

Influenza Surveillance in Ireland – Summary Report

Influenza Weeks 21 - 23 2011 (23rd May – 12th June 2011)



During the summer period, a short summary report of influenza activity will be published every fortnight. In the event of influenza activity increasing a full report will be published on a weekly basis.

Summary

- All indicators of influenza activity in Ireland continue to remain at low levels.
- The sentinel GP influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rates remained low and below baseline levels during weeks 21-23 2011.
 - The ILI consultation rate was 2.7 per 100,000 population in week 21 2011, 2.8 per 100,000 population in week 22 2011 and 2.7 per 100,000 population in week 23 2011.
 - ILI rates in all age groups were at low levels
- The proportion of influenza-related calls to GP Out-of-Hours services remained at low levels during weeks 21 - 23 2011.
- No positive influenza specimens were detected by the National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL) from sentinel or non-sentinel sources during weeks 21 - 23 2011.
- The virus strains circulating during the 2010/2011 season were well matched to the current influenza vaccine.
- No confirmed influenza cases were admitted to hospital or ICU during weeks 21 - 23 2011.
- Since week 40 2010, 947 confirmed influenza cases have been hospitalised, 122 cases have been admitted to ICU and 34 deaths have been reported to HPSC.
- No new general outbreaks of influenza/ILI have been reported since week 5 2011. As of 16th June 2011, 14 influenza/ILI outbreaks have been reported to HPSC this season.
- During weeks 21 - 23 2011, the NVRL tested 215 sentinel and non-sentinel respiratory specimens. Four non-sentinel specimens were positive for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), two were positive for Adenovirus, two were positive for parainfluenza virus (PIV-1) type 1 and eleven were positive for PIV-3.
- As of 3rd June 2011, the influenza season has finished in the temperate countries of the northern hemisphere with only sporadic influenza virus detections occurring. Transmission in tropical countries of the Americas and sub-Saharan Africa has continued to decline. An unconfirmed media account has reported that new cases of influenza A (H1N1 2009) were detected in Bolivia in late May along with an increase in severe respiratory infections. South Africa has reported an increase in influenza virus detections, primarily influenza A (H1N1 2009), consistent with the start of their winter influenza season. Although, Australia had previously noted unusual out-of-season influenza virus transmission, rates of detection have recently decreased and levels of ILI have remained low in the majority of surveillance systems reporting. Seasonal transmission does not appear to have started in other temperate countries of the southern hemisphere. <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/en/>

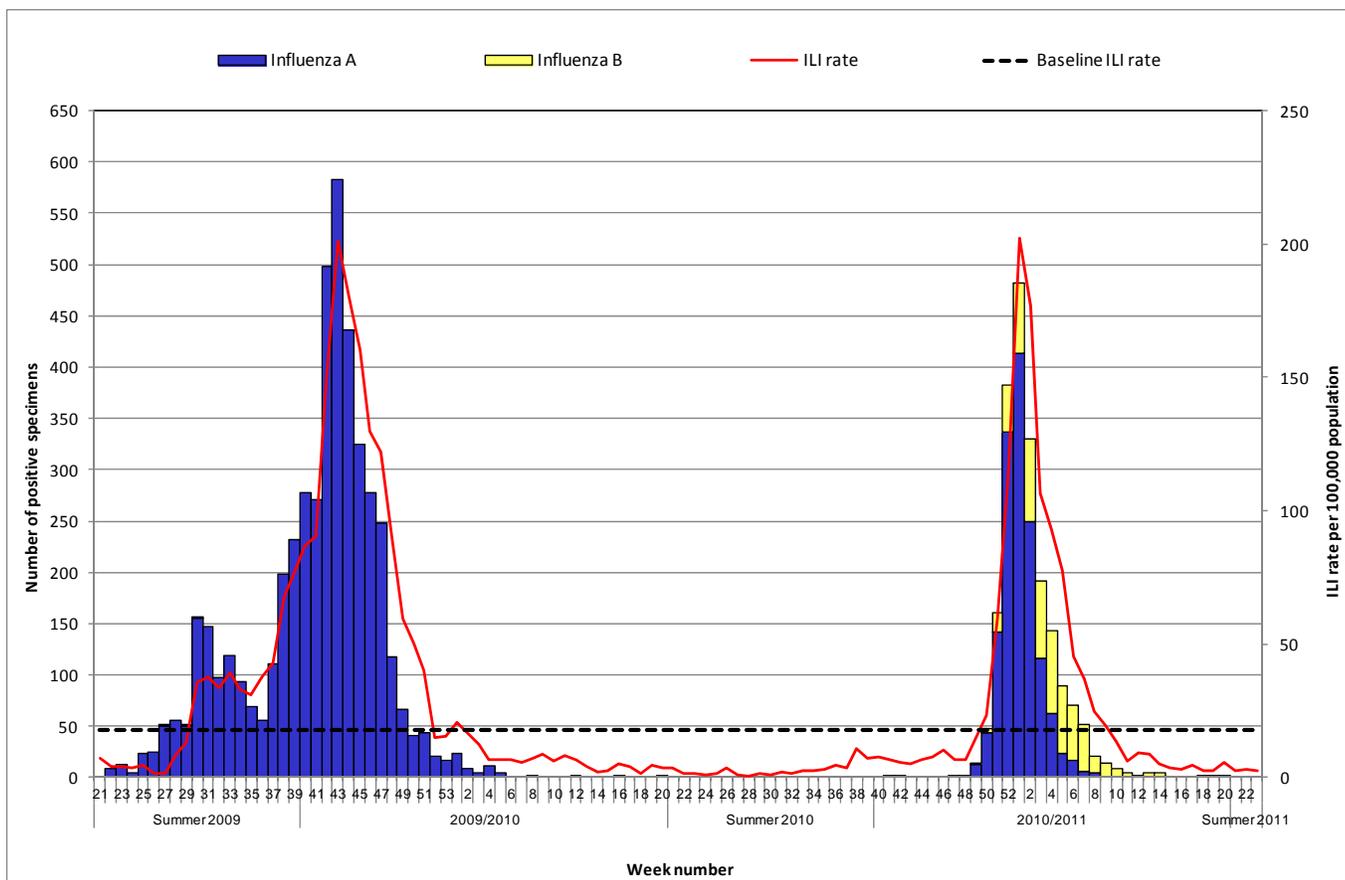


Figure 1. ILI sentinel GP consultation rates per 100,000 population, baseline ILI threshold rate, and number of positive influenza A and B specimens tested by the NVRL, by influenza week and season.

Source: Clinical ILI data from ICGP and virological data from the NVRL^{**†}

Further information on influenza in Ireland and internationally can be found on the following websites:

- Ireland www.hpsc.ie
- Northern Ireland <http://www.cdscni.org.uk/>
- UK – HPA <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/Influenza/>
- Europe – ECDC <http://ecdc.europa.eu/>
- Europe – EISN <http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/EISN/Pages/home.aspx>

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* Please note that in addition to the NVRL, Cork University Hospital (CUH) and Galway University Hospital(s) (GUH) also tested for influenza A (H1N1 2009) during the pandemic period.

† Sentinel GP consultations and virological data are updated on an ongoing basis, ILI rates and virological data are adjusted accordingly.