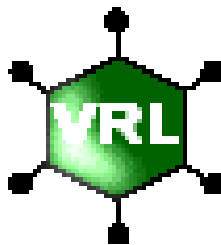


# Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



**Week 44 2002**

**Report produced: 06/11/2002**

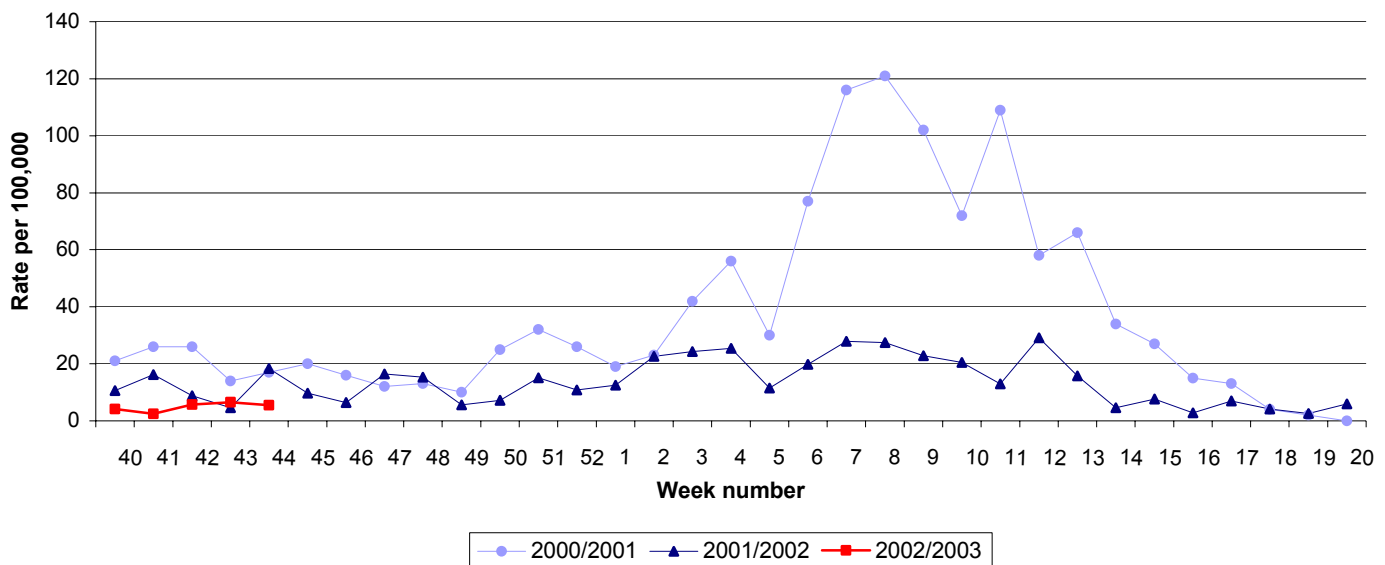
**This report is produced in collaboration with the Departments of Public Health**

### Summary

To date, no laboratory confirmed cases of influenza have been identified during the 2002/2003-influenza season. There has been an increase in the number of positive RSV specimens from non-sentinel sources this season compared to the 2001/2002-influenza season.

### Clinical data from sentinel GPs

During week 44 (week ending the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2002), 4 influenza-like illness (ILI) cases were reported from sentinel general practices, corresponding to an ILI consultation rate of 5.5 per 100,000 population (figure 1). Twenty-six (78.8 %) of the 33 sentinel general practices reported during week 44, 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, 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 influenza seasons.

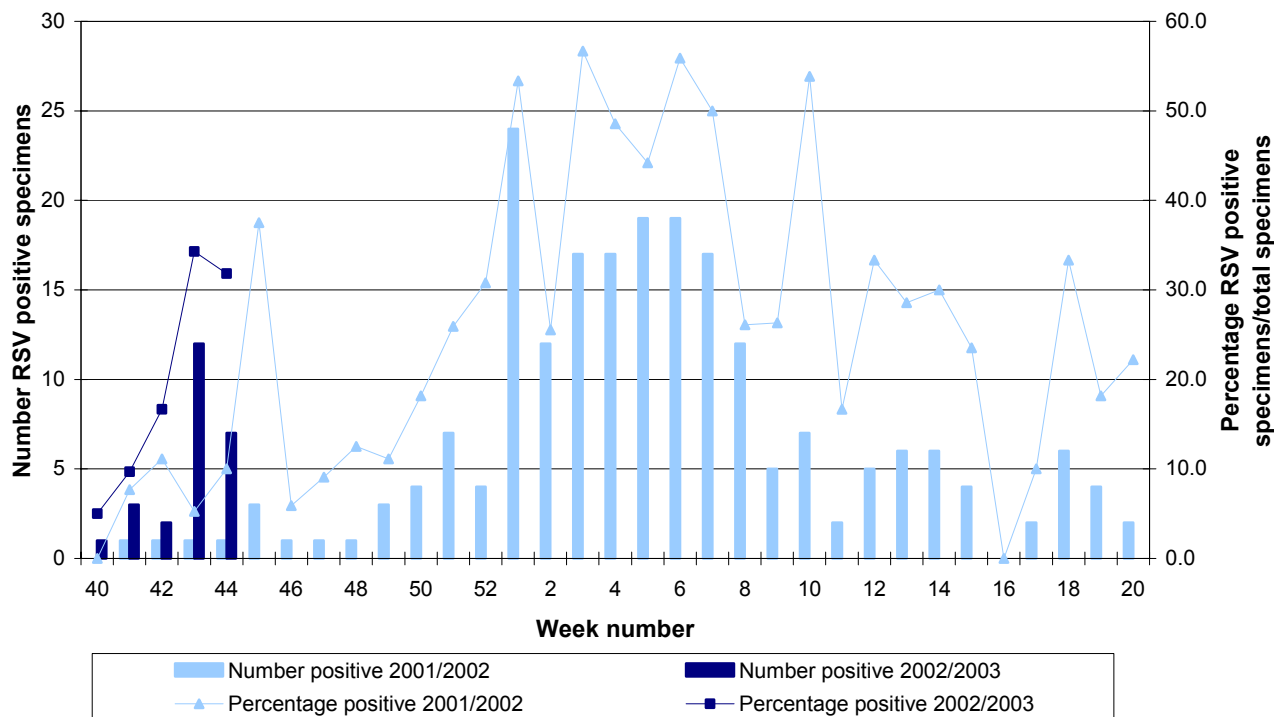
### Virological data

The National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL) received 3 swabs from sentinel GPs during week 44; all 3 swabs were negative for influenza virus (table 1). There have been no positive detections of influenza virus this season.

The NVRL also tested 22 specimens from non-sentinel sources (GPs and hospitals) during week 44. Seven (31.8%) of these were positive for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV; figure 2); this is a decrease from week 43 when 12 (34.3%) respiratory specimens were positive for RSV.

**Table 1: Sentinel influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2002/2003**

Week number	Total swabs	Positive swabs	Percentage positive	A (unsubtyped)	A (H1N1)	A (H1N2)	A (H3N2)	B
40	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
41	1	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
42	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
43	3	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
44	3	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>



**Figure 2:** Number and percentage of non-sentinel RSV positive specimens detected during the 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 influenza seasons.

### **Influenza activity by health board/authority**

Influenza activity is reported on a weekly basis from the Departments of Public Health. Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory confirmed cases of influenza, sentinel hospital admissions data, and/or sentinel school absenteeism data. To date, this season, there have been no indications of influenza activity in any of the health boards.

### **Influenza activity in Northern Ireland**

During week 44 in Northern Ireland, 22 of the 24 sentinel GPs reported, covering 8.0% of the population. The combined influenza and ILI rate per 100,000 decreased from 38.7 in week 43 to 21.5 in week 44. No swabs were submitted from sentinel GPs during week 44 and there were no positive swabs identified from non-sentinel or routine laboratory testing.

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

No data was available for week 44 at the time of producing this report. During week 43, indicators of ILI continued to remain within the range of baseline activity in England, Scotland and Wales. In England, the GP consultation rate for ILI changed little from 11.7 per 100,000 in week 42 to 10.7 per 100,000 in week 43. In Wales and Scotland, the ILI consultation rate remained low during week 43 at 0.47 and 17 per 100,000, respectively. There has been one positive detection of influenza A (H1) by PCR from a hospital source by the ERNVL Reference Laboratory in week 43. No other positive detections have been made from any specimens referred to ERNVL, NHS or PHLS laboratories. RSV numbers are low as expected for this time of year.

### **Influenza activity in Europe**

During weeks 43, 16 networks reporting to the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) reported no influenza activity. Although influenza activity is at low levels there are indications that influenza A and B are circulating in Europe. In Germany, 3 influenza B viruses were detected and in England, one influenza A (H1) virus has been detected during week 43.

### **Influenza activity in Canada**

In Canada, influenza activity remains at low levels. During week 43, 12 provinces reported no influenza activity. Sentinel GPs reported 21 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits, which is within the expected rate for the time of year. Health Canada received 594 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: none were positive for influenza. Other respiratory viruses circulating in the Canadian population have increased slightly: RSV (3.7% of tests positive), parainfluenza viruses (6.2% of tests positive) and adenovirus (1.0% of tests positive).

### **Influenza activity in the United States**

During week 43, the overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel providers was 1.0%, which is less than the national baseline of 1.9%. The WHO and NREVSS laboratories tested 668 specimens for influenza viruses and 3 were positive for influenza A (H1N1). Two state and territorial health departments reported regional influenza activity, 8 reported sporadic activity and 40 reported no influenza activity.

### **Influenza activity Worldwide**

Australia reported no influenza activity during week 43. Sporadic activity was reported in Brazil, Argentina, Hong Kong, Madagascar and Chile in week 43. In Brazil and Madagascar the sporadic activity was associated with influenza B. In Argentina, 7 A (unsubtyped) and 2 A (H1N1) influenza viruses were detected during week 43. In Hong Kong, one A (unsubtyped), 2 A (H3N2) and 5 B influenza viruses were detected. In Chile sporadic activity was associated with influenza A and B.

**This report was produced by Dr Lisa Domegan, NDSC.**