



# PHE Weekly National Influenza Report

## Summary of UK surveillance of influenza and other seasonal respiratory illnesses

26 January 2017 – Week 04 report (up to week 03 data)

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

During week 03 (ending 22 January 2017), influenza activity stabilised with decreases noted in some indicators such as GP consultations for influenza-like illness and influenza-related hospital admissions. The Department of Health has issued an [alert](#) on the prescription of antiviral medicines by GPs.

- [Community influenza surveillance](#)
  - Through the GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance system, GP consultations for respiratory conditions continued to decrease during week 03.
  - 110 new acute respiratory outbreaks have been reported in the past 7 days. 83 outbreaks were from care homes, where 25 tested positive for influenza (2 influenza A(H3) and 23 influenza A(not subtyped)) and one mixed infection of influenza A(not subtyped) and RSV. 17 outbreaks were from hospitals where nine tested positive for influenza (9 influenza A(not subtyped)) and one mixed infection of influenza A(not subtyped) and RSV. Ten outbreaks were from schools where two tested positive for influenza (1 influenza A(not subtyped) and 1 influenza A(H3)).
- [Overall weekly influenza GP consultation rates across the UK](#)
  - In week 03, the overall weekly influenza-like illness (ILI) GP consultation rate was 16.5 per 100,000 in England compared to 20.3 per 100,000 in the previous week. This is above the baseline threshold of 14.3 per 100,000 for this season, consistent with influenza circulating in the community. In the devolved administrations, ILI rates have decreased and are within their respective baseline thresholds in Scotland and Northern Ireland; however ILI rates in Wales remained similar to the previous week, but remain above their baseline threshold.
- [Influenza-confirmed hospitalisations](#)
  - In week 03, there were 65 admissions to ICU/HDU with confirmed influenza (35 influenza A(unknown subtype), 18 influenza A(H3N2), 10 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and two influenza B) were reported across the UK (123/156 Trusts in England) through the USISS mandatory ICU scheme with a rate of 0.16 per 100,000 compared to 0.18 per 100,000 in the previous week.
  - In week 03, there were 119 hospitalised confirmed influenza cases (61 influenza A(H3N2), 54 influenza A(not subtyped), three influenza B and one influenza A(H1N1pdm09)) reported through the USISS sentinel hospital network (15 NHS Trusts across England), with a rate of 2.13 per 100,000, compared to 2.56 per 100,000 in the previous week.
  - No confirmed influenza admissions have been reported from the six Severe Respiratory Failure centres in the UK in week 03.
- [All-cause mortality data](#)
  - In week 03 2017, statistically significant excess all-cause mortality by week of death was seen through the EuroMOMO algorithm in England overall and by age group, in the 15-64 year olds and 65+ year olds.
- [Microbiological surveillance](#)
  - 57 samples tested positive for influenza (43 influenza A(H3N2), 12 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 2 influenza B) through GP sentinel schemes across the UK, with an overall positivity of 36.8% in week 03 compared to the same (36.8%) in week 02.
  - 464 influenza positive detections were recorded through the DataMart scheme (371 influenza A(H3N2), 82 influenza A(unknown subtype), 2 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 9 influenza B) in week 03. The overall positivity was at 24.5% in week 03, which is above the threshold for 2016/17 season of 8.6%. The highest age-specific positivities were seen in the 65+ year olds (30.5%).
- [Vaccination](#)
  - Up to week 03 2017, in 85.6% of GP practices reporting weekly to Immform, the provisional proportion of people in England who had received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine in targeted groups was as follows: 48.2% in under 65 years in a clinical risk group, 44.8% in pregnant women and 70.4% in 65+ year olds. In 41.8% of GP practices reporting to Immform, the provisional proportion of children in England who had received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine was as follows: 38.8% in all 2 year olds, 41.3% in all 3 year olds and 33.6% in all 4 year olds.
  - Provisional data from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake in GP patients up to 31 December 2016 has been published. The [report](#) provides uptake at national, Area Team (AT), Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and by Local Authority (LA) levels.
  - Provisional data from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake by frontline healthcare workers show 61.8% were vaccinated by 31 December 2016, compared to 47.6% vaccinated in the previous season by 31 December 2015. The [report](#) provides uptake at Trust level.
  - Provisional [data](#) from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake for children of school years 1, 2 and 3 age show the provisional proportion of children in England who received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine via school, pharmacy or GP practice by 31 December 2016 in targeted groups was as follows: 56.6% in children of school Year 1 age (5-6 years); 54.4% in children of school Year 2 age (6-7 years); 52.4% in children of school Year 3 age (7-8 years).
- [International situation](#)
  - Globally, influenza activity in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere continued to increase, with many countries especially in Europe and East Asia passing their seasonal threshold early in comparison with previous years. Worldwide, influenza A(H3N2) virus was predominant.

Through the GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance system, GP consultations for respiratory conditions continued to decrease during week 03. 110 new acute respiratory outbreaks were reported in the past 7 days.

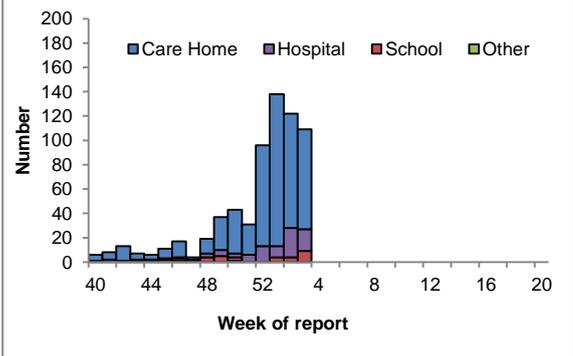
- PHE Real-time Syndromic Surveillance

- During week 03, there were continued decreases in GP consultations for respiratory conditions including influenza-like illness and pneumonia. There were, however, increases in upper respiratory tract infection and influenza-like illness in children aged <1, 1-4 and 5-14 years.
- For further information, please see the syndromic surveillance [webpage](#).

- Acute respiratory disease outbreaks

- 110 new acute respiratory outbreaks have been reported in the past 7 days. 83 outbreaks were from care homes, where 25 tested positive for influenza (23 influenza A(not subtyped) and 2 influenza A(H3)), two tested positive for RSV, one for a mixed infection of influenza A(not subtyped) and RSV, one was positive for human metapneumovirus (hMPV) and one enterovirus. 17 outbreaks were in hospitals where 9 tested positive for influenza (9 influenza A(not subtyped)), one for a mixed infection of influenza A(not subtyped) and RSV and one was positive for RSV. Ten outbreaks were from schools, where two tested positive for influenza (1 influenza A(not subtyped) and 1 influenza A(H3)).
- Outbreaks should be recorded on HPZone and reported to the local Health Protection Teams and [Respscidsc@phe.gov.uk](mailto:Respscidsc@phe.gov.uk).

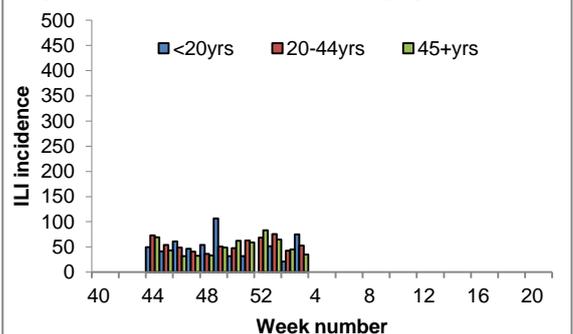
Figure 1: Number of acute respiratory outbreaks by institution, UK



- FluSurvey

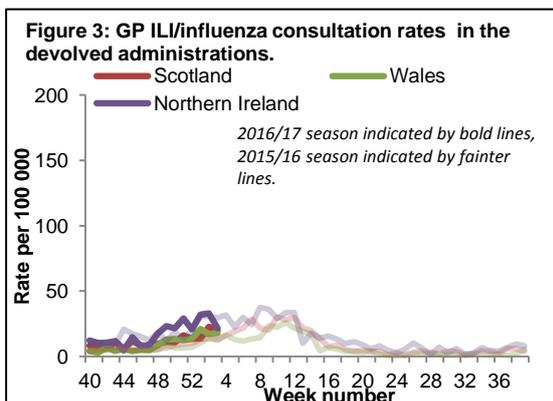
- Internet-based surveillance of influenza-like illness in the general population is undertaken through the FluSurvey. A project run jointly by PHE and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
- The overall ILI rate (all age groups) for week 03 was 41.7 per 1,000 (82/1,966 people reported at least 1 ILI), with the <20 years age group reporting a higher rate of 75.3 per 1,000.
- If you would like to become a participant of the FluSurvey project please do so by visiting the <https://flusurvey.org.uk/en/accounts/register/> website for more information.

Figure 2: FluSurvey ILI incidence by age group, UK



In week 03, the overall weekly influenza-like illness GP consultation rate has decreased and is above the baseline threshold in England. In the devolved administrations, ILI rates have decreased and are within their respective baseline thresholds in Scotland and Northern Ireland; however ILI rates has remained similar in Wales but remain above their baseline threshold.

- Influenza/Influenza-Like-Illness (ILI)



Northern Ireland

- The Northern Ireland ILI rate has decreased at 21.4 per 100,000 in week 03 compared to 33.0 per 100,000 in week 02 (Figure 3). This remains below the baseline threshold (47.9 per 100,000).
- The highest rates were seen in the 75+ year olds (37.6 per 100,000) and 45-64 year olds (29.4 per 100,000).

### Wales

-The Welsh ILI rate has remained similar at 17.8 per 100,000 in week 03 compared to 17.1 per 100,000 in week 02 (Figure 3). This remains above the baseline threshold (10.3 per 100,000).

- The highest rates were seen in the <1 year olds (34.9 per 100,000) and 45-64 year olds (25.9 per 100,000).

### Scotland

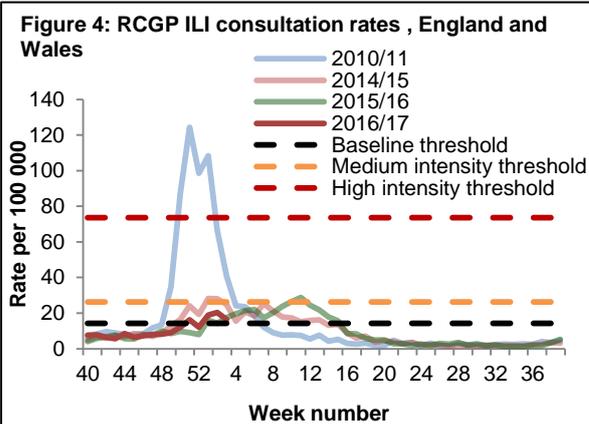
-The Scottish ILI rate has decreased at 19.7 per 100,000 in week 03 compared to 22.7 per 100,000 in week 02 (Figure 3). This remains below the baseline threshold (36.1 per 100,000).

-The highest rates were seen in 45-64 year olds (28.6 per 100,000) and 75+ year olds (27.4 per 100,000).

### RCGP (England and Wales)

- The weekly ILI consultation rate through the RCGP surveillance is at 16.5 per 100,000 in week 03 compared to 20.3 per 100,000 in week 02. This is above the baseline threshold (14.3 per 100,000), consistent with influenza circulating in the community (Figure 4\*). By age group, the highest rates were seen in 45-64 year olds (21.9 per 100,000) and 15-44 year olds (17.0 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.*



### GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance System (England)

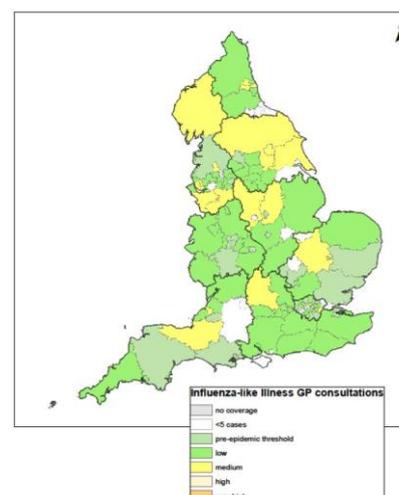
-The weekly ILI consultation rate through the GP In Hours Syndromic Surveillance system is at 12.8 per 100,000 in week 03 (Figure 5).

Figure 5 represents a map of GP ILI consultation rates in Week 03 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 03**



## **Influenza confirmed hospitalisations**

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**In week 03, there were 65 admissions to ICU/HDU with confirmed influenza (35 influenza A(unknown subtype), 18 influenza A(H3N2), 10 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and two influenza B) reported through the USISS mandatory ICU/HDU surveillance scheme across the UK (123 Trusts). 119 hospitalised confirmed influenza cases (61 influenza A(H3N2), 54 influenza A(not subtyped), three influenza B and one influenza A(H1N1pdm09)) were reported through the USISS sentinel hospital network across England (15 Trusts).**

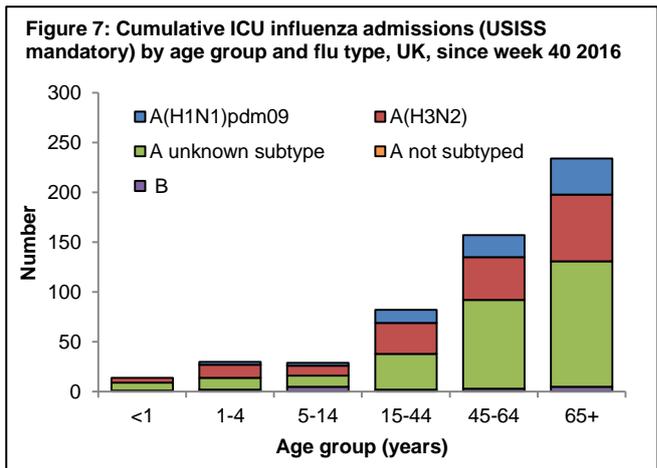
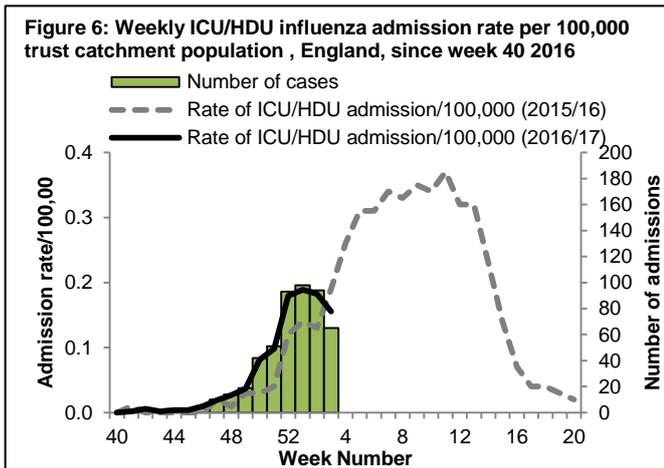
A national mandatory collection (USISS mandatory ICU scheme) is operating in cooperation with the Department of Health to report the number of confirmed influenza cases admitted to Intensive Care Units (ICU) and High Dependency Units (HDU) and number of confirmed influenza deaths in ICU/HDU across the 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 03)

- In week 03, there were 65 admissions to ICU/HDU with confirmed influenza (35 influenza A(unknown subtype), 18 influenza A(H3N2), 10 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and two influenza B) reported across the UK (123/156 Trusts in England) through the USISS mandatory ICU scheme, with a rate of 0.16 per 100,000 compared to a rate of 0.18 per 100,000 in week 02 (Figures 6 and 7). Eleven deaths were reported in week 03.

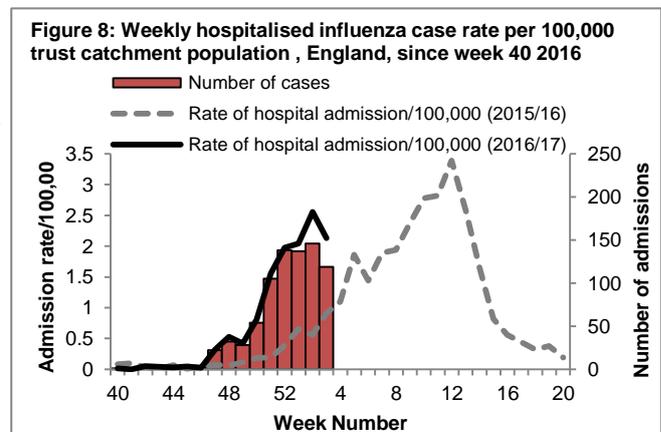
A total of 546 admissions (282 influenza A(unknown subtype), 169 influenza A(H3N2), 77 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09, and 18 influenza B) and 53 confirmed deaths have been reported since week 40 2016.



- USISS sentinel weekly hospitalised confirmed influenza cases, England (week 03)

- In week 03, there were 119 hospitalised confirmed influenza cases (61 influenza A(H3N2), 54 influenza A(not subtyped), three influenza B and one influenza A(H1N1pdm09)) reported through the USISS sentinel hospital network from 15 NHS Trusts across England (Figure 8), a rate of 2.13 per 100,000 compared to 2.56 per 100,000 in the previous week.

A total of 796 hospitalised confirmed influenza admissions (526 influenza A(H3N2), 247 influenza A(not subtyped) and 22 influenza B) have been reported since week 40 2016.



- USISS Severe Respiratory Failure Centre confirmed influenza admissions, UK (week 03)

- In week 03, there were no confirmed influenza admissions reported from the six Severe Respiratory Failure (SRF) centres in the UK. There have been two confirmed influenza admissions (1 influenza A(H3N2) and 1 influenza A(unknown subtype)) reported since week 40 2016.

### All-cause mortality data

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**In week 03 2017 in England, statistically significant excess all-cause mortality by week of death was seen through the EuroMOMO algorithm in England overall, in 15-64 year olds and 65+ year olds. In the devolved administrations, no significant excess all-cause mortality was observed in week 03.**

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 02 2017, an estimated 13,715 all-cause deaths were registered in England and Wales (source: [Office for National Statistics](#)). This is an increase compared to the 11,991 estimated death registrations in week 01 2017.

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

-In week 03 2017 in England, excess mortality by week of death above the upper 2 z-score threshold was seen in all ages, 15-64 year olds and 65+ year olds England after correcting ONS disaggregate data for reporting delay with the standardised [EuroMoMo](#) algorithm (Table 1). No significant excess was seen in the other age groups. Subnationally, excess mortality was seen in the London, South East, East Midlands and Yorkshire and Humber regions. This data is provisional due to the time delay in registration; numbers may vary from week to week.

- In the devolved administrations, no significant excess mortality above the threshold was observed in Scotland or Wales in week 03 (Table 2). Data was not available for Northern Ireland

**Table 1: Excess mortality by age group, England\***

Age group (years)	Excess detected in week 03 2017?	Weeks with excess in 2016/17
<5	x	48
5-14	x	-
15-64	✓	51-03
65+	✓	52-03

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

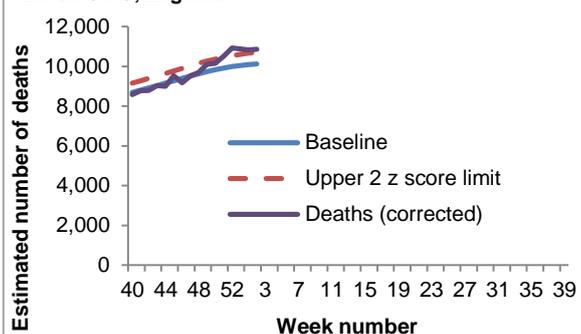
**Table 2: Excess mortality by UK country, for all ages\***

Country	Excess detected in week 03 2017?	Weeks with excess in 2016/17
England	✓	51-03
Wales	x	52
Scotland	x	46,50,51,01
Northern Ireland	-	-

\* 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 9: Excess mortality in all ages by week of death, EuroMoMo, England**



## Microbiological surveillance

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In week 03 2017, 57 samples tested positive for influenza (43 influenza A(H3N2), 12 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 2 influenza B) through the UK GP sentinel schemes with an overall positivity of 36.8%. 464 positive detections were recorded through the DataMart scheme (371 influenza A(H3N2), 82 influenza A(not subtyped), 2 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 9 influenza B) with a positivity of 24.5% in week 03.

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

-In week 03, 57 samples tested positive for influenza (43 influenza A(H3N2), 12 influenza A(unknown subtype) and 2 influenza B) through the UK GP sentinel swabbing schemes, with an overall positivity of 36.8% compared to the same (36.8%) in week 02 (Table 3).

Since week 40 2016, 505 samples (444 influenza A(H3N2), 34 influenza A(unknown subtype), 3 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 24 influenza B) have tested positive for influenza through this scheme.

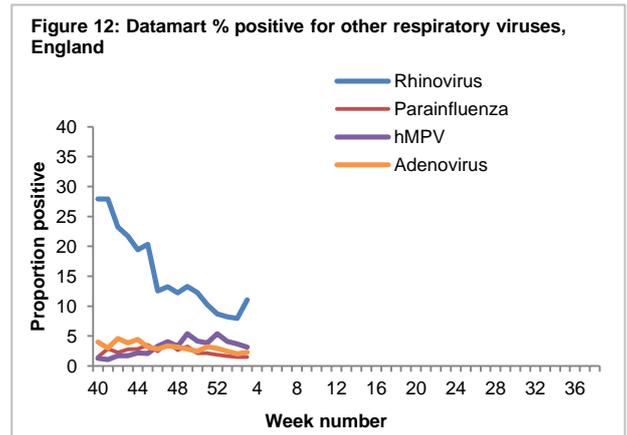
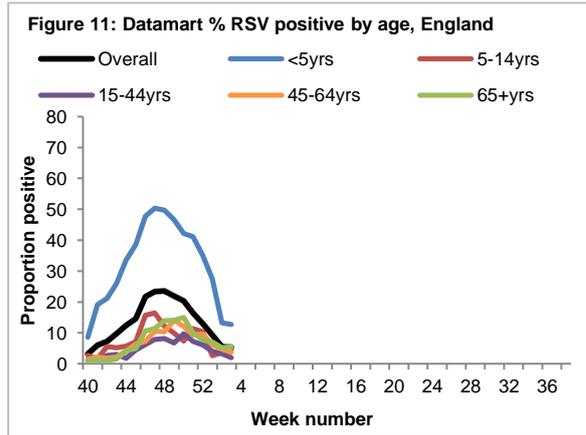
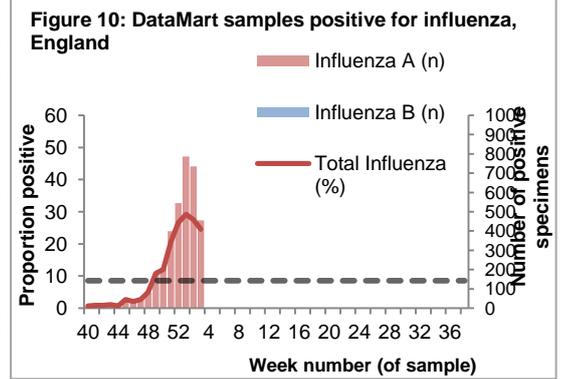
**Table 3: Sentinel influenza surveillance in the UK**

Week	England	Scotland	Northern Ireland	Wales
51	48/162 (29.6%)	14/84 (16.7%)	5/14 (35.7%)	4/15 (26.7%)
52	40/95 (42.1%)	22/69 (31.9%)	3/8 (-)	4/14 (28.6%)
01	51/135 (37.8%)	19/56 (33.9%)	8/13 (61.5%)	5/12 (41.7%)
02	48/117 (41%)	31/102 (30.4%)	3/13 (23.1%)	9/15 (60%)
03	40/103 (38.8%)	14/43 (32.6%)	3/8 (-)	0/1 (-)

NB. Proportion positive omitted when fewer than 10 specimen tested

- Respiratory DataMart System (England)

In week 03 2017, out of the 1,894 respiratory specimens reported through the Respiratory DataMart System, 464 samples (24.5%) were positive for influenza (371 influenza A(H3N2), 82 influenza A(not subtyped), 2 influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 9 influenza B) (Figure 10), which is above the MEM threshold for this season of 8.6%. The highest positivity by age group was seen in the 65+ year olds (30.5%). The overall positivity for RSV decreased at 5.4% in week 03. The highest positivity was noted in the <5 year olds at 12.8% in week 03 (Figure 11). Positivity for rhinovirus increased from 8.0% in week 02 to 11.1% in week 03. Positivities for parainfluenza and adenovirus remained at similarly low levels at 1.5% and 2.3% respectively in week 03. Positivity for human metapneumovirus (hMPV) decreased slightly from 3.7% in week 02 to 3.1% in week 03.



\*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 8.6% in 2016/17.

- Virus characterisation

PHE characterises the properties of influenza viruses through one or more tests, including genome sequencing (genetic analysis) and haemagglutination inhibition (HI) assays (antigenic analysis). These data are used to compare how similar the currently circulating influenza viruses are to the strains included in seasonal influenza vaccines, and to monitor for changes in circulating influenza viruses. The interpretation of genetic and antigenic data sources is complex due to a number of factors, for example, not all viruses can be cultivated in sufficient quantity for antigenic characterisation, so that viruses with sequence information may not be able to be antigenically characterised as well.

Since the start of the 2016/17 winter influenza season in week 40 2016, the PHE Respiratory Virus Unit has characterised two A(H1N1)pdm09 influenza viruses: one genetically and one antigenically. The A(H1N1)pdm09 virus genetically characterised belongs in the genetic subgroup 6B.1, which was the predominant genetic subgroup in the 2015/16 season. The virus antigenically analysed is similar to the A/California/7/2009 Northern Hemisphere 2016/17 (H1N1)pdm09 vaccine strain.

Genetic characterisation of 94 A(H3N2) influenza viruses since week 40 showed that they all belong to genetic subclade 3C.2a, with 53 belonging to a cluster within this genetic subclade designated as 3C.2a1. Viruses within this cluster are antigenically similar to other 3C.2a subclade viruses, which was the majority group circulating during the 2015/16 season. The Northern Hemisphere 2016/17 influenza A(H3N2) vaccine strain A/HongKong/4801/2014 belongs in genetic subclade 3C.2a. Eleven influenza A(H3N2) viruses have been isolated and antigenically characterised since week 40 2016. The viruses antigenically analysed are similar to the A/HongKong/4801/2014 Northern Hemisphere 2016/17 A(H3N2) vaccine strain.

Three influenza B viruses have been analysed genetically since week 40/2015 and have been characterised as belonging to the B/Yamagata/16/88-lineage. One influenza B virus has been isolated and antigenically characterised since week 40 2016. This virus was characterised as belonging to the B/Yamagata/16/88-lineage and was antigenically similar to B/Phuket/3073/2013, the influenza B/Yamagata-lineage component of 2016/17 Northern Hemisphere quadrivalent vaccine.

- Antiviral susceptibility

Influenza positive samples are screened for mutations in the virus neuraminidase gene known to confer oseltamivir and/or zanamivir resistance. Additionally, testing of influenza A (H1N1)pdm09, A(H3N2), and influenza B virus isolates for neuraminidase inhibitor susceptibility (oseltamivir and zanamivir) is performed at PHE-RVU using a functional assay. The data summarized below combine the results of both testing methods. The samples tested are routinely obtained for surveillance purposes, but diagnostic testing of patients suspected to be infected with neuraminidase inhibitor-resistant virus is also performed.

Since week 40 2016, 100 influenza A(H3N2) have been tested for oseltamivir susceptibility; 96 are fully susceptible. 87 of the 100 were also tested for zanamivir susceptibility with 84 being fully susceptible. Three A(H3N2) viruses have been detected with an R292K amino acid substitution, which causes resistance to oseltamivir and a reduction in susceptibility to zanamivir, and one A(H3N2) virus with an E119V amino acid substitution was detected, causing resistance to oseltamivir but not affecting zanamivir susceptibility. All three R292K cases and the E119V case have been identified in patients with underlying medical conditions with some exposure to oseltamivir. Only one influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 virus and 5 influenza B (Yamagata) virus have been tested and all were fully susceptible to neuraminidase inhibitors.

- Antimicrobial susceptibility

-Table 4 shows in the 12 weeks up to 22 January 2017, 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 22 January 2017, E&W

Organism	Antibiotic	Specimens tested (N)	Specimens susceptible (%)
<i>S. pneumoniae</i>	Penicillin	3,834	91
	Macrolides	4,318	82
	Tetracycline	4,184	84
<i>H. influenzae</i>	Amoxicillin/ampicillin	15,166	69
	Co-amoxiclav	15,738	87
	Macrolides	5,519	13
<i>S. aureus</i>	Tetracycline	15,392	98
	Methicillin	6,226	90
	Macrolides	6,703	68
MRSA	Clindamycin	375	39
	Tetracycline	559	80
MSSA	Clindamycin	3,239	78
	Tetracycline	5,238	93

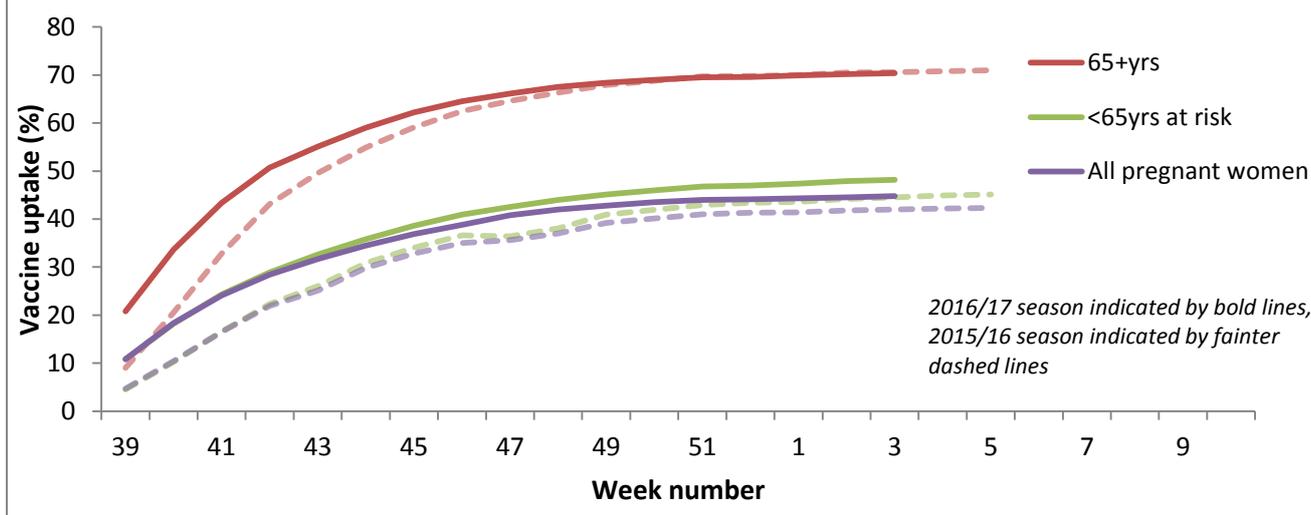
\*Macrolides = erythromycin, azithromycin and clarithromycin

## Vaccination

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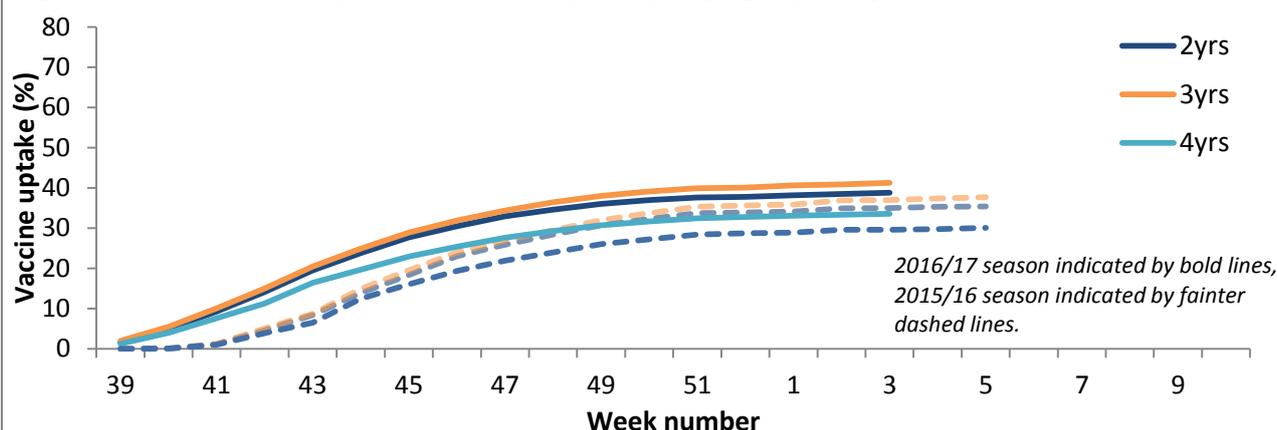
- Up to week 03 2017 in 85.8% of GP practices reporting weekly to Immform, the provisional proportion of people in England who had received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine in targeted groups was as follows, with vaccination activity starting earlier than last season (Figure 13):
  - 48.2% in under 65 years in a clinical risk group
  - 44.8% in pregnant women
  - 70.4% in 65+ year olds

Figure 13: Cumulative weekly influenza vaccine uptake by target group in England



- In 2016/17, 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, 2 and 3 age. Up to week 03 2017 in 88.9% of GP practices reporting weekly to Immform, the provisional proportion of children in England who had received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine in targeted groups was as follows (Figure 14):
  - 38.8% in all 2 year olds
  - 41.3% in all 3 year olds
  - 33.6% in all 4 year olds

Figure 14: Cumulative weekly influenza vaccine uptake by target group in England



- Provisional data from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake in GP patients up to 31 December 2016 show that in 95.4% of all GP practices in England responding to the main GP survey, the proportion of people in England who received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine was as follows:
  - 46.9% in under 65 years in a clinical risk group
  - 44.1% in pregnant women
  - 69.6% in 65+ year olds
- Provisional data from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake in GP patients up to 31 December 2016 show that in 96.2% of all GP practices in England responding to the child GP survey, the proportion of people in England who received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine was as follows:
  - 37.8% in all 2 year olds
  - 40.1% in all 3 year olds
  - 33.1% in all 4 year olds
- Provisional data from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake by frontline healthcare workers show 61.8% were vaccinated by 31 December 2016 from 97.7% of Trusts, compared to 47.6% vaccinated in the previous season by 31 December 2015. The report provides uptake at Trust level.
- Provisional data from the third monthly collection of influenza vaccine uptake for children of school years 1, 2 and 3 age (from a sample of 100% of all Local Authorities in England) show the proportion of children in England who received the 2016/17 influenza vaccine via school, pharmacy or GP practice by 31 December 2016 in targeted groups was as follows:
  - 56.6% in children of school Year 1 age (5-6 years)
  - 54.4% in children of school Year 2 age (6-7 years)
  - 52.4% in children of school Year 3 age (7-8 years)

## International Situation

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**Influenza activity in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere remained widespread especially in Europe and East Asia passing their seasonal threshold early in comparison with previous years. Worldwide, influenza A(H3N2) virus was predominant.**

- [Europe](#) updated on 20 January 2017 (Joint ECDC-WHO Influenza weekly update)

In week 02/2017, influenza activity remained widespread across the region with high or very high intensity in 8 out of 44 reporting countries or regions and medium intensity in 26 countries.

In week 02/2017, 1,382 of 3,009 (46%) sentinel specimens tested positive for influenza viruses. Of these, 97% were type A and 3% were type B. The great majority (>99%) of subtyped influenza A viruses were A(H3N2). The lineage of seven influenza B viruses was determined with 5 being B/Yamagata lineage. Of 32 countries across the region that each tested at least 10 sentinel specimens, 24 reported proportions of influenza virus detections above 30% (median 55%, range 37% to 75%).

For week 02/2017, of the 15 countries that conduct sentinel surveillance on severe acute respiratory infection (SARI), 12 reported data and all 8 countries that conduct surveillance on hospitalized laboratory-confirmed influenza cases reported data.

Of 1,416 SARI cases reported, 336 were tested for influenza and 129 (38%) were positive: 98 A(H3N2), 24 unsubtype influenza type A viruses and 7 influenza type B viruses were detected. Since week 40/2016, 18,737 SARI cases have been reported from 15 countries with 4,814 being tested for influenza, of which 1,822 (38%) were positive: 1,578 (87%) were infected by type A and 244 (13%) by type B viruses. Of the influenza A viruses, 1,487 (94%) were A(H3N2) and 91 (6%) were unsubtype.

For week 2/2017, 9 027 specimens from non-sentinel sources (such as hospitals, schools, non-sentinel primary care facilities, nursing homes and other institutions) tested positive for influenza viruses. Of these, 97% were type A (with more than 99% of the subtype viruses being A(H3N2)), and 3% type B.

- [United States of America](#) updated on 20 January 2017 (Centre for Disease Control report)

During week 02, influenza activity increased in the United States.

The most frequently identified influenza virus subtype reported by public health laboratories during week 02 was influenza A (H3). The percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza in clinical laboratories increased.

A cumulative rate for the season of 10.2 laboratory-confirmed influenza-associated hospitalizations per 100,000 population was reported.

Nationwide during week 02, the proportion of outpatient visits for influenza-like illness (ILI) was 3.3%, which is above the national baseline of 2.2%.

- [Canada](#) updated on 20 January 2017 (Public Health Agency report)

For the past two weeks, several indicators including laboratory detections, outbreaks and hospitalizations have been at their highest levels of the season.

A total of 3,477 positive influenza detections were reported in week 02, an increase from the previous week. A(H3N2) continues to be the most common type of influenza affecting Canadians.

The majority of cases, hospitalizations and deaths have been among adults aged 65+ years.

106 confirmed influenza outbreaks were reported in week 02, with the majority occurring in long-term care facilities and due to influenza A.

A total of 467 hospitalizations were reported by participating provinces and territories, up from 445 hospitalizations reported in the previous week.

- [Global influenza update](#) updated on 23 January 2017 (WHO website)

Influenza activity in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere continued to increase, with many countries especially in East Asia and Europe having passed their seasonal threshold early in comparison with previous years. Worldwide, influenza A(H3N2) virus was predominant. The majority of influenza viruses characterized so far was similar antigenically to the reference viruses contained in vaccines for use in the 2016-2017 northern hemisphere influenza season. All tested viruses collected recently for antiviral sensitivity were susceptible to the neuraminidase inhibitor antiviral medications. In North America, influenza activity continued to increase with influenza A(H3N2) virus predominating. Influenza-like illness (ILI) levels just surpassed the seasonal thresholds in the United States. In the United States, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity increased.

In Europe, influenza activity was high, with influenza A (H3N2) virus being the most prominent subtype. Persons aged over 65 years were most frequently associated with severe disease from influenza infection.

In North America, influenza activity continued to increase with influenza A(H3N2) virus predominating. In the United States of America, influenza-like illness (ILI) levels were above the seasonal thresholds and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity continued to be reported.

In East Asia, high influenza activity continued to be reported with influenza A(H3N2) viruses predominant. In Western Asia, influenza activity slightly increased. In Southern Asia influenza activity remained low in most of the countries. Detection of influenza A (H3N2) virus continued to be reported by the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka. In South East Asia, influenza activity remained low, with influenza A(H3N2) virus and influenza B predominating in the region.

In Northern Africa, influenza detections continued to be reported in Morocco and Tunisia with influenza A(H3N2) virus dominating. In West Africa, influenza continued to be detected in Ghana with B viruses dominating.

In the Caribbean countries and Central America, influenza and other respiratory virus activity remained low in general.

In tropical South America, influenza and other respiratory viruses activity remained low.

In the temperate zone of the Southern Hemisphere, influenza activity was at inter-seasonal levels.

Based on FluNet reporting, the WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 124,657 specimens between 12 December 2016 and 25 December 2016. 25,263 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 24,223 (95.9%) were typed as influenza A and 1,040 (4.1%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 159 (1.3%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 11,927 (98.7%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the characterized B viruses, 67 (34.9%) belonged to the B-Yamagata lineage and 125 (65.1%) to the B-Victoria lineage.

- [Avian Influenza](#) latest update on 16 January 2017 (WHO website)

### **Influenza A(H5) viruses**

On [07 December 2016](#), two new laboratory-confirmed human case of influenza A(H5N6) virus infection was reported to WHO from the National Health and Family Planning Commission (NHFPC) of China.

Since 2003, a total of 856 laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H5N1) virus, including 452 deaths, have been reported to WHO from 16 countries.

Although other influenza A(H5) subtype viruses have the potential to cause disease in humans, no human cases, other than those with influenza A(H5N1) and A(H5N6), have been reported so far. According to reports received by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), various influenza A(H5) subtypes continue to be detected in birds in West Africa, Europe and Asia. There have also been numerous detections of influenza A(H5N8) viruses in wild birds and domestic poultry in several countries in Asia and Europe since June 2016.

### **Influenza A(H7N9)**

On [11 January 2017](#), the Department of Health, China, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) notified WHO of a laboratory-confirmed human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus and on 12 January 2017, the Health Bureau, China, Macao SAR notified WHO of an additional laboratory-confirmed case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus.

On [5 January 2017](#), the Department of Health, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) notified WHO of a case of laboratory-confirmed human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus and on 9 January 2017, the National Health and Family Planning Commission of China (NHFPC) notified WHO of 106 additional laboratory-confirmed cases of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus.

A total of 918 laboratory-confirmed human infections with avian influenza A (H7N9) virus, including 359 deaths have been reported through IHR notification since early 2013.

### **Influenza A(H7N2)**

Between [20 December 2016 and 16 January 2017](#), the United States of America (USA) reported one laboratory confirmed human case of influenza A(H7N2) virus infection to WHO. The likely source of infection in the human was through close contact with ill cats infected with an A(H7N2) virus. More information on influenza in cats, influenza A(H7N2), and the human infection with A(H7N2) can be found [here](#).

### **Influenza A(H9N2)**

Between [20 December 2016 and 16 January 2017](#), One new laboratory-confirmed human case of A(H9N2) virus infection was reported to WHO from China in a seven-month-old girl from Guangdong province. Avian influenza A(H9N2) viruses are enzootic in poultry in China.

- [Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus \(MERS-CoV\)](#) latest update on 17 January 2017

Between [16 and 31 December 2016](#) the National IHR Focal Point of Saudi Arabia reported fifteen (15) additional cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) including two (2) fatal cases. Five (5) deaths among previously reported MERS cases were also reported.

Up to 25 January 2017, 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 930 suspect cases in the UK that have been investigated for MERS-CoV and tested negative.

Globally, since September 2012, WHO has been notified of 1,879 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV, including at least 666 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.

This report was prepared by the Influenza section, Respiratory Diseases Department, Centre for Infectious Disease Surveillance and Control, Public Health England. We are grateful to all who provided data for this report including the RCGP Research and Surveillance Centre, the PHE Real-time Syndromic Surveillance team, the PHE Respiratory Virus Unit, the PHE Modelling and Statistics unit, the PHE Dept. of Healthcare Associated Infection & Antimicrobial Resistance, PHE regional microbiology laboratories, Office for National Statistics, the Department of Health, Health Protection Scotland, National Public Health Service (Wales), the Public Health Agency Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, QSurveillance<sup>®</sup> and EMIS and EMIS practices contributing to the QSurveillance<sup>®</sup> database.

**Weekly consultation rates in national sentinel schemes**

- [Sentinel schemes operating across the UK](#)
- [RCGP scheme](#)
- Northern Ireland surveillance ([Public Health Agency](#))
- Scotland surveillance ([Health Protection Scotland](#))
- Wales surveillance ([Public Health Wales](#))
- [Real time syndromic surveillance](#)
- MEM threshold [methodology paper](#) and [UK pilot paper](#)

**Community surveillance**

- [Outbreak reporting](#)
- [FluSurvey](#)
- [MOSA](#)

**Disease severity and mortality data**

- [USISS](#) system
- [EuroMOMO](#) mortality project

**Vaccination**

- Seasonal influenza vaccine programme ([Department of Health Book](#))
- Childhood flu programme information for healthcare practitioners ([Public Health England](#))
- 2016/17 Northern Hemisphere seasonal influenza vaccine recommendations ([WHO](#))