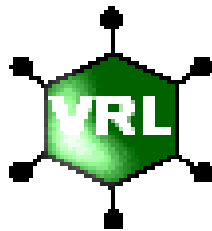


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 45

Report produced: 14th November 2001

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

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 45, week ending the 11th of November 2001, 4 influenza-like illness (ILI) cases were reported by sentinel general practices. This corresponds to a GP consultation rate for ILI of 8 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 25 sentinel general practices, with only 3 reporting ILI cases.

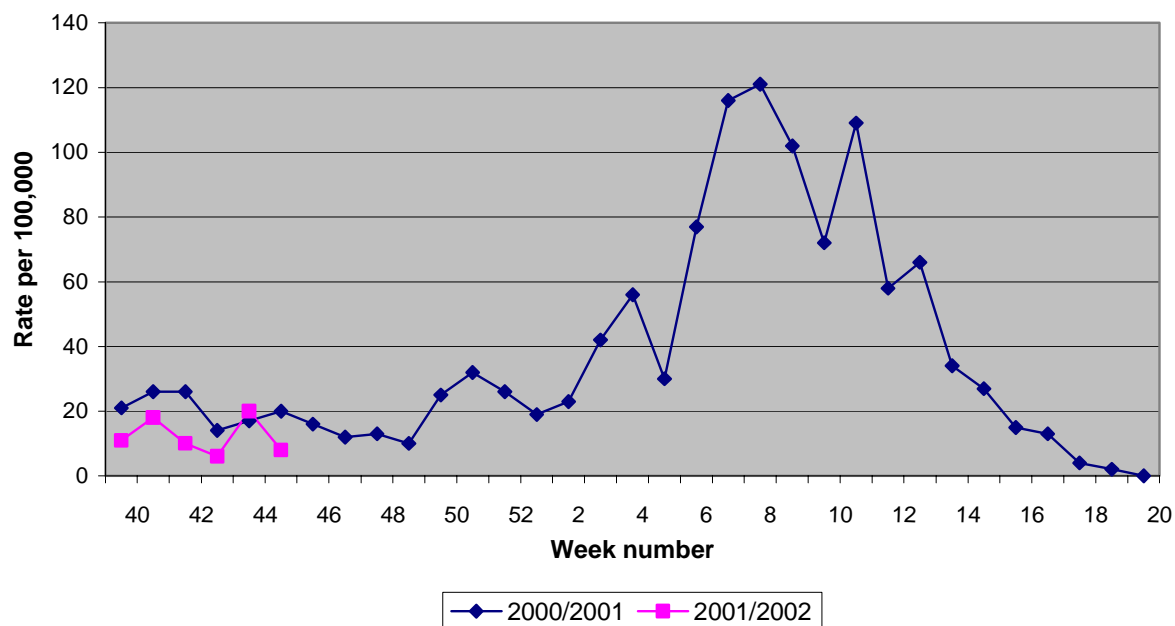


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

Virological Data from the Virus Reference Laboratory (VRL)

During week 45, the VRL received 6 swabs from sentinel general practices. None of these were positive for influenza virus. Since the beginning of the 2001/2002 influenza season, there have been no laboratory confirmed cases of influenza through the sentinel surveillance system.

Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales

In Northern Ireland, the consultation rate for combined influenza and ILI has decreased to a rate of 12 per 100,000 during week 44. In England, Scotland and Wales, the GP consultation rates for ILI remains well below the baseline activity levels. In England, the GP consultation rate for ILI has increased to a rate of 13 per 100,000 during week 44. In Wales, the GP consultation rate remained little changed with a rate of 1 per 100,000. During the same week, the consultation rate in Scotland was 17 per 100,000. No influenza isolates have been detected in specimens submitted to the ERNVL since week 40, 2001.

Influenza Activity in Europe

During week 44, the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) reported low levels of influenza activity. Ten networks reported “no influenza activity” to EISS. The Swiss network has reported a second influenza positive case (their National Reference Laboratory are in the process of confirming the influenza virus type). There is no dominant influenza virus type currently circulating in Europe.

Influenza Activity in Canada

In Canada, during week 44, 49 regions reported no influenza activity and 4 regions reported sporadic activity. Sentinel general practices reported 16 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits. During the same period, the Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control reported 2 influenza A isolates. There has been one reported outbreak at a long-term care facility during week 42.

Influenza Activity in the United States

The proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians during week 44 was 1.4%, which is less than the US national baseline of 1.9%. Two state and territorial health departments reported regional influenza activity, 15 reported sporadic influenza activity and 32 reported no influenza activity. During week 44, the WHO and NREVSS laboratories reported 513 specimens tested for influenza viruses; 3 influenza A isolates were identified. CDC has antigenically characterised 15 influenza viruses during September and October 2001. There were 12 influenza A (H3N2) viruses, 2 influenza A (H1N1) viruses, and 1 influenza B virus. 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

During week 44, no influenza activity was reported in the Slovak Republic, Latvia, Hungary, Poland, Belgium, France, Russia and the UK. Sporadic influenza activity was reported in Argentina, Hong Kong and Belarus. In Argentina, 7 influenza A (unsubtyped) and 2 influenza B viruses were isolated. In Hong Kong, 2 influenza viruses were isolated; influenza A (H1N1) and influenza B. Sporadic cases of influenza A were also reported in Belarus, where influenza activity is still below epidemic levels.