



This report is published weekly on the [PHE website](#). For further information on the surveillance schemes mentioned in this report, please see the [PHE website](#) and the [related links](#) at the end of this document.

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Summary

In week 17 2016 (ending 01 May 2016), influenza activity continues to decrease and has reached or nearing the expected baseline levels across surveillance schemes. Updated [guidance](#) on antiviral prescribing in secondary care when influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 is the dominant circulating strain has been published.

- [Community influenza surveillance](#)
 - During week 17, respiratory indicators across remained stable across all syndromic surveillance systems.
 - Eight new acute respiratory outbreaks have been reported in the past 7 days. 2 outbreaks were from schools where no test results were available. 5 outbreaks were from care homes where 1 tested positive for influenza B. The remaining outbreak was from the other settings category (a nursery) where no test results were available.
- [Overall weekly influenza GP consultation rates across the UK](#)
 - In week 17, overall weekly influenza-like illness (ILI) GP consultation rate has decreased further, and is now below the baseline threshold in England (8.4 per 100,000). In the devolved administrations, the ILI rates for Scotland (8.5 per 100,000) and Wales (5.8 per 100,000) have remained similar to the previous week and a decrease was noted with the ILI rate for Northern Ireland (13.3 per 100,000).
 - Through the GP In Hours surveillance system, GP consultations for ILI have continued to decrease across all age groups and regions and at seasonally expected levels.
- [Influenza-confirmed hospitalisations](#)
 - Fifteen new admissions to ICU/HDU with confirmed influenza (2 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 3 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 10 influenza B) were reported through the USSS mandatory ICU/HDU surveillance scheme across the UK (135 NHS Trusts in England) in week 17, a rate of 0.04 per 100,000, compared to 0.07 per 100,000 in week 16. Four new confirmed influenza deaths were also reported through this scheme.
 - Twenty-eight new hospitalised confirmed influenza cases (3 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 1 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 24 influenza B) were reported through the USSS sentinel hospital network across England (16 NHS Trusts), a rate of 0.41 per 100,000 in week 17 compared to 0.56 per 100,000 the previous week.
 - Since week 40, seventy-three confirmed influenza admissions have been reported (63 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 6 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 4 influenza B) from the six Severe Respiratory Failure centres in the UK.
- [All-cause mortality data](#)
 - Up to week 17 2016 in England, excess mortality by date of death was seen in 15-64 year olds from week 52 to 53, 02 to 03, 05 to 07, 09 to 10, in <5 year olds in week 05 and 5-14 year olds in week 51 with the EuroMoMo algorithm. In the devolved administrations, no significant excess was seen in week 17 2016.
- [Microbiological surveillance](#)
 - Six samples tested positive for influenza (5 influenza B and 1 influenza A(unknown subtype)) through GP sentinel schemes across the UK, with an overall positivity of 17.6%, compared to 21.4% in the previous week.
 - One hundred and two influenza positive detections were recorded through the DataMart scheme (12 A(H1N1)pdm09, 1 A(H3), 6 A(not subtyped) and 83 influenza B). A positivity of 9.3% was seen in week 17, compared to 10.4% in week 16, with the highest positivity in 15-44 year olds (11.3%). This is above the all-age threshold for 2015/16 season of 7.4%.
- [Vaccination](#)
 - Up to week 04 2016 (31 January 2016) in 98.8% GP practices reporting weekly to Immform, the provisional proportion of people in England who had received the 2015/16 influenza vaccine in targeted groups was as follows: 45.1% in under 65 years in a clinical risk group, 42.3% in pregnant women, 71.0% in 65+ year olds, 35.4% in all 2 year olds, 37.7% in all 3 year olds and 30.1% in all 4 year olds.
 - Provisional data from the fifth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake by frontline healthcare workers show 50.8% were vaccinated by 29 February 2016 from 96.6% of Trusts, compared to 54.9% vaccinated in the previous season by 28 February 2015. The report is available [here](#).
 - Provisional data from the fourth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake children of school years 1 and 2 age show the proportion of children in England who received the 2015/16 live attenuated intranasal vaccine (LAIV) from 1 September 2015 to 31 January 2016 was as follows: 53.6% in children school year 1 age (5-6 years) and 52.1% in children school year 2 age (6-7 years).
 - [WHO](#) have published their recommendations for the composition of the 2016/17 northern hemisphere influenza vaccine.
- [International situation](#)
 - Influenza activity in the Northern Hemisphere continued to decrease. A predominance of influenza B virus activity continued to be reported in parts of North America, in Northern Temperate Asia, South-East Asia and in parts of Europe.

During week 17, respiratory indicators remained stable across all syndromic surveillance systems. Eight new acute respiratory outbreaks were reported in the past 7 days.

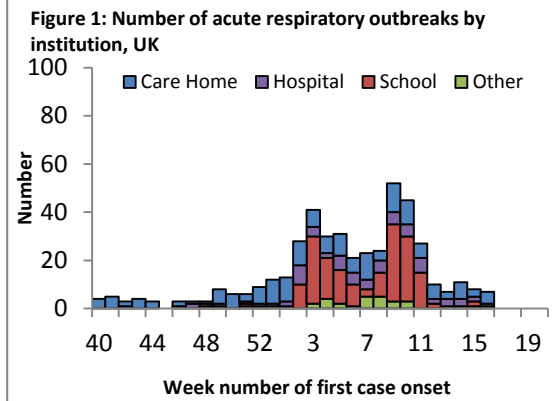
- PHE Real-time Syndromic Surveillance

- During week 17, respiratory indicators remained stable across all syndromic systems.
- For further information, please see the syndromic surveillance [webpage](#).

- Acute respiratory disease outbreaks

- Eight new acute respiratory outbreaks have been reported in the past 7 days. 2 outbreaks were from schools where no test results were available. 5 outbreaks were from care homes where 1 tested positive for influenza B. The remaining outbreak was from the other settings category (a nursery) where no test results were available.

-Outbreaks should be recorded on HPZone and reported to the local Health Protection Teams and Respscidsc@phe.gov.uk.

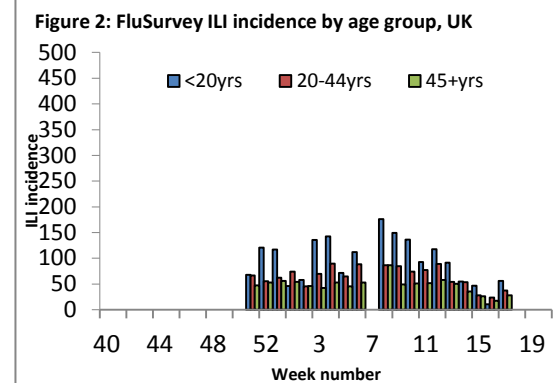


- FluSurvey

- Internet-based surveillance of influenza in the general population is undertaken through the FluSurvey. A project run jointly by PHE and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

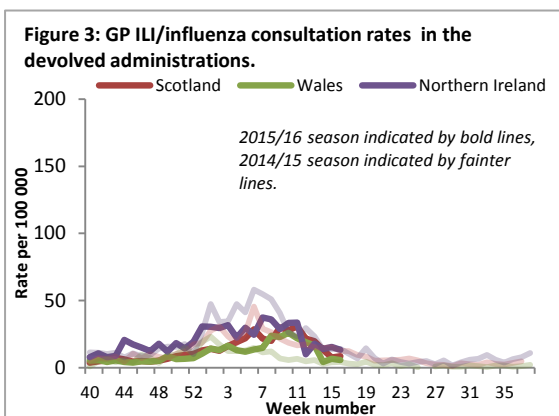
- The overall ILI rate (all age groups) for week 17 was 32.0 per 1,000 (69/2,157 people reported at least 1 ILI), with the <20 year age group reporting a higher rate of 56.1 per 1,000.

- If you would like to become a participant of the FluSurvey project please do so by visiting the <http://flusurvey.org.uk> website for more information.



In week 17, overall weekly influenza-like illness GP consultations has decreased and is below the baseline threshold in England. ILI rates have also decreased or remained similar in the devolved administrations.

- Influenza/Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI)



NB: As week 53 appears in 2015 but not in previous years, the figure used for week 52 in Figure 3 is an average of week 52 and week 53 data.

Northern Ireland

-The Northern Ireland influenza consultation rate has decreased at 13.3 per 100,000 in week 17 compared to 15.6 per 100,000 in week 16 (Figure 3). This remains below the baseline threshold (49.4 per 100,000).

-The highest rates were seen in the 15-44 year olds (21.9 per 100,000) and 65-74 year olds (13.1 per 100,000).

Wales

-The Welsh influenza rate has remained similar at 5.8 in week 17 compared to 7.0 in week 16 (Figure 3). This is below the baseline threshold (10.3 per 100,000).

-The highest rates were seen in 15-44 year olds (10.6 per 100,000) and 45-64 year olds (5.8 per 100,000).

Scotland

-The Scottish ILI rate has remained similar at 8.5 per 100,000 in week 17 (Figure 3) compared to 7.6 per 100,000 in week 16. This remains below baseline threshold (37.0 per 100,000).

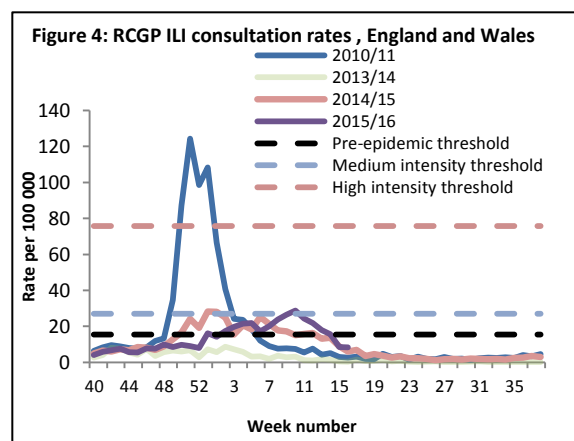
-The highest rates were seen in 45-64 year olds (11.3 per 100,000) and 75+ year olds (10.0 per 100,000).

RCGP (England and Wales)

- The weekly ILI consultation rate through the RCGP surveillance is 8.6 per 100,000 in week 16 compared to 15.7 per 100,000 in week 15. This is below the baseline threshold (15.4 per 100,000) (Figure 4*). By age group, the highest rates were seen in 15-44 year olds (12.6 per 100,000) and 65-74 year olds (8.2 per 100,000).

**The Moving Epidemic Method has been adopted by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control to calculate thresholds for GP ILI consultations for the start of influenza activity in a standardised approach across Europe.*

NB: As week 53 appears in 2015 but not in previous years, the figure used for week 52 in Figure 4 is an average of week 52 and week 53 data.



GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance System (England)

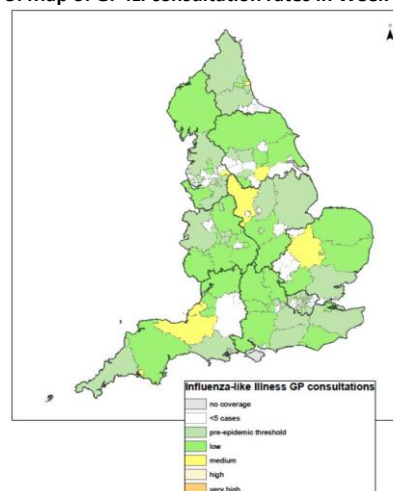
-The weekly ILI consultation rate through the GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance system has decreased at 5.8 per 100,000 in week 17 (Figure 5).

Figure 5 represents a map of GP ILI consultation rates in Week 17 across England by Local Authorities, using influenza-like illness surveillance thresholds.

Thresholds are calculated using a standard methodology for setting ILI thresholds across Europe (the "Moving Epidemic Method" (MEM)) and are based on six previous influenza seasons (excluding the 2009/10 H1N1 pandemic)

-For further information, please see the syndromic surveillance [webpage](#).

Figure 5: Map of GP ILI consultation rates in Week 17



Influenza confirmed hospitalisations

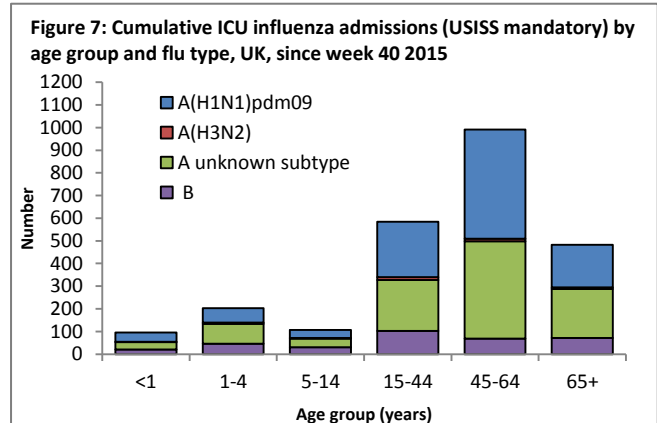
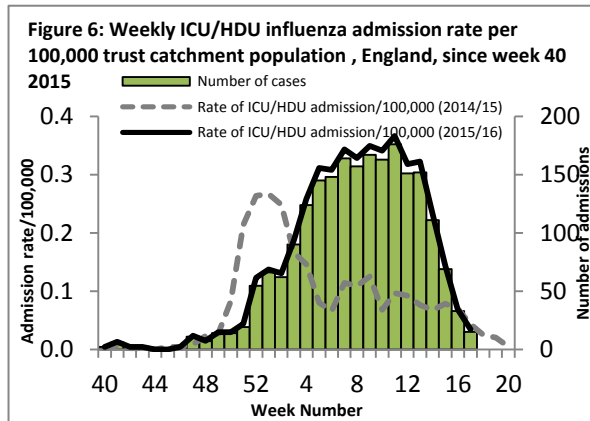
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In week 17, fifteen new admissions to ICU/HDU with confirmed influenza (2 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 3 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 10 influenza B) were reported through the USISS mandatory ICU/HDU surveillance scheme across the UK (135 Trusts in England). Twenty-eight new hospitalised confirmed influenza cases (3 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 1 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 24 influenza B) were reported through the USISS sentinel hospital network across England (16 Trusts).

A national mandatory collection (USISS mandatory ICU scheme) is operating in cooperation with the Department of Health to report the number of confirmed influenza cases admitted to Intensive Care Units (ICU) and High Dependency Units (HDU) and number of confirmed influenza deaths in ICU/HDU across the UK. A confirmed case is defined as an individual with a laboratory confirmed influenza infection admitted to ICU/HDU. In addition a sentinel network (USISS sentinel hospital network) of acute NHS trusts is established in England to report weekly laboratory confirmed hospital admissions. Further information on these systems is available through the [website](#). Please note data in previously reported weeks are updated and so may vary by week of reporting.

- Number of new admissions and fatal confirmed influenza cases in ICU/HDU (USISS mandatory ICU scheme), UK (week 17)

- In week 17, fifteen new admissions to ICU/HDU with confirmed influenza (2 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 3 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 10 influenza B) were reported across the UK (135/156 Trusts in England) through the USISS mandatory ICU scheme (Figures 6 and 7), a rate of 0.03 per 100,000, compared to 0.07 in the previous week. Four new confirmed influenza deaths were also reported in week 17 2016. A total of 2,462 admissions (1,053 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 41 influenza A(H3N2), 1,029 influenza A (unknown subtype) and 339 influenza B) and 208 confirmed influenza deaths have been reported since week 40 2015.

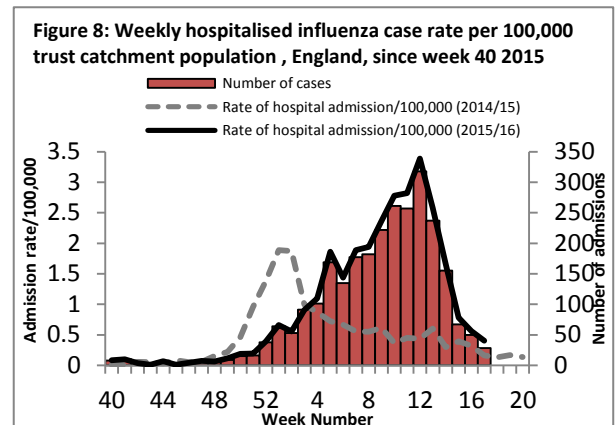


NB: As week 53 appears in 2015 but not in previous years, the figure used for week 52 in Figure 6 is an average of week 52 and week 53 data.

- USISS sentinel weekly hospitalised confirmed influenza cases, England (week 17)

- In week 17, twenty-eight new hospitalised confirmed influenza cases (3 influenza A(H1N1) pdm09, 1 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 24 influenza B) were reported through the USISS sentinel hospital network from 16 NHS Trusts across England (Figure 8), a rate of 0.41 per 100,000 compared to 0.56 per 100,000 the previous week. A total of 2,708 hospitalised confirmed influenza admissions (1,526 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09), 34 influenza A(H3N2), 394 influenza A (unknown subtype) and 754 influenza B) have been reported since week 40.

NB: As week 53 appears in 2015 but not in previous years, the figure used for week 52 in Figure 8 is an average of week 52 and week 53 data.



- USISS Severe Respiratory Failure Centre confirmed influenza admissions, UK (week 17)

- In week 17, there were no new confirmed influenza admissions reported to the six Severe Respiratory Failure Centres in the UK. Since week 40, seventy-three confirmed influenza admissions have been reported (63 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 6 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 4 influenza B) from the six Severe Respiratory Failure centres in the UK.

All-cause mortality data

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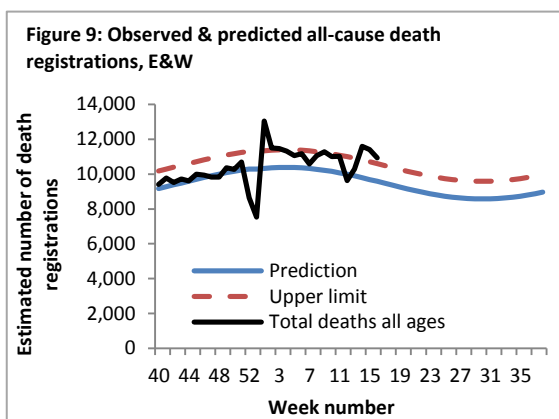
Up to week 17 2016 in England, excess mortality by date of death was seen in 15-64 year olds from week 52 to 53, 02 to 03, 05 to 07, 09 to 10; in <5 year olds in week 05 and in 5-14 year olds in week 51 with the EuroMoMo algorithm. In the devolved administrations, no significant excess was noted in week 17 2016.

Seasonal mortality is seen each year in the UK, with a higher number of deaths in winter months compared to the summer. Additionally, peaks of mortality above this expected higher level typically occur in winter, most commonly the result of factors such as cold snaps and increased circulation of respiratory viruses, in particular influenza. Weekly mortality surveillance presented here aims to detect and report acute significant

weekly excess mortality above normal seasonal levels in a timely fashion. Excess mortality is defined as a significant number of deaths reported over that expected for a given point in the year, allowing for weekly variation in the number of deaths. The aim is not to assess general mortality trends or precisely estimate the excess attributable to different factors, although some end-of-winter estimates and more in-depth analyses (by age, geography etc.) are undertaken.

- Excess overall all-cause mortality, England and Wales

-In week 16 2016, an estimated 10,925 all-cause deaths were registered in England and Wales (source: [Office for National Statistics](#)). This is a decrease compared to the 11,417 estimated death registrations in week 15 2016, and is above the 95% upper limit of expected death registrations for the time of year as calculated by PHE (Figure 9). The drops in the number of deaths in week 53 and week 13 correspond to weeks where there were bank holidays and fewer days when deaths were registered. Therefore these decreases are likely to be artificial.



- Excess all-cause mortality by age group, England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland

-Up to week 17 2016 in England, excess mortality by date of death above the upper 2 z-score threshold was seen in 15-64 year olds from week 52 to 53, 02 to 03, 05 to 07 and 09 to 10, in <5 years olds in week 05 and in 5-14 year olds in week 51 after correcting ONS disaggregate data for reporting delay with the standardised [EuroMoMo](#) algorithm (Table 1). No significant excess was seen in other age groups. This data is provisional due to the time delay in registration; numbers may vary from week to week.

Table 1: Excess mortality by age group, England*

Age group (years)	Excess detected in week 17 2016?	Weeks with excess in 2015/16
<5	x	05
5-14	x	51
15-64	x	52,53, 02,03,05-07, 09,10
65+	x	NA

* Excess mortality is calculated as the observed minus the expected number of deaths in weeks above threshold

- In the devolved administrations, no significant excess mortality above the threshold was seen in week 16 2016 (Table 2).

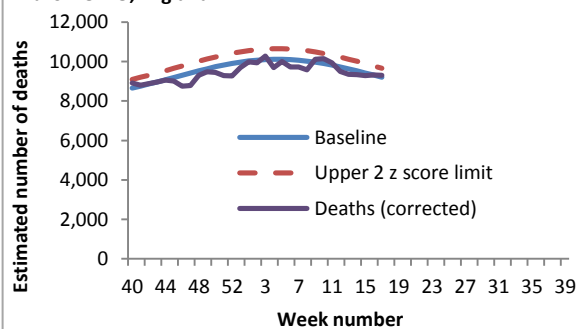
Table 2: Excess mortality by UK country*

Country	Excess detected in week 17 2016?	Weeks with excess in 2015/16
England	x	40,52-03, 05-07, 09,10
Wales	x	01,05,08,10,11
Scotland	x	48,02,04,05,07,09
Northern Ireland	x	42,49,52,53,01,09,11

* Excess mortality is calculated as the observed minus the expected number of deaths in weeks above threshold

NB. Separate total and age-specific models are run for England which may lead to discrepancies between Tables 1 + 2

Figure 10: Excess mortality in all ages by week of death, EuroMOMO, England



Microbiological surveillance

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In week 17 2016, six samples tested for influenza through the UK GP sentinel schemes were positive. One hundred and two influenza positive detections were recorded through the DataMart scheme (12 A(H1N1)pdm09, 1 A(H3), 6 A(not subtyped) and 83 influenza B).

- Sentinel swabbing schemes in England (RCGP) and the Devolved Administrations

-In week 17, six samples tested positive for influenza through the UK GP sentinel swabbing schemes. Of the six samples, 5 tested positive for influenza B and 1 tested positive for influenza A(unknown subtype) (Table 3).

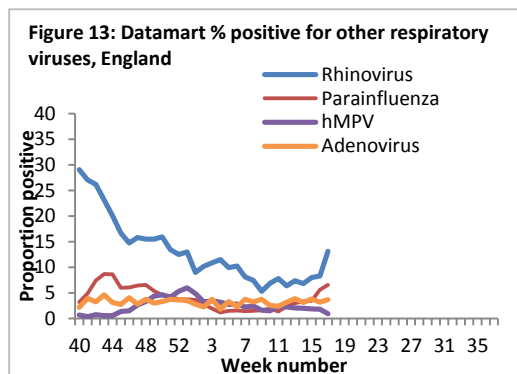
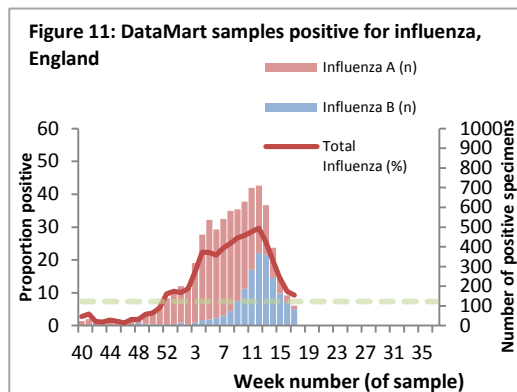
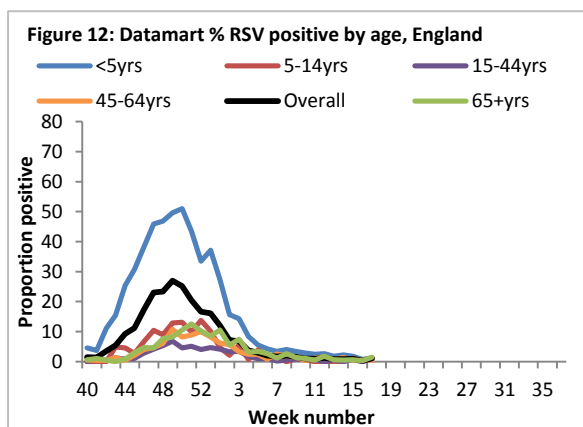
Table 3: Sentinel influenza surveillance in the UK

Week	England	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Wales
13	33/75 (44%)	15/62 (24.2%)	1/3 (-)	7/11 (63.6%)
14	26/71 (36.6%)	11/42 (26.2%)	4/6 (-)	2/2 (-)
15	16/72 (22.2%)	11/41 (26.8%)	0/2 (-)	1/1 (-)
16	3/19 (15.8%)	7/40 (17.5%)	3/6 (-)	2/5 (-)
17	0/1 (-)	4/27 (14.8%)	2/5 (-)	0/1 (-)

NB. Proportion positive omitted when fewer than 10 specimens tested

- Respiratory DataMart System (England)

In week 17 2016, out of the 1,093 respiratory specimens reported through the Respiratory DataMart System, 102 samples (9.3%) were positive for influenza (12 A(H1N1)pdm09, 1 A(H3), 6 A(not subtyped) and 83 B) (Figure 11). The highest positivity was in the 15-44 year olds at 11.3%. The overall positivity for RSV remained at low levels, 1.0% in week 17 (Figure 12). Positivity for parainfluenza increased slightly at 6.6% in week 17. Positivity for rhinovirus increased to 13.1% and positivity for hMPV remained low at 0.9%. Adenovirus positivity remained low at 3.7% (Figure 13).



*The Moving Epidemic Method has been adopted by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control to calculate thresholds for GP ILI consultations for the start of influenza activity in a standardised approach across Europe. The threshold to indicate a likelihood of influenza community circulation for Datamart % positive as calculated through the Moving Epidemic Method is 7.4% in 2015/16.

- Virus characterisation

Since the start of the 2015/16 winter influenza season in week 40 2015, the PHE Respiratory Virus Unit has characterised a total of 1079 A(H1N1)pdm09 influenza viruses; 280 genetically and 72 both antigenically and genetically. The A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses genetically characterised to date all belong in the genetic subgroup 6B, which was the predominant genetic subgroup in the 2014/15 season. Some heterogeneity has been seen in the A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses genetically characterised to date this season, with some genetic subgroups evident. Of 871 viruses analysed by HI assays to date, the majority were antigenically similar to the A/California/7/2009 Northern Hemisphere 2015/16 (H1N1)pdm09 vaccine strain. Antigenic characterisation data suggests that some antigenic drift variants appear to be circulating, but the majority of viruses antigenically characterised to date are similar to the (H1N1)pdm09 vaccine strain. Genetic characterisation of 21 A(H3N2) influenza viruses since week 38 showed that they belong to genetic group 3C.2a, and are genetically similar to the majority of A(H3N2) viruses circulating in the 2014/15 season. Four A(H3N2) influenza viruses have been isolated and antigenically characterised since week 38 2015. These four viruses were antigenically similar to the A/Switzerland/9715293/2013 H3N2 Northern Hemisphere 2015/16 vaccine strain.

Of 52 influenza B viruses analysed genetically since week 40/2015, 9 viruses have been characterised as belonging to the B/Yamagata/16/88-lineage and 43 viruses as belonging to the B/Victoria/2/87 lineage. One hundred and sixty six influenza B viruses have been isolated and antigenically characterised since week 40 2015. Seven viruses were characterised as belonging to the B/Yamagata/16/88-lineage and were antigenically similar to B/Phuket/3073/2013, the influenza B/Yamagata-lineage component of 2015/16 Northern Hemisphere trivalent and quadrivalent vaccines. One hundred and fifty nine viruses were characterised as belonging to the B/Victoria/2/87 lineage and were antigenically similar to B/Brisbane/60/2008, the influenza B/Victoria-lineage component of 2015/16 Northern Hemisphere quadrivalent vaccines.

- Antiviral susceptibility

Since week 40 2015, 1880 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, 7 influenza A(H3N2) and 79 influenza B have been tested for oseltamivir susceptibility with ten influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus and one influenza A(H3N2) found to be resistant in the UK. Eight of the 11 A(H1N1) resistant samples have information on antiviral use, while the remaining three are still under investigation. Six of the 8 A(H1N1)pdm09 resistant samples were obtained from patients undergoing oseltamivir treatment and two cases had no exposure to oseltamivir. All A(H1N1)pdm09 resistance is due to the H275Y amino acid substitution. The A(H3N2) resistant sample was from an immunocompromised patient receiving oseltamivir treatment, with an E119V amino acid change. 361 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 46 influenza B have also been tested for zanamivir susceptibility in the UK and all found to be sensitive.

- Antimicrobial susceptibility

-Table 4 shows in the 12 weeks up to 01 May 2016, the proportion of all lower respiratory tract isolates of *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, MRSA and MSSA tested and susceptible to antibiotics. These organisms are the key causes of community acquired pneumonia (CAP) and the choice of antibiotics reflects the British Thoracic Society empirical guidelines for management of CAP in adults.

Table 4: Antimicrobial susceptibility surveillance in lower respiratory tract isolates, 12 weeks up to 01 May 2016, E&W

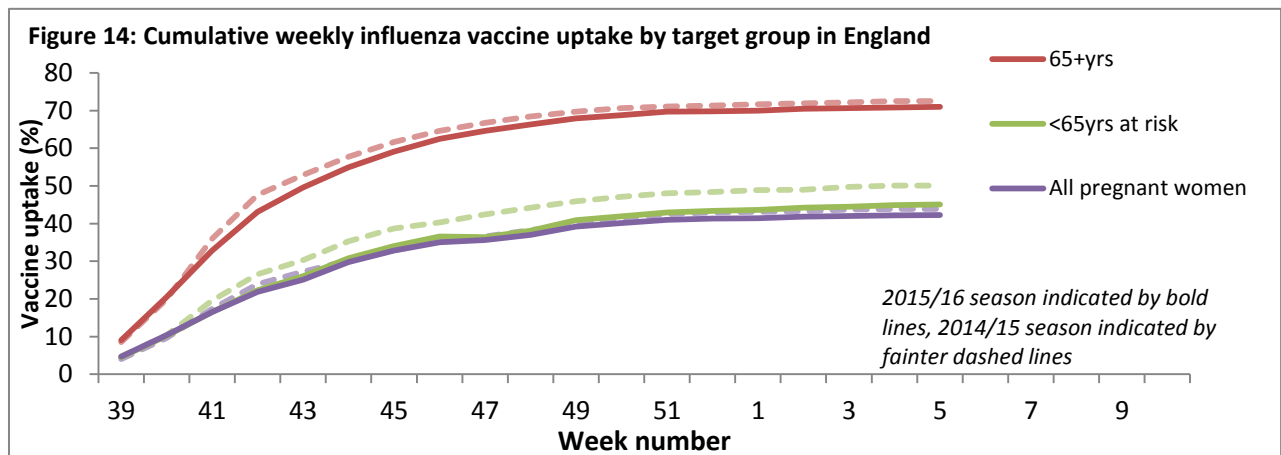
Organism	Antibiotic	Specimens tested (N)	Specimens susceptible (%)
<i>S. pneumoniae</i>	Penicillin	3,003	92
	Macrolides	3,285	82
	Tetracycline	3,163	84
<i>H. influenzae</i>	Amoxicillin/ampicillin	14,049	70
	Co-amoxiclav	13,576	93
	Macrolides	4,568	22
	Tetracycline	13,856	98
<i>S. aureus</i>	Methicillin	4,276	88
	Macrolides	4,224	72
MRSA	Clindamycin	455	48
	Tetracycline	512	86
MSSA	Clindamycin	2,404	77
	Tetracycline	3,446	94

*Macrolides = erythromycin, azithromycin and clarithromycin

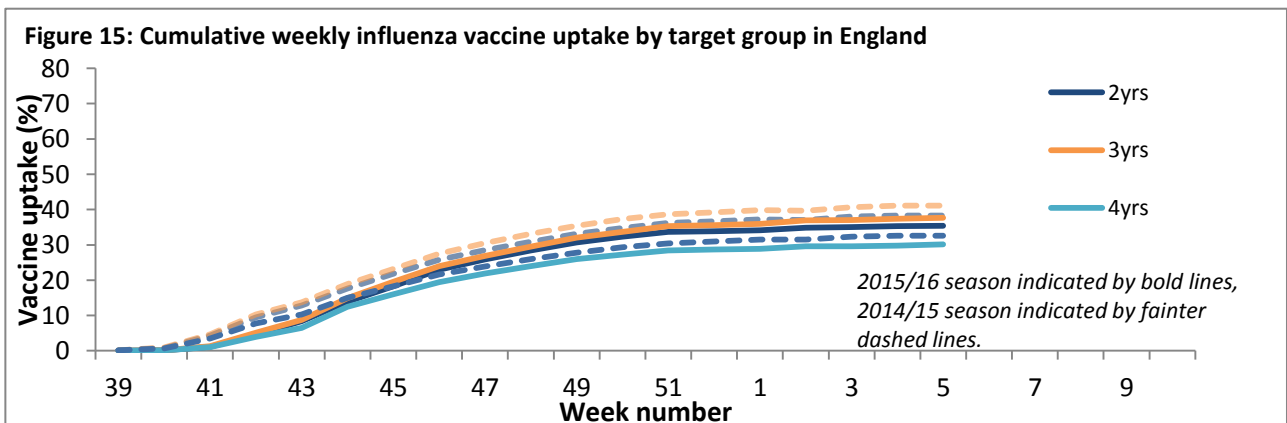
Vaccination

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- Up to week 04 2016 in 98.8% of GP practices reporting weekly to Immform, the provisional proportion of people in England who had received the 2015/16 influenza vaccine in targeted groups was as follows (Figure 14):
 - 45.1% in under 65 years in a clinical risk group
 - 42.3% in pregnant women
 - 71.0% in 65+ year olds



- In 2015/16, all two-, three- and four-year-olds continue to be eligible for flu vaccination. In addition, the programme has been extended to children of school years 1 and 2 age. Up to week 04 2016 in 98.8% of GP practices reporting weekly to Immform, the provisional proportion of people in England who had received the 2015/16 influenza vaccine in targeted groups was as follows (Figure 15)
 - 35.4% in all 2 year olds
 - 37.7% in all 3 year olds
 - 30.1% in all 4 year olds



- Provisional data from the fifth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake by frontline healthcare workers show 50.8% were vaccinated by 29 February 2016 from 96.6% of Trusts, compared to 54.9% vaccinated in the previous season by 28 February 2015. The [report](#) provides uptake at national, area team and CCG level.
- Provisional data from the fourth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake children of school years 1 and 2 age show the proportion of children in England who received the 2015/16 live attenuated intranasal vaccine (LAIV) from 1 September 2015 to 31 January 2016 was as follows: 53.6% in children school year 1 age (5-6 years) and 52.1% in children school year 2 age (6-7 years).
- Provisional data from the fourth monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake in GP patients up to 31 January 2016 has been published. The [report](#) provides uptake at national, area team and CCG level.

International Situation

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Influenza activity in the Northern Hemisphere continued to decrease. A predominance of influenza B virus activity continued to be reported in parts of North America, in Northern Temperate Asia, South-East Asia and in parts of Europe.

- [Europe](#) updated on 29 April 2016 (Joint ECDC-WHO Influenza weekly update)

In week 16/2016, influenza activity continued to decrease in the WHO European Region. Most countries (92%) reported low intensity, with lower numbers of specimens being collected and fewer testing positive for influenza virus (22%) than in the previous week (35%).

For week 16/2016, 1 306 of the specimens from non-sentinel sources tested positive for influenza viruses. Of these, 32% contained type A viruses: A(H1N1)pdm09 accounted for 85% and A(H3N2) for 15% of those subtyped. Most type B viruses were not ascribed to a lineage; of those that were, B/Victoria-lineage viruses predominated (87%).

Since week 40/2015, influenza A viruses have accounted for 74% of influenza viruses detected and A(H1N1)pdm09 for 93% of those subtyped.

For week 16/2016, 10 countries or regions in the eastern part of the Region reported data on cases of severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) from sentinel systems. The trends for such cases in these countries were declining or stable. Cases occurred mainly in people under the age of 65, and the great majority of those testing positive for influenza virus was infected by A(H1N1)pdm09.

- [United States of America](#) Updated on 29 April 2016 (Centre for Disease Control report)

During week 16, influenza activity decreased in the United States. The most frequently identified influenza virus type reported by public health laboratories during week 16 was influenza B. The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza in clinical laboratories decreased.

Nationwide during week 16, the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) was 2.0%, which is below the national baseline of 2.1%.

During week 16, 6.7% of all deaths reported through the 122 Cities Mortality Reporting System were due to P&I. This percentage was below the epidemic threshold of 7.0% for week 16. Four influenza-associated paediatric deaths were reported in week 16.

- [Canada](#) Updated on 29 April 2016 (Public Health Agency report)

In week 16, all influenza indicators remained similar to, or declined from the previous week.

In week 16, the percentage of tests positive for influenza continued to decrease from the previous week [from 21% in week 15 to 19% in week 16], driven by the decline in influenza A.

In week 16, 129 hospitalizations were reported by participating provinces and territories*. Influenza B accounted for the greatest proportion of hospitalizations, accounting for 55% of hospitalizations reported in week 16. The largest proportion of cases reported was in adults 65+ years of age (37%). Among hospitalizations for influenza B, children represented 35% of cases.

The national ILI consultation rate decreased from the previous week from 56.4 per 1,000 patient visits in week 15, to 36.1 per 1,000 patient visits in week 16. The highest ILI consultation rate was found in the 0-4 years age group (104.4 per 1,000) and the lowest was found in the ≥65 years age group (18.8 per 1,000).

- [Global influenza update](#) Updated on 02 May 2016 (WHO website)

Influenza activity in the Northern Hemisphere continued to decrease. A predominance of influenza B virus activity continued to be reported in parts of North America, in Northern Temperate Asia, South-East Asia and in parts of Europe. In a few countries in the Southern Hemisphere, slight increases in influenza-like illness (ILI) activity were reported.

In North America, influenza activity continued to decrease with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and influenza B viruses co-circulating.

Europe and Northern temperate Asia reported influenza activity decreased with a continued predominance of influenza B virus activity.

In North Africa and West Africa, influenza activity continued to decrease, with influenza A virus predominant, while influenza activity remained low in the other regions in Africa.

In Central America and the Caribbean countries, influenza activity in general was low. In Jamaica, severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) continued to decrease but remained elevated. In Guatemala and El Salvador, an increase in influenza activity was reported mainly due to influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus.

In parts of tropical South America, low but increasing influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 activity was reported. In Brazil, influenza activity was already above expected levels for this time of year with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus predominating. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity remained elevated in Colombia.

In tropical countries of South Asia, influenza activity remained low.

In Temperate South America, an increase in ILI and SARI activities were reported in Argentina and Paraguay.

In the rest of the temperate countries of the Southern Hemisphere, influenza virus activity remained low.

Based on FluNet reporting, the WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 105,838 specimens between 04 April 2016 and 17 April 2016. 20,933 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 9,821(46.9%) were typed as influenza A and 11,112 (53.1%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 3,758 (84.8%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 673 (15.2%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 481 (17.7%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 2,231 (82.3%) to the B-Victoria lineage.

- [Avian Influenza](#) latest update on 26 April 2016 (WHO website)

Influenza A(H5) viruses

Five new human A(H5) virus infections were notified to WHO between 25 February and 4 April 2016: four human cases of A(H5N1) virus infection were reported from Egypt and one human case of A(H5N6) virus infection was reported from China.

Since 2003, a total of 850 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H5N1) virus, including 449 deaths, have been reported to WHO from 16 countries. In addition, a total of 11 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H5N6) virus, including 6 deaths, have been detected in China since 2013. Although other influenza A(H5) viruses have the potential to cause disease in humans, no human cases have been reported so far. According to reports received by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), various influenza A(H5) subtypes, such as influenza A(H5N1), A(H5N2), A(H5N6), A(H5N8) and A(H5N9), continue to be detected in birds in West Africa, Europe and Asia. Overall, the public health risk assessment for avian influenza A(H5) viruses remains unchanged since the assessment of [17 July 2015](#).

Influenza A(H7N9)

On [19 April 2016](#), the Department of Health, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region notified WHO of a confirmed, imported case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus.

On [18 April 2016](#), the National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) of China notified WHO of 17 additional laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus, including 5 deaths.

Since [25 February 2016](#), China reported 29 new laboratory-confirmed human cases of avian influenza A(H7N9) virus infection to WHO. Additionally, one laboratory-confirmed case of avian influenza A(H7N9) virus infection was also reported to WHO from Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR).

A total of 752 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) viruses, including at least 295 deaths have been reported to WHO.

- [Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus \(MERS-CoV\)](#) latest update on 27 April 2016

Between [19 and 23 April 2016](#), the National IHR Focal Point for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia notified WHO of 3 additional cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV).

On [10 April 2016](#), the National IHR Focal Point of Bahrain notified WHO of a fatal case of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). This is the first case reported in Bahrain.

Up to 04 May 2016, a total of four cases of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus, MERS-CoV, (two imported and two linked cases) have been confirmed in the UK. On-going surveillance has identified 738 suspect cases in the UK that have been investigated for MERS-CoV and tested negative.

Globally, since September 2012, WHO has been notified of 1,728 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV, including at least 624 related deaths. Further information on management and guidance of possible cases is available [online](#). The latest ECDC MERS-CoV risk assessment can be found [here](#), where it is highlighted that risk of widespread transmission of MERS-CoV remains low.

Acknowledgements

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- Seasonal influenza vaccine programme ([Department of Health Book](#))
- Childhood flu programme information for healthcare practitioners ([Public Health England](#))
- 2015/16 Northern Hemisphere seasonal influenza vaccine recommendations ([WHO](#))