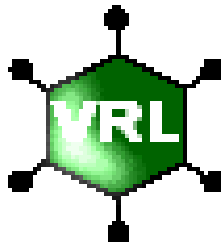


Weekly Influenza Surveillance Report



Week 12 2002

Report produced: 27/03/2002

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

Influenza Activity in Ireland

During week 12, the week ending the 24th of March 2002, the GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) has increased to its highest level this season. Eighteen ILI cases were reported from sentinel general practices, corresponding to a consultation rate of 29 per 100,000 population. Reports were received from 21 sentinel GPs, with 8 reporting ILI cases. Data for week 11 has been updated to 15 per 100,000, with 4 sentinel GPs reporting ILI cases.

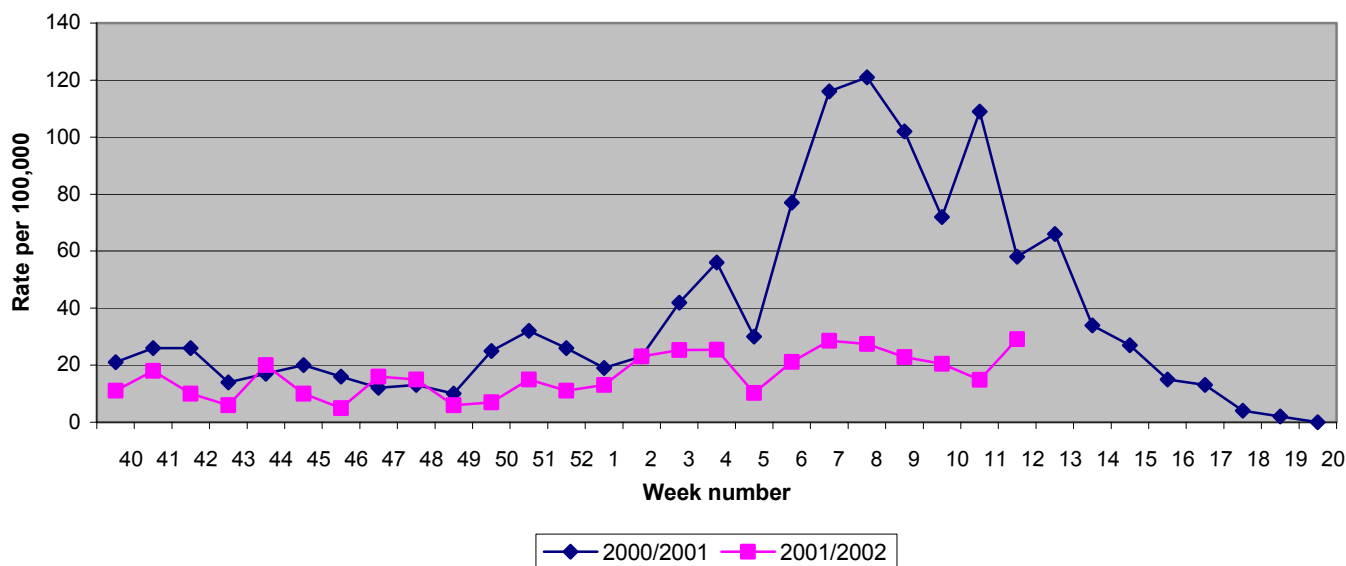


Figure 1: GP consultation rate for influenza-like illness per 100,000 population by report week, during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 influenza seasons.

Virological Data from the Virus Reference Laboratory (VRL)

The VRL have tested 576 respiratory specimens from non-sentinel specimens (hospitals and GPs), since the start of the influenza season. The only positive specimen for influenza from non-sentinel sources was detected during week 9. During week 12, 5 specimens were positive for RSV, bringing the total RSV cases detected this season to 184.

During week 12, 11 swabs were received from sentinel GPs, 5 of these were positive for influenza A (unsubtyped). To date this season, the VRL have received 226 swabs from sentinel GPs. Twenty-six percent of the swabs were positive for influenza virus; 14 were positive for influenza A (unsubtyped), 2 were positive for influenza A (H1N1), 9 were positive for influenza A (H1N2), and 33 were positive for influenza A (H3N2). There have been no laboratory confirmed cases of influenza B in Ireland this season.

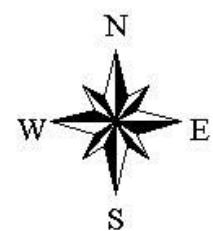
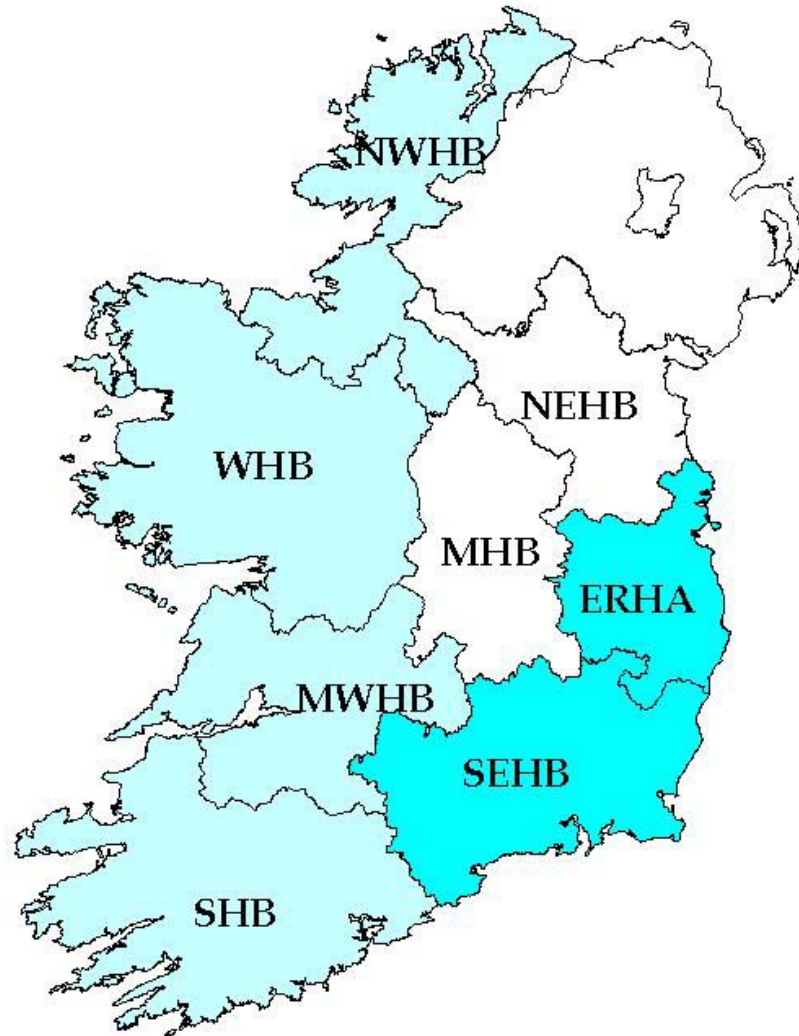
Table 1: Sentinel influenza results by type, subtype and report week for 2001/2002

<i>Week number</i>	<i>Total swabs</i>	<i>Positive swabs</i>	<i>Percentage positive</i>	<i>A (unsubtyped)</i>	<i>A (H1N1)</i>	<i>A (H1N2)</i>	<i>A (H3N2)</i>	<i>B</i>
40	5	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
41	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
42	4	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
43	2	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
44	2	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
45	6	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
46	3	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
47	10	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
48	8	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
49	6	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
50	8	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
51	9	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
52	1	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
1	7	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
2	9	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0
3	12	4	33%	0	1	0	3	0
4	14	6	43%	0	0	0	6	0
5	15	3	20%	0	0	2	1	0
6	15	10	67%	1	1	1	7	0
7	16	5	31%	0	0	0	5	0
8	13	6	46%	0	0	3	3	0
9	14	8	57%	0	0	1	7	0
10	14	7	50%	4	0	2	1	0
11	8	4	50%	4	0	0	0	0
12	11	5	46%	5	0	0	0	0
Total	226	58	26%	14	2	9	33	0

Influenza Activity by Health Board/Authority

Influenza activity for week 11 (week ending the 17th of March 2002) was reported from the Departments of Public Health. Influenza activity is based on sentinel GP ILI consultation rates, laboratory confirmed cases of influenza, hospital admissions data, and/or school absenteeism levels. During week 11, 4 health boards reported no influenza activity and 2 reported sporadic influenza activity.

Influenza Activity - Week 11



Influenza Activity in Northern Ireland

There was no data available for week 12

Influenza Activity in England, Scotland and Wales

GP consultations for influenza and ILI decreased in England and Scotland, during week 11, to 15 and 18 per 100,000 respectively. In Wales, the GP consultation rate remained little changed during week 11, at a rate of 2 per 100,000. The ERNVL isolated 12 influenza A (H1) and 17 influenza A (H3N2) viruses, during week 11. The number of new specimens for community surveillance remains low.

Influenza Activity in Europe

While most networks in Europe reported lower clinical morbidity rates in week 11, Norway, Germany and Romania reported increasing or high levels of influenza activity. Influenza A was the dominant influenza type across most of Europe. However, influenza B was the dominant virus in Belgium, Italy, Spain and Switzerland. During week 11, 2 influenza B/Victoria/2/87-like viruses were isolated in Europe: one in Norway and one in Switzerland. Results from the European influenza surveillance scheme suggest that this strain of influenza B is rare in Europe this season.

Influenza Activity in Canada

During week 11, sentinel physicians reported 23 cases of ILI per 1000 patient visits, which is the expected rate for the time of year. Health Canada received 2172 reports of laboratory tests for influenza: 320 were positive for influenza A and 41 were positive for influenza B. The National Microbiology Laboratory antigenically characterised 304 influenza isolates to date this season: 212 were A (H3N2), 6 were A (H1), 4 were B/Sichuan/379/99-like and 82 were B/Hong Kong/22/01-like viruses.

Influenza Activity in the United States

The overall proportion of patient visits to sentinel physicians during week 11 was 2.0%, above the national baseline. Five state and territorial health departments reported widespread activity, 26 reported regional activity, 18 reported sporadic activity and 1 reported no influenza activity. Forty-five influenza A (H3N2), 1 influenza A (H1N1), 192 influenza A (unsubtyped) and 38 influenza B viruses were identified during week 11.

Influenza Activity Worldwide

During week 11, Hong Kong and Mexico reported sporadic influenza activity. Influenza A and B are co-circulating in Hong Kong with influenza A (H3N2) predominating. In Israel and the Russian Federation, localised influenza activity was reported.

This report was produced by Dr Lisa Domegan, Surveillance Scientist, NDSC