Influenza A (H1N1) deaths

H1N1-related deaths now total 64

Two more swine flu deaths have been confirmed, bringing the total number of deaths to 64.

A Scottish adult transferred to Leicester has died after contracting H1N1 and post mortem tests have now confirmed that a patient being treated in NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde who died in October had H1N1. Both patients had underlying health conditions.

The latest figures from Health Protection Scotland about the incidence of influenza A (H1N1) in Scotland have also been published today. This week these do not include an estimate of the number of people who have contracted H1N1, since the three-day working week means the number of swabs and GP consultations is too low to produce a reliable estimate.

The findings are:

- A rate of GP consultations for flu-like illness – not necessarily H1N1 – across Scotland of 110.9 per 100,000, a slight decrease on last week’s figure of 113.3.

- The proportion of community samples (based on a smaller number of samples than in previous weeks) that tested positive for H1N1 was 15.6 per cent, a slight decrease on last week’s figure of 17.9 per cent.

- There is no estimate this week of the total number of people estimated to have contracted H1N1. This is because the three-day working week has meant the number of swabs and GP consultations was too low to produce a reliable estimate.

- The proportion of cold and flu related calls to NHS 24 increased from 3.9 per cent to 4.1 per cent.
• As of January 6, there have been 1,482 people with influenza A (H1N1) hospitalised since the start of the outbreak. In the last week 8 people have required hospital admission.

• The estimated uptake rate of the vaccine so far for people under 65 years in a clinical at risk group is 48.3 per cent, among individuals aged 65 years and over in a clinical at risk group is 42.3 per cent and among pregnant women is 45.0 per cent. Overall this equates to a vaccination rate of 45.6 per cent – up from 42.4 the previous week.

• The estimated uptake rate so far among front line health and social care staff is 50.8 per cent and 32.1 per cent respectively.

• There have been 64 deaths linked to influenza A (H1N1) since the start of the outbreak.

Health Secretary Nicola Sturgeon said:

“Unfortunately we have had confirmation of two H1N1-related deaths, and my deepest sympathies go to the patients’ families and friends.

“This week’s figures suggest a stable picture across Scotland. The rate of people seeing their GP for flu-like symptoms is down, as is the number of people testing positive for H1N1 and the number of hospitalisations.

“Vaccination remains our best defence against this pandemic, and I would urge everyone who has been invited to have the jag to come forward. As the programme enters its second phase and children aged six months to five years are offered immunisation, I would encourage all parents to ensure their children are vaccinated.”

Anyone who is concerned about flu-like symptoms should continue to contact their GP for advice, or NHS 24 on 08454 24 24 24. Further information on the vaccine programme is available via the Scottish Swine Flu Vaccination Helpline on 08000 28 28 16.

Background

Please note that GP surgeries were open for three days in the week leading up to New Year’s Day, compared to the four working days of the previous week, therefore comparisons should be made with caution.

Rates of GP consultations for flu-like illness per 100,000 population in Scottish NHS Boards:

• Ayrshire and Arran – 81.2
• Borders – 189.7
• Dumfries and Galloway – 185.4
• Fife – 87.0
• Forth Valley – 76.5
• Grampian – 73.4
• Greater Glasgow and Clyde – 167.5
• Highland – 103.6
• Lanarkshire – 76.4
• Lothian – 72.3
• Orkney – 92.8
• Shetland – 275.1
• Tayside – 124.1
• Western Isles – 375.3
• Scotland – 110.9

Population figures per board area, mid-year 2008 estimates (GROS)
• Ayrshire and Arran - 367,510
• Borders - 112,430
• Dumfries and Galloway - 148,580
• Fife - 361,815
• Forth Valley - 290,047
• Grampian - 539,630
• Greater Glasgow and Clyde - 1,194,675
• Highland - 309,900
- Lanarkshire - 561,174
- Lothian - 817,727
- Orkney - 19,890
- Shetland - 21,980
- Tayside - 396,942
- Western Isles - 26,200
- Scotland - 5,168,500

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