

Glen Abbot Ltd.

Swine Flu Briefing 39 – 25/10/2009

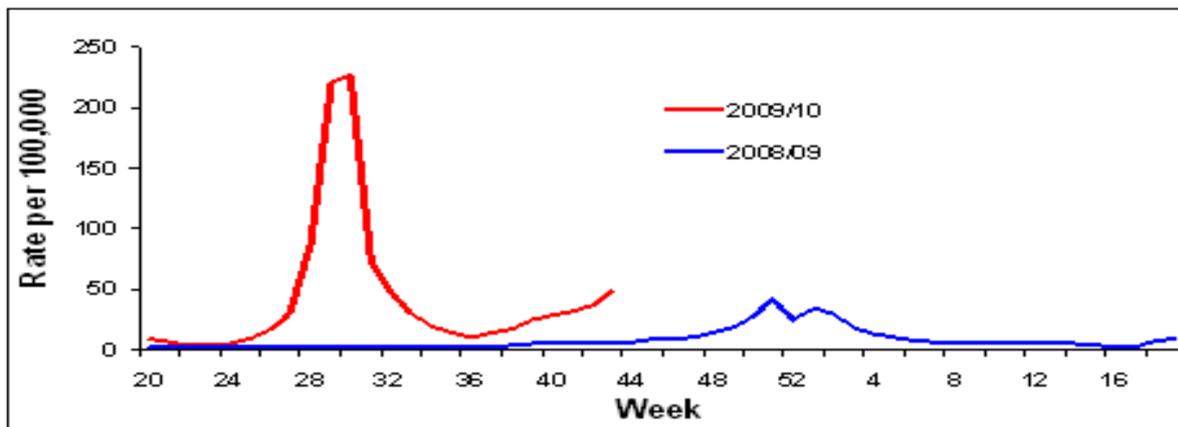
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Current Situation:

The H1N1 virus continues to spread with more cases being reported but the increase in England this week of 56% (78,000 cases) is again below what was originally predicted.

I know there is a view that you lose 50% of your readers for every graph you put in a book so I hope that doesn't apply here! Here is the Health Protection Agency graph which shows the spread in the current year against last year's (seasonal) flu levels.

QSurveillance® - weekly consultation rate for flu-like illness in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (all ages)



In Scotland the number of cases was estimated to be 19,200 an increase of 31% on the previous week.

There has been quite a lot of comment in the media about the increased level of hospitalisations and especially of those requiring high levels of care. It is true that H1N1 does seem to cause such issues, especially in those under 5, but in the end the vast majority of people will not require hospitalisation and most of those who do recovery fully.

Sir Liam.....

No I can't get through a briefing without some quotes from Sir Liam Donaldson, Chief Medical Officer for England. Here is a selection for the week:

He has said that it will be mid-December before the 9 million in priority groups get their vaccinations.

There has been no final decision on whether to extend the priority programme to under 18s

That intensive care beds are 'under a lot of pressure'

Over reaction or safety first?

Most countries I follow seem to be simply carrying in as normal with swine flu but it seems that the Ukraine has decided to take stronger measures.

The Government has decided to close schools for three weeks and to ban public meetings including pre-election gatherings (so not all bad then!). Also there is a plan to stop unnecessary travel from one region to another, possibly cancel two major football matches and impose quarantines 'because the virus is spreading very fast'

Reading articles about public reaction to H1N1 shows that there are definite signs of significant public concern and that there are possibly some signs of panic. In the early days of planning, when we thought we faced H5N1 and serious illness, this mirrors what was seen as the doomsday approach in the UK. I will monitor to let you know how well this works.

Can home broadband cope?

I've covered the issues around home working several times in these bulletins so I thought you might be interested in a report from the GAO (the US Government Accountability Office) and the Gartner Group which suggests that high levels of home working might put too great a strain in the 'last mile' broadband connections.

There is a very good article at the following which covers the key points:

<http://www.infosecurity-magazine.com/view/4905/gartner-and-us-gao-worry-about-swine-flu-net-congestion-worries/>

Although the report is from the USA the article suggests that the UK is in the same position.

iPhone Swine flu application

No it is the 1 November not 1 April! Harvard Medical School have developed an app for the iPhone to help with H1N1.

I suppose it was only a matter of time.....

If any of you really can't cope with the pandemic unless your iPhone tells you how to, then go to this link for details:

<http://www.health.harvard.edu/flu-resource-center/swine-flu-app.htm>

Past Briefings

All previous briefings are available at our website: www.glenabbot.co.uk

Training and Consultancy

We provide specific pandemic training courses both publicly and bespoke to companies. If you are interested please contact me directly or email Geoff Howard at Continuity Shop (goward@continuityshop.com). We can also help organisation review or create plans so if you need any assistance please contact me via this email or Andrew Sinclair on Andrew.sinclair@glenabbot.co.uk. Our office number is 01738 580580.



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