

Influenza Surveillance in Ireland – Summer Report

Weeks 34 -37 2023 (21stAugust – 17th September 2023)



 **Intensive Care Society of Ireland**



Summary

All indicators of influenza activity were at low levels in Ireland during weeks 34-37 2023. Sporadic influenza cases have been detected during this period and RSV notifications have slightly increased. HPSC will continue to actively monitor influenza and other respiratory virus activity and will publish reports on a weekly basis for the 2023/2024 influenza season (weekly reporting resumes week beginning 9th October 2023).

- **Influenza-like illness (ILI):** The sentinel GP influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rate remained low and below baseline levels during week 37 2023 at a rate of 6.9/100,000 and ranged from 4.4/100,000 to 6.9/100,000 population during weeks 34-37 2023. The sentinel GP ILI consultation rate has been below the Irish baseline threshold level (18.1/100,000 population) since week 6 2023. Sentinel GP ILI consultation rates were below age specific thresholds for all age groups during weeks 34-37 2023.
- **GP Out of Hours:** The proportion of self-reported ‘flu’ calls to GP Out-of-Hours services remained low and below baseline levels during weeks 34-37 2023, ranging from 0.4% to 0.6%. The proportion of cough calls was at baseline levels in week 37 (10.8%) and ranged from 4.8% to 10.8% during weeks 34-37 2023.
- **National Virus Reference Laboratory (NVRL):** There was one (0.8%) positive influenza detection (A(H1)pdm09) and two (1.5%) RSV detections from the 132 sentinel GP acute respiratory infection (ARI) specimens tested during weeks 34-37 2023. The weekly influenza positivity rate for sentinel samples ranged from 0 to 2.4% and RSV positivity ranged from 0 to 8.7%. Of 430 non-sentinel respiratory specimens tested during the reporting period, two (0.5%) were positive for influenza (including one A(H3) and one influenza B) and three (0.6%) were positive for RSV. The weekly influenza positivity rate from non-sentinel respiratory specimens ranged from 0 to 1.9 % during the reporting period and the RSV rate ranged from 0 to 2.2%.
- During weeks 34-37 2023, the NVRL also reported the following other respiratory virus (ORV) positive detections (from both sentinel and non-sentinel specimens): rhinovirus/enterovirus (n=103), human metapneumovirus (n=6), parainfluenza virus type 3 (PIV-3) (n=4) and other respiratory viruses (ORV) (n=39).
- **Influenza and RSV notifications:** 55 laboratory confirmed influenza cases – eight A(H1)pdm09, three A(H3), 33 A (not subtyped) and 11 influenza B were notified during weeks 34-37 2023. Sixty-one RSV cases were notified during weeks 34-37 2023, an increase compared to 29 cases reported in weeks 30-33 2023. Weekly notifications are reported in <https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/weeklyreports/>
- **Hospitalisations:** 15 laboratory confirmed influenza hospitalised cases were notified during weeks 34-37 2023: three A(H1) pdm09, one A (H3), nine influenza A (not subtyped), and two influenza B cases.
- **Intensive care admissions:** One laboratory confirmed influenza A(H3) case was admitted to an intensive care unit and reported to HPSC during week 34 2023.
- **Mortality:** There were no deaths in influenza cases notified to HPSC during weeks 34-37 2023. No excess all-cause mortality was reported during weeks 34-37 2023; data reported with one-week time lag.
- **Outbreaks:** Two ARI outbreaks, one of which was Rhino/Enterovirus were reported during week 35 2023. No influenza or RSV outbreaks were notified to HPSC during weeks 34-37 2023.
- **International:** Overall influenza activity was reported below seasonal levels in the European region. In the temperate zones of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity was reported at low levels or below seasonal threshold in most reporting countries. Detections were predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 followed by influenza B and influenza A(H3N2) viruses. In the temperate zones of the southern hemisphere, overall influenza activity is decreasing.

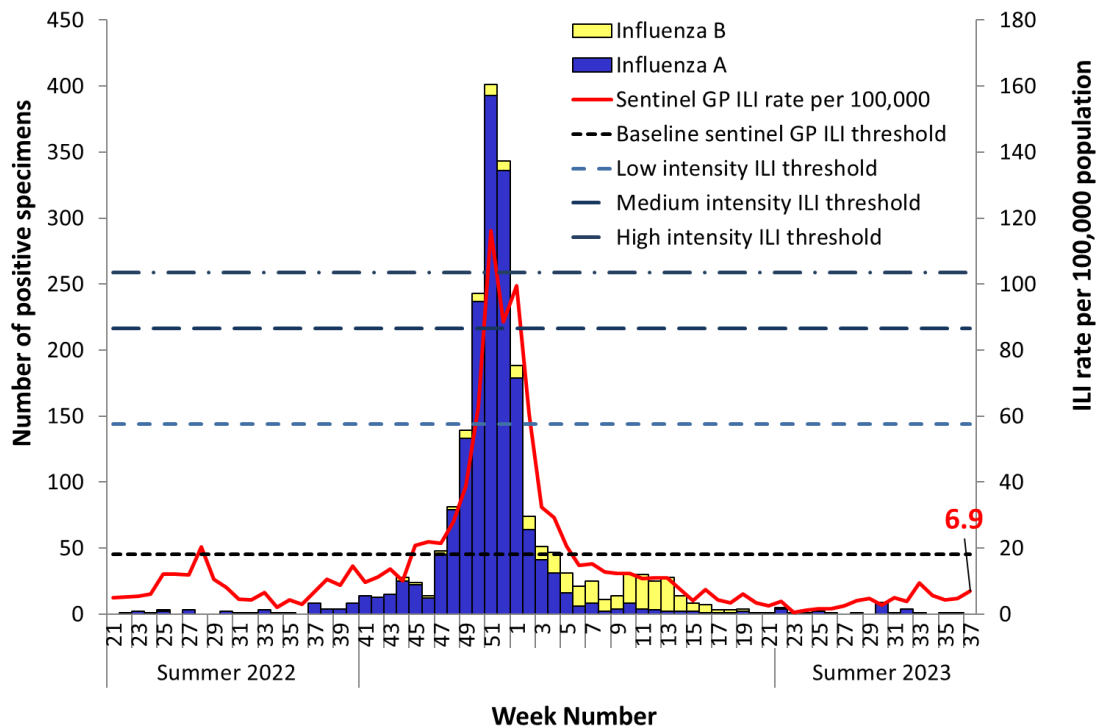


Figure 1: Sentinel GP Influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rates per 100,000 population, baseline ILI threshold, medium and high intensity ILI thresholds and number of positive influenza A and B specimens tested by the NVRL, by influenza week and season. The current week sentinel GP ILI consultation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

This report was prepared by the HPSC influenza epidemiology team: Nancy Somi, Eva Kelly, Adele McKenna, Amy Griffin, Pamella Lima, Maureen O'Leary, Lisa Domegan, Joan O'Donnell.

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