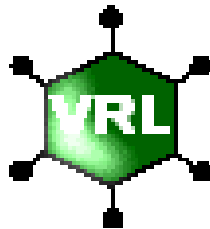


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 11 2002

Report produced: 21/03/2002

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

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 11, the week ending the 17th of March 2002, the GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) has decreased. Six ILI cases were reported from sentinel general practices, corresponding to a consultation rate of 13 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 21 sentinel GPs, with 4 reporting ILI cases.

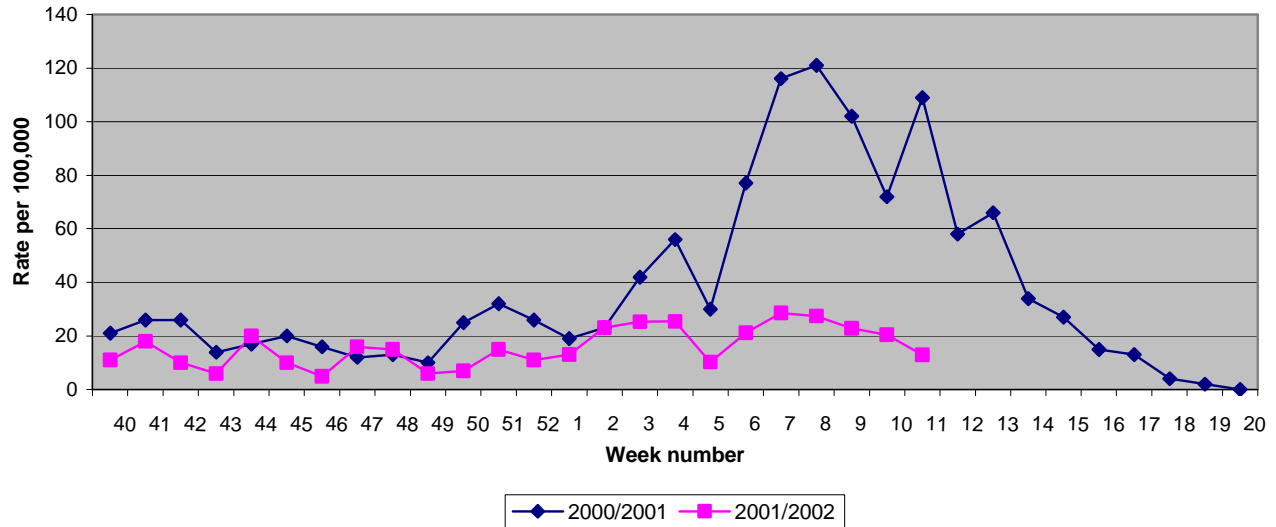


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

Virological Data from the Virus Reference Laboratory (VRL)

The VRL have tested 561 respiratory specimens from non-sentinel specimens (hospitals and GPs), since the start of the influenza season. The only positive specimen for influenza from non-sentinel sources was detected during week 9. During week 11, 2 specimens were positive for RSV, bringing the total RSV cases detected this season to 179. There was also one positive specimen for adenovirus during week 11.

During week 11, 8 swabs were received from sentinel GPs, 2 of these were positive for influenza A (unsubtyped). Data from week 6 to week 11 has been updated (table 1). To date this season, the VRL have received 205 swabs from sentinel GPs. Twenty-five percent of the swabs were positive for influenza virus; 7 were positive for influenza A (unsubtyped), 2 were positive for influenza A (H1N1), 9 were positive for influenza A (H1N2), and 33 were positive for influenza A (H3N2). There have been no laboratory confirmed cases of influenza B in Ireland this season. The nine positive influenza A (H1N2) viruses were from weeks 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10. Eight of these isolates were identified in adolescents' aged 13 to 18, and one was in a 44 year old. No unusual clinical illnesses have been associated with this new influenza strain.

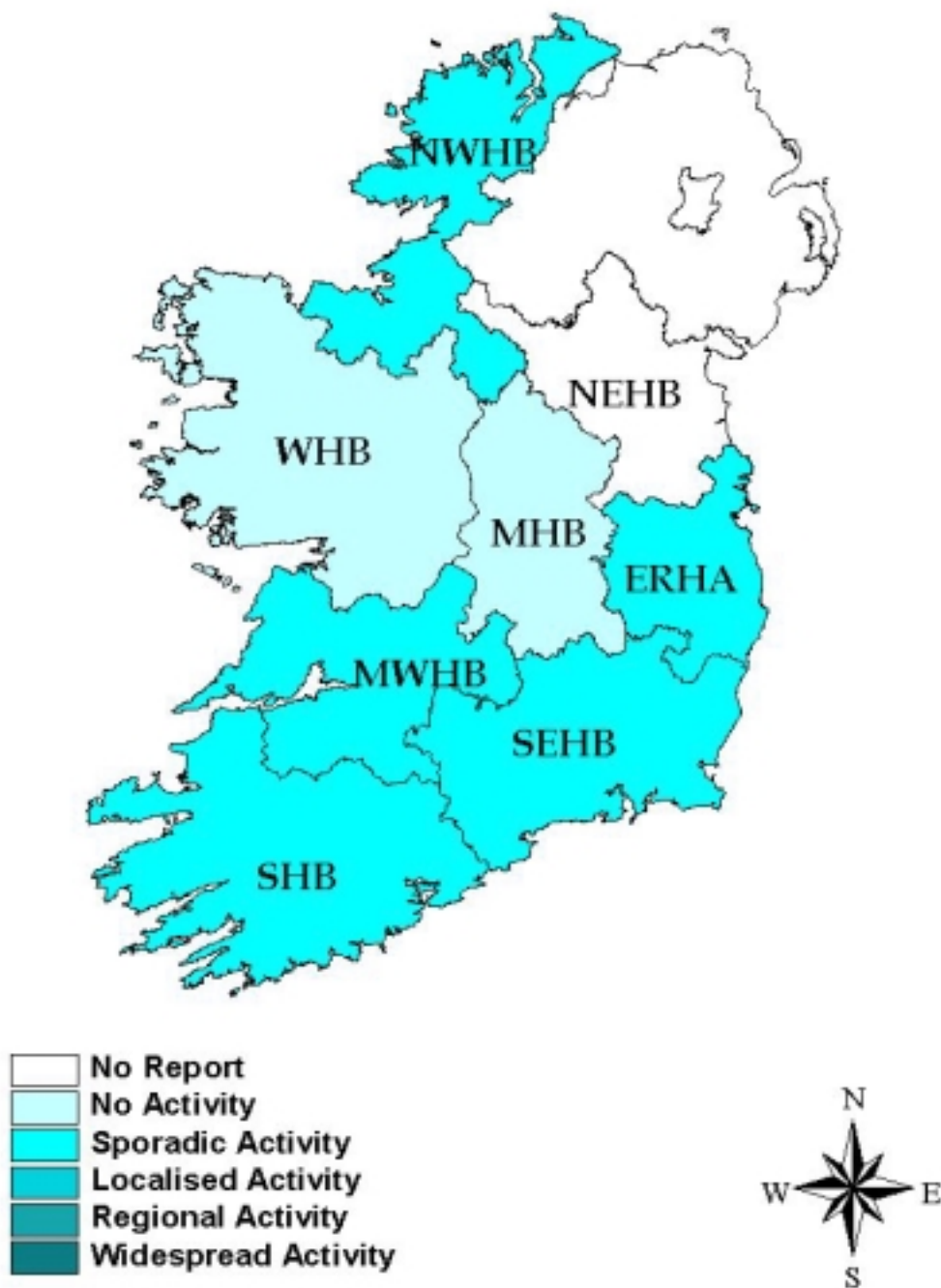
Table 1: Sentinel influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2001/2002

<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	2	25%	2	0	0	0	0
Total	205	51	25%	7	2	9	33	0

Influenza Activity by Health Board/Authority

Influenza activity for week 10 (week ending the 10th 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 10, 5 health boards reported sporadic influenza activity and 2 reported no influenza activity.

Influenza Activity - Week 10



Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland

The GP consultation rate for influenza and ILI decreased from 34.4 per 100,000 in week 10 to 22 per 100,000 in week 11. No sentinel swabs were positive for influenza virus. One positive influenza A (unsubtyped) virus was identified from a hospitalised child.

Influenza Activity in England, Scotland and Wales

The GP consultation rate for influenza and ILI decreased in England and Scotland, to 15 per 100,000 and 18 per 100,000, respectively. In Wales, the GP consultation rate for influenza and ILI remained stable, at 2 per 100,000 population. During week 11, the ERNVL detected 12 influenza A (H1) and 17 influenza A (H3N2) viruses. Laboratory reports of influenza and RSV indicate that activity has decreased to low levels.

Influenza Activity in Europe

Clinical morbidity rates in Europe were generally declining or stable in week 10 2002. However, increasing rates were reported in Germany, Poland, Romania, and Sweden. Nine European networks reported influenza A as the dominant type, mainly the H3N2 type. Five European networks reported influenza B as the dominant type.

Influenza Activity in Canada

In Canada during week 10, localised influenza activity was reported in 9 provinces. Sentinel physicians reported 31 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits. Health Canada received 2180 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: 343 were positive for influenza A and 156 were positive for influenza B. Influenza B/Hong Kong/22/01 like viruses identified in Ontario this season are antigenically different from the current vaccine strains and the current vaccine is expected to provide limited cross-protection against these viruses. All other influenza viruses that have been antigenically characterised this season are similar to the current vaccine.

Influenza Activity in the United States

During week 10, the overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians for ILI was 2.3%, which is above the national baseline. Twelve state and territorial health departments reported widespread influenza activity, 27 reported regional activity, 10 reported sporadic activity and 1 reported no influenza activity. During week 10, the WHO and NREVSS laboratories identified 117 influenza A (H3N2), 1 influenza A (H1N1), 310 influenza A (unsubtyped) and 20 influenza B viruses.

Influenza Activity Worldwide

During week 10, sporadic influenza activity was reported in Hong Kong and Mexico. In Hong Kong, influenza A and B continue to be isolated, with influenza A (H3N2) predominating. Localised influenza activity was reported in Israel.

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