

2.6 Chickenpox-hospitalised cases

Summary

Number of cases, 2015: 69
Crude incidence rate, 2015: 1.5/100,000

Chickenpox-hospitalised cases

The Health Act, 1947 entitles the Minister for Health to declare by regulation diseases that are infectious, covered by legislation and that require notification to a Medical Officer of Health. The infectious diseases notifiable in Ireland are regulated in the 1981 Infectious Diseases Regulations. The amendment S.I. No. 452 of 2011 to these regulations specified for the first time the disease chickenpox, hospitalised cases only, as notifiable. Chickenpox is caused by varicella-zoster virus. The case definition is available at www.hpsc.ie.

In 2015, 69 (1.5/100,000) hospitalised chickenpox cases were notified in Ireland compared to 61 (1.3/100,000) in 2014. In 2015, the largest number of cases was in the HSE E (table 1). Of the 69 cases, 44 (64%) were classified as confirmed and 25 (36%) as possible. The highest age specific incidence rates were in those aged less than ten years (figure 1). Of the 69 cases, 38 (55%) were male and 29 (42%) were female while sex was unreported for two cases (3%).

Chickenpox/varicella outbreaks

The amendment S.I. No. 707 of 2003 to the infectious disease regulations specified that unusual clusters or changing patterns of illness that may be of public health concern must be reported. Therefore, outbreaks of chickenpox must be notified regardless of hospitalisation status. One outbreak of possible chickenpox was notified in 2015. This outbreak occurred in a private house with two ill; both cases were reported as being hospitalised.

The figures presented in this summary are based on data extracted from the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) system on 1st September 2016. These figures may differ slightly from those published previously due to ongoing updating of notification data on CIDR.

Table 1. Number of notified hospitalised chickenpox cases and the crude incidence rate per 100,000 population (CIR) by HSE Area in 2015

HSE Area	Number	CIR
HSE E	32	2.0
HSE M	7	2.5
HSE MW	2	0.5
HSE NE	7	1.6
HSE NW	3	1.2
HSE SE	8	1.6
HSE S	6	0.9
HSE W	4	0.9
Total	69	1.5

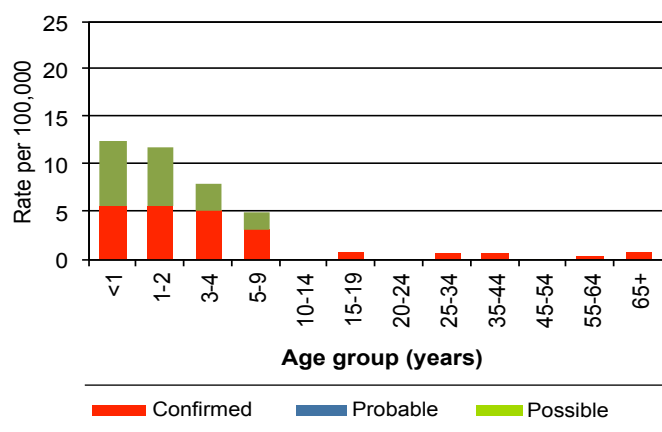


Figure 1. The age specific incidence rate (per 100,000 population) of notified hospitalised chickenpox cases in 2015 by case classification