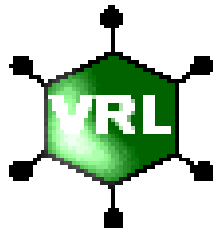


# Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



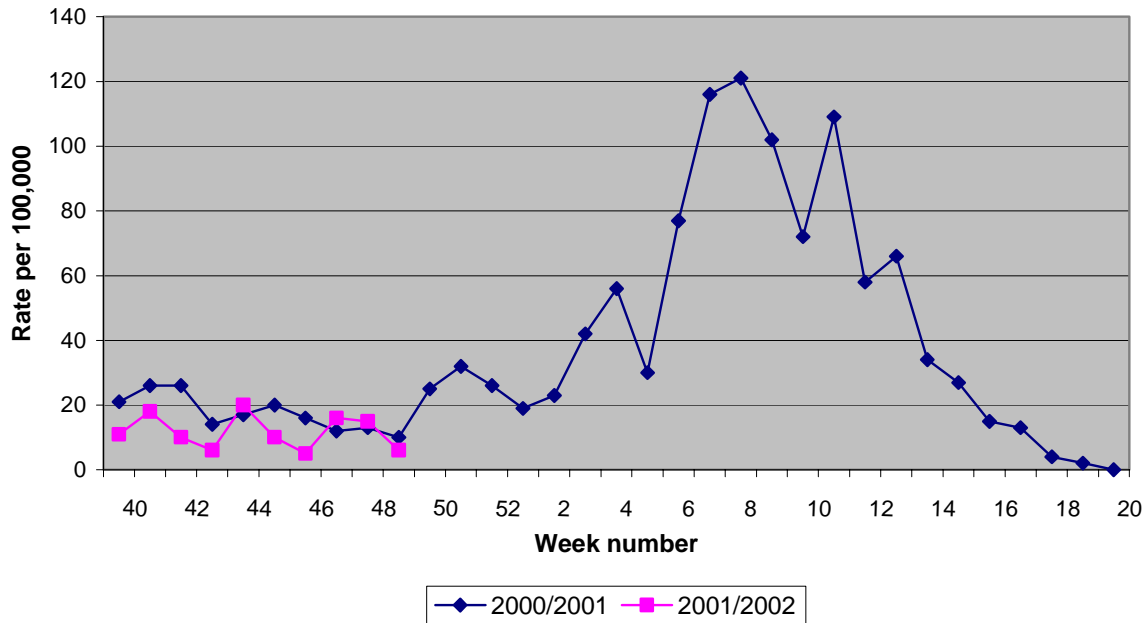
**Week 49**

**Report produced: 13/12/2001**

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

## Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 49, week ending the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2001, 4 cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) were reported from sentinel general practices. This corresponds to a consultation rate of 6 per 100,000 population. Only 4 sentinel GPs reported ILI cases during week 49. The consultation rate for week 48 has been updated to 15 per 100,000.



**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 49, the VRL received 5 swabs from sentinel GPs, none were positive for influenza virus. Since the start of the 2001/2002 influenza season, the VRL has received 49 swabs from sentinel GPs; influenza virus has not been detected in any of these swabs (table 1).

Since October 1<sup>st</sup> 2001 (week 40), the VRL have tested 141 respiratory swabs from non-sentinel sources (hospitals and GPs). Thirteen specimens were positive for RSV, 1 was positive for adenovirus, and 1 was positive for parainfluenza virus type 3. No influenza has been detected in these specimens to date.

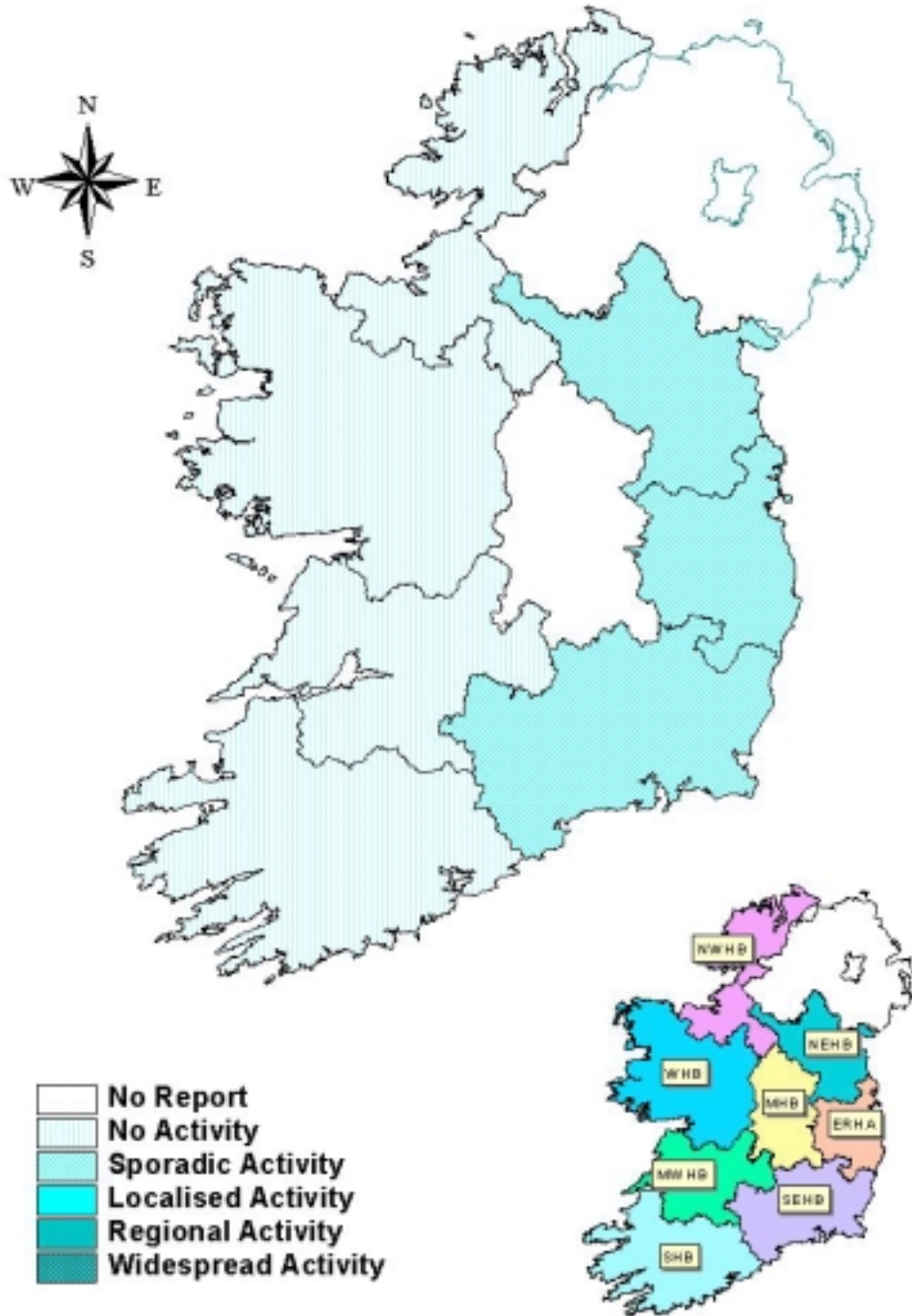
**Table 1: Influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2001/2002**

| <i>Week number</i> | <i>Number of swabs</i> | <i>Percentage Positive</i> | <i>Influenza A (unsubtyped)</i> | <i>Influenza A (H1N1)</i> | <i>Influenza A (H3N2)</i> | <i>Influenza B</i> |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 40                 | 5                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 41                 | 4                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 42                 | 4                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 43                 | 2                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 44                 | 2                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 45                 | 6                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 46                 | 3                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 47                 | 10                     | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 48                 | 8                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |
| 49                 | 5                      | 0%                         |                                 |                           |                           |                    |

**Influenza Activity by Health Board/Authority**

Influenza activity for week 48 (week ending the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2001) was reported from the Departments of Public Health. Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory confirmed cases of influenza, school absenteeism levels and hospital admissions data. Three health boards/authority reported sporadic activity and 4 reported no activity.

# Influenza Activity - Week 48



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

During week 48, in Northern Ireland, the consultation rates for influenza and ILI were 0 and 10.6 per 100,000 population, respectively. Consultation rates increased slightly in week 49, with rates of 1.9 and 15.1 for influenza and ILI, respectively. There have been no laboratory confirmed cases of influenza in Northern Ireland since the beginning of the influenza season.

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

In England during week 48, GP consultations for influenza and ILI have increased to a rate of 19 per 100,000. In Scotland and Wales, the consultation rates have also increased to 22 per 100,000 and 3 per 100,000, respectively, during week 48. The rates for England, Scotland and Wales remain well below the upper level set for baseline activity. Two hospital derived isolates of influenza A (H3N2) were reported in week 48. Further characterisation has shown these to be antigenically related to the influenza A (H3N2) Panama-like strain, one of the strains included in this seasons vaccine.

### **Influenza Activity in Europe**

During week 48, influenza activity remained at low levels in Europe. Twelve European networks reported no influenza activity, whilst France and Slovenia reported sporadic activity to the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme. France reported its first sentinel case of influenza A (H3N2) and Romania confirmed its first influenza case of the season, influenza A (H1N1) virus. Influenza activity levels remain well below epidemic thresholds in Europe, however France and Slovakia reported increased levels of influenza morbidity during week 48.

### **Influenza Activity in Canada**

In Canada during week 48, 38 regions reported no influenza activity and 3 regions reported sporadic activity. Sentinel physicians reported 14 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits. The CIDPC received 866 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: 3 were positive for influenza.

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

The proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians was 1.6% during week 48. One state and territorial health department reported widespread influenza activity, one reported regional activity, 23 reported sporadic activity and 18 reported no influenza activity. The WHO and NREVSS laboratories reported 805 specimens tested for influenza viruses; three influenza A (H3N2) viruses were identified. The CDC antigenically characterised 20 influenza A (H3N2) viruses, 2 influenza A (H1N1) viruses and 1 influenza B virus in September and October. All viruses were similar to the vaccine strains A/Panama/2007/99 (H3N2), A/New Caledonia/20/99 (H1N1), and B/Sichuan/379/99, respectively.

### **Influenza Activity Worldwide**

Greece, Iceland, the Slovak Republic and Mexico all reported no influenza activity during week 48. Sporadic activity was reported in Hong Kong, where one influenza A (H1N1), one influenza A (H3N2) and 2 influenza B viruses were identified in week 48.