Activity - Week 12



### **Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland**

GP consultation rates for flu and flu-like illness have continued to fall in recent weeks. The rates for both were 0.9 and 29.1 cases/100,000 population respectively in week 11 and 3.0 and 21.8 cases/100,000 respectively in week 12. Two swabs from routine laboratory testing were positive for influenza virus antigens: one H3 during week 11 and one H1 during week 12.

### **Influenza Activity in England, Scotland and Wales**

Following last week's report (20th March), the PHLS has stopped reporting influenza activity in the UK for the 2001/2002 season. There was no further data reported from Scotland.

### **Influenza Activity in Europe**

During week 12, the spread and intensity of influenza activity has decreased or remained stable in most countries. Activity remained high in Norway and Germany while elsewhere the spread ranged from sporadic to regional. The percentage of sentinel swabs reported positive for influenza decreased from 38% in week 11 to 31.5% in week 12. Influenza A virus continued to be the dominant type across most of Europe, but with influenza B virus still predominating in Belgium, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and, additionally this week, France.

### **Influenza Activity in Canada**

During week 12, sentinel physicians reported 18 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits, which is the expected rate for the time of year. Health Canada received 2211 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: 379 (17%) were positive for influenza A and 54 (2%) were positive for influenza B. The National Microbiology Laboratory antigenically characterised 319 influenza isolates to date this season: 226 were A (H3N2), six were A (H1), four were B/Sichuan/379/99-like and 83 were B/Hong Kong/22/01-like viruses. Of the six A(H1) strains, five were characterised antigenically to be the new influenza A (H1N2) strain. Widespread activity was reported in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan with localised activity reported in regions of seven other provinces.

### **Influenza Activity in the United States**

The overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians during week 12 was 1.7%, above the national baseline. Three state and territorial health departments reported widespread activity, 16 reported regional activity, 27 reported sporadic activity and 2 reported no influenza activity. Thirty-five influenza A (H3N2), 119 influenza A (unsubtyped) and 57 influenza B viruses were identified among 1,058 specimens tested during week 12.

### **Influenza Activity Worldwide**

During week 12, influenza activity was sporadic in Hong Kong, the Russian Federation and Belarus. Local outbreaks were reported in Australia and Israel, regional outbreaks in Finland and widespread outbreaks in Latvia and Croatia.