

## ESICM Seasonal Influenza Report (in conjunction with ECDC)

Several European Countries have been experiencing extra-ordinary levels of activity relating to seasonal influenza over the last few weeks. In conjunction with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) we have therefore agreed to provide this update for all ESICM members on the current situation.

Andy Rhodes  
President, ESICM

## ECDC Influenza Digest January 20<sup>th</sup> 2011

### Intensification of the European Seasonal Epidemics

The data from the [Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview \(WISO\) - Influenza in Europe Week 1 2011 14<sup>th</sup> January](#) indicates that the 2010-2011 epidemics are now intensifying and they remain dominated by A(H1N1)2009 and B viruses. ECDC has developed an RSS Feed for the WISO available for subscription [here](#) or via the listing of all [ECDC RSS Feeds](#). **In more detail the WISO reports this week that:**

- Most countries are now reporting regional or widespread influenza activity, with medium to high influenza-like illness/acute respiratory infection (ILI/ARI) consultation rates and increasing trends. This is more prominent in Western European countries.
- Forty-three per cent of sentinel swabs tested positive for influenza: 71% were type A, and of the type A viruses subtyped, 97% were A(H1N1) 2009.
- Since week 40/2010, 1148 severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) cases, including 37 fatal cases, have been reported by seven countries.
- In addition to the UK, other countries are now reporting cases requiring higher level care and deaths in young adults associated with influenza infection. Most are with A(H1N1) 2009 virus, but some are with B viruses as well

The current dominance of the A(H1N1)2009 influenza viruses is making the epidemics different in character from the previous seasonal influenza. Younger people are affected, most in clinical risk groups including pregnant women but also some entirely healthy people. At least in the first affected country, the UK, the impact of the epidemics is considerable with [around 600 people currently receiving higher level care in hospitals in England](#).

Descriptions of the UK situation appear on the [Influenza section of the Health Protection Agency web-site](#) every Thursday afternoon with the most recent epidemiological analysis for [week 2-2011 January 12<sup>th</sup>](#). This shows another rise in community consultations and deaths (both with confirmed influenza and also all-cause). The all-cause data should not be over-interpreted as it will also reflect the severe weather and other respiratory infections. There are also new data on the proportion of higher level care beds occupied

in England from its Department of Health on its Winter-watch Site  
<http://winterwatch.dh.gov.uk>.

### **ECDC Seasonal Influenza Spotlight**

#### **ECDC 'Spotlight on Influenza' - a theme site for seasonal influenza**

Europe has started the first influenza season after the 2009 pandemic influenza. The initial picture is different from the 'old' seasonal influenza (up to 2008) and more similar to the pandemic through the addition of B viruses may be raising overall intensity levels especially in hospitals. However what people in Europe can do to protect themselves and others has not changed – immunisation and personal measures (hand washing and early self-isolation). Briefings on these topics are provided in formats accessible to citizens, experts and policy makers with an [Animation Graphic](#), and [Expert Video Blog](#), a [Citizens Factsheet](#) and other relevant resources. They may also be found through the [European Commission Seasonal Influenza web-site](#).

### **Epidemiological Updates**

#### **WISO - Influenza in Europe Week 01 (Jan 03<sup>rd</sup>-Jan 09<sup>th</sup>), issued 14<sup>th</sup> January.**

#### **WHO Fortnightly Report**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has published its latest fortnightly on January 14<sup>th</sup> 2011. Outside of Europe, it mentions that in North Asia, Mongolia, Northern China, the Republic of Korea and Japan have all reported increases in respiratory disease activity in recent weeks. In Mongolia and northern China, the dominant virus is influenza A (H3N2) and it may have peaked early around the third week of December. However, in the Republic of Korea, very little H3N2 is being detected and over 90% of influenza viruses reported there were A(H1N1)2009. Japan had earlier detected mostly A(H3N2) similar to Mongolia and northern China but more recently A(H1N1)2009 has predominated see the web-site of the [National Institute for Infectious Diseases](#). There is now a mailing list for the WHO report and those wishing to subscribe to that should email [garniers@who.int](mailto:garniers@who.int) The WHO Regional Office for Europe summaries appear [here](#) and there is also a [WHO-Europe web-page](#).

### **Scientific Advances**

#### **Three European studies show effectiveness of 2009 pandemic influenza vaccines**

[Estimates of Pandemic Influenza Vaccine Effectiveness in Europe, 2009–2010: Results of Influenza Monitoring Vaccine Effectiveness in Europe \(I-MOVE\) Multicentre Case-Control Study](#)

Valenciano M, Kissling E, Cohen JM, et al. PLoS Med 8(1): e1000388; 2011

[Age-specific effectiveness of an oil-in-water adjuvanted pandemic \(H1N1\) 2009 vaccine against confirmed infection in high risk groups in England](#)

Andrews N, Waight P, Yung CF, et al. J Infect Dis. 2011 Jan; 203(1):32-9

[Effectiveness of pandemic and seasonal influenza vaccine in preventing pandemic influenza A\(H1N1\)2009 infection in England and Scotland 2009-2010](#)

Hardelid P, Fleming DM, McMenamin J, et al. Euro Surveill. 2011; 16(2):pii=19763

### **Public Health Developments**

## **Influenza season 2010/11 – Norway's risk assessment and revisited vaccine recommendations**

In Norway, influenza experts from the Norwegian Institute of Public Health have made a risk assessment for the remainder of the 2010/11 influenza season. Norway's influenza vaccination recommendations have also been reconsidered.

### **Other Euro Surveillance articles**

#### **Effectiveness of the 2009 seasonal influenza vaccine against pandemic influenza A(H1N1)2009 in healthcare workers in New Zealand, June-August 2009**

Jefferies S, Earl D, Berry N, et al.

Euro Surveill. 2011; 16(2):pii=19761

This study carried out in New Zealand analyses the effectiveness of the 2009 seasonal influenza vaccination in protecting from infection with the 2009 pandemic influenza A(H1N1) virus. To do this, the authors investigated 548 healthcare workers (HCW's) from the Capital and Coast District Health Boards in Wellington, presenting with influenza-like illness during the influenza pandemic between June 2009 and August 2009. The risk of pandemic influenza A(H1N1) infection associated with the 2009 seasonal inactivated trivalent influenza vaccine was determined by logistic regression, with adjustment for potential confounding variables. Of the total number of HCW's, 96 tested positive for pandemic influenza A(H1N1) 2009 and 452 tested negative. Since the multivariate analysis performed by the researchers did not show any effect of vaccination on PCR-confirmed influenza A(H1N1)2009 infection (odds ratio 1.2, 95% confidence interval 0.7–1.9,  $p=0.48$ ), they concluded that 2009 seasonal influenza vaccination had no protective effect against influenza A(H1N1)2009 infection amongst HCW's.