

Influenza Surveillance in Ireland – Summer Report

Weeks 36-39 2022 (5th September – 2nd October 2022)



Summary

All indicators of influenza activity were below baseline or at low levels in Ireland during weeks 36-39 2022 (5th September-2nd October 2022). Sporadic influenza cases including influenza A(H3), A(H1)pdm09 and influenza B were all notified during this time period. **Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) notifications increased during weeks 36-39 2022; this may be an indicator of an early RSV season similar to 2021.** HPSC will continue to actively monitor influenza, RSV and other respiratory virus activity. Weekly influenza surveillance reporting resumes from 13th October 2022.

- **Influenza-like illness (ILI):** The sentinel GP influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rate remained low and below baseline levels during week 39 2022 at 8.7/100,000 and ranged from 3/100,000 to 10.5/100,000 population during weeks 36-39 2022. The sentinel GP ILI consultation rate remained below the Irish baseline threshold level (18.1/100,000 population) for weeks 36 - 39 2022. Sentinel GP ILI consultation rates were above age specific thresholds for those aged ≥65 years during week 38 2022 and below the baseline levels for all age groups during weeks 36, 37 and 39 2022. Sentinel GP ILI consultations are currently reflecting the circulation of SARS-CoV-2 and other respiratory viruses (ORVs).
- **GP Out of Hours:** The proportion of self-reported 'flu' calls to GP Out-of-Hours services remained low and below baseline levels (2.3%) during weeks 36-39 2022, ranging from 0.6% to 1.1%. The proportion of cough calls was above baseline levels (10.8%) during weeks 36-39 2022 ranging from 36.9% to 44.7%.
- **National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL):** The influenza positivity rate reported by the NVRL for sentinel GP ILI and non-sentinel respiratory specimens tested was low, ranging from 0% - 5.7%, during weeks 36-39 2022. For weeks 21-39 2022, of 155 sentinel GP ILI specimens and 2355 non-sentinel respiratory specimens tested, 36 (1.4%) were positive for influenza: 21 A(H3), 12 A(H1)pdm09, 2 A (not subtyped) and 1 influenza B.
- RSV (n=28), Rhinovirus/enterovirus (n=128), adenovirus (n=8), parainfluenza 3 virus (n=6) and ORV positive detections were reported from the NVRL during weeks 36-39 2022.
- **Influenza and RSV notifications:** 121 laboratory confirmed influenza cases - 102 A (not subtyped), 11 A(H3), 7 A(H1)pdm09 and 1 type (not reported) were notified during weeks 36-39 2022. 289 RSV cases were notified during weeks 36-39 2022, of which 114 were notified during week 39 2022; 65% (n=188/289) in the 0-4-year age group). Weekly notifications are reported in <https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/weeklyidreports/>
- **Hospitalisations:** 34 laboratory confirmed influenza hospitalised cases were notified during weeks 36-39 2022: 29 influenza A (not subtyped), 3 A(H3) and 2 A(H1)pdm09. 133 laboratory confirmed RSV hospitalised cases were notified during weeks 36-39 2022; 73% (n=97/133) were in 0-4-year age group.
- **Critical care admissions:** Two laboratory confirmed influenza cases (1 A(H1)pdm09 and 1 A (not subtyped)) were admitted to critical care units and reported to HPSC during weeks 36-39 2022.
- **Mortality:** One death occurred and was reported to HPSC in a notified influenza A(H1)pdm09 case during week 37 2022. No excess all-cause mortality was reported during weeks 36-38 2022; data are reported with a one-week time lag.
- **Outbreaks:** Two RSV outbreaks were notified to HPSC, one in an acute hospital setting (week 37 2022) and one in a private house (week 38 2022). One influenza outbreak was notified (week 39 2022) in an acute hospital setting and one acute respiratory infection (ARI) outbreak in a nursing home (week 38 2022).
- **International:** Overall Influenza activity has increased in the European region though remains at inter-seasonal levels (latest WHO publication 03/10/2022). In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, overall influenza activity decreased in recent weeks.

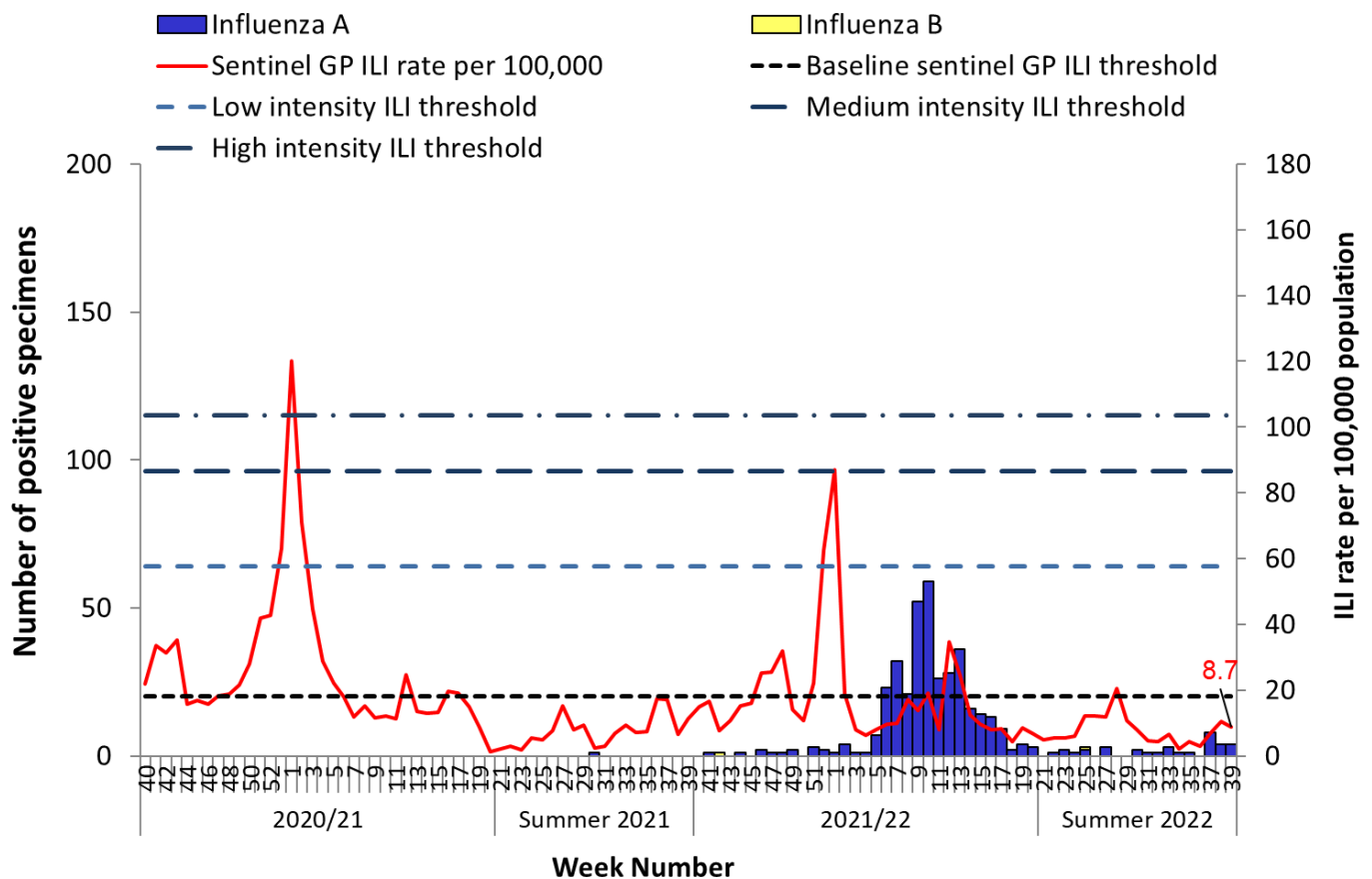


Figure 1: Sentinel GP Influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rates per 100,000 population, baseline ILI threshold, medium and high intensity ILI thresholds and number of positive influenza A and B specimens tested by the NVRL, by influenza week and season. The current week sentinel GP ILI consultation rate per 100,000 population is highlighted in red text. *Source: ICGP and NVRL*

Further surveillance information is available on the following websites:

- HPSC <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/influenza/seasonalinfluenza/surveillance/influenzasurveillancereports/>
- Influenza case definition in Ireland <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/influenza/casedefinitions/>
- COVID-19 case definition in Ireland <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/casedefinitions/>
- COVID-19 surveillance reports/dashboard on HPSC website <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/surveillance/>
- Public Health Agency Northern Ireland influenza surveillance <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/directorate-public-health/health-protection/seasonal-influenza>
- Europe – ECDC influenza surveillance reports <https://flunewseurope.org/>
- ECDC Avian influenza <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/avian-influenza>
- ECDC COVID-19 <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/covid-19>
- WHO influenza surveillance updates <https://www.who.int/teams/global-influenza-programme/surveillance-and-monitoring/influenza-updates/current-influenza-update>
- UK Health Security Agency influenza reports <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/weekly-national-flu-reports>
- United States CDC influenza reports <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/fluactivitysurv.htm>
- Public Health Agency of Canada influenza reports <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/fluwatch/index-eng.php>
- Australian influenza report <https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-ozflu-2022.htm>
- WHO COVID-19 <https://covid19.who.int/>

Further information on influenza in Ireland is available at www.hpsc.ie

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