

Hepatitis A

Summary

Number of cases, 2014: 21

Crude notification rate, 2014: 0.45/100,000 population

Number of cases, 2013: 50

Introduction

Hepatitis A virus causes an acute, usually self-limiting disease of the liver. It is primarily transmitted from person to person via the faecal-oral route and is associated with poor hygiene and sanitation. Common source outbreaks due to contaminated food or water also occur.

Annual Figures

The incidence of hepatitis A in Ireland has been low in recent years and remained low in 2014, with 21 cases notified (figure 1). This corresponds to a crude notification rate of 0.45/100,000 population. This rate is lower than the previous two years with rates of 0.63 and 1.1/100,000 population for 2012 and 2013 respectively. Case classification was reported for all cases and all were laboratory confirmed. The number of notifications in each HSE area is shown in figure 2.

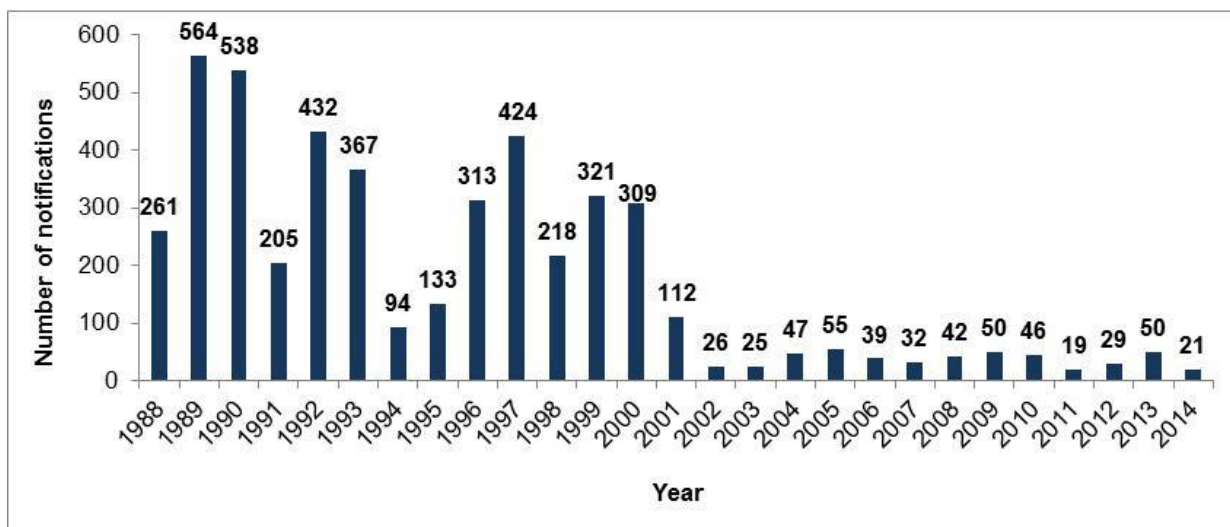


Figure 1: Number of hepatitis A notifications, 1988-2014

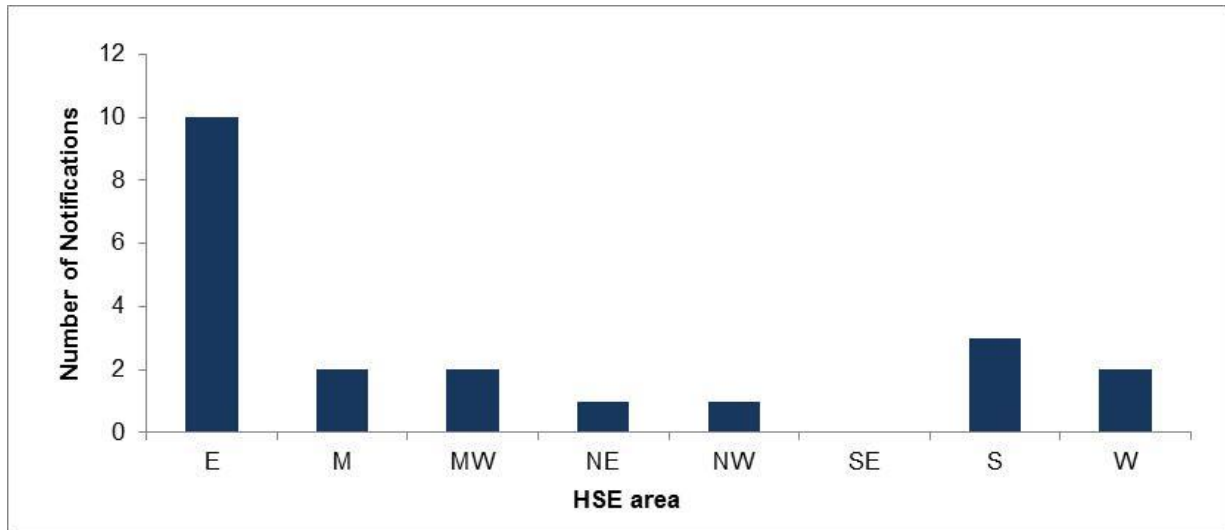


Figure 2: Number of hepatitis A notifications by HSE area, 2014

Fifty two percent of cases were female (n=11) and 48% were male (n=10). The highest notifications rates were in children and young adults, with 52% of cases aged between 0 and 24 years (figure 3).

Six cases were reported as infected in Ireland and eight cases were linked to travel outside of Ireland. Country of infection was not known for seven cases.

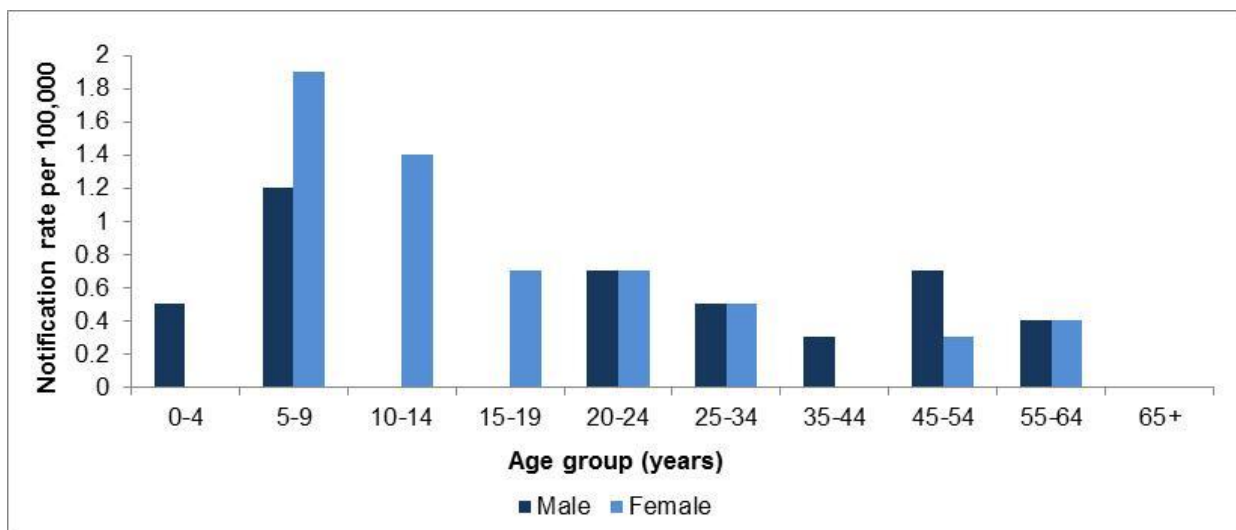


Figure 3: Hepatitis A age and sex-specific notification rates/100,000 population, 2014

Two hepatitis A outbreaks were reported in 2014. One outbreak involved three adults in two separate households. All cases reported the same genotype however no source of infection was identified. A second outbreak involved an adult and two children in the same household for which there was no source of infection identified.

The figures presented in this summary are based on data extracted from the Computerised Infectious Disease Reporting (CIDR) System on 10th August 2015. These figures may differ from those published previously due to on-going updating of notification data on CIDR.