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This edition of Monthly Report features an immunisation theme; with details of the most up to date COVER statistics, surveillance of Childhood Vaccine Preventable Illnesses and analysis of the Influenza Vaccination Programme for 2005/6.

COVER data for the quarter ended December 2005 reports MMR uptake at 24 months of age at an encouraging 90.6% for the second successive quarter. The uptake of other primary vaccinations remains at 95% or above.

Mumps notifications in Northern Ireland are now down to almost baseline levels, and while clusters of measles cases have been reported from many regions of GB in recent months, there have been no confirmed cases in Northern Ireland over this time.

Continuing the good news, we are pleased to report that the regional targets for influenza vaccination have been exceeded within all four Health Board areas, with a combined total of 77% uptake in the 65 and over age group. Almost 90% of all GP practices in Northern Ireland now achieve uptake rates of 70% or over in this age group. Particularly noteworthy is the large increase in uptake seen for the at-risk under 65 age group; from 65.2% in 2004/5 to 81.0% in 2005/6.

Finally, we would draw readers' attention to the publication by HSE/HPA of infection control guidelines for spa pools and whirlpool baths, an increasingly important area given their growth in popularity and attendant risk of infections such as Legionnaires' disease if poorly maintained.

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Regional Epidemiologist

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Childhood Vaccine Preventable Illnesses and the Vaccination Programme

Notifications of mumps in Northern Ireland continue at just above baseline levels. This edition of the Monthly Report presents statistics up to epidemiological week 13, 2006.

Routine surveillance data are otherwise unremarkable.

Vaccination uptake (COVER) statistics are now available for the quarter ended December 2005 and show MMR1 uptake at 24 months of age, at 90.6%; the same as the previous quarter's figure.

Childhood Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Routine information on childhood vaccine preventable diseases is available from three sources:

1. Clinical notifications

Table 1: Notifications of Vaccine Preventable Infectious Diseases*, Northern Ireland

Disease	Weeks 5-8, 2006	Weeks 9-12, 2006	Cumulative Total to Week 12, 2006	Cumulative Total to Week 12, 2005
Diphtheria	0	0	0	0
Measles	1	3	4	21
Mumps	32	18	73	2240
Polio	0	0	0	0
Rubella	2	2	5	9
Tetanus	0	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	1	1	4	8

*Data provisional

2. Laboratory reports

Table 2: Laboratory Reports of Vaccine Preventable Infectious Diseases*, Northern Ireland

Disease	Weeks 5-8, 2006	Weeks 9-12, 2006	Cumulative Total to Week 12, 2006	Cumulative Total to Week 12, 2005
Diphtheria	0	0	0	0
Invasive Hib disease	0	0	0	1
Measles	0	0	0	0
Mumps**	4	1	5	140
Polio	0	0	0	0
Rubella	0	0	0	0
Tetanus	0	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0	0

*Data provisional

**Serologically confirmed by RVL

3. Salivary Antibody Testing Results

Table 3: Salivary Antibody Testing Results, Quarter 1, 2006, Northern Ireland*

	Board	Quarter 1, 2006				Cumulative to Quarter 1, 2005			
		Notifications**	Salivary test completed	Confirmed Case	Not Confirmed	Notifications**	Salivary test completed	Confirmed Case	Not Confirmed
Measles	NHSSB	0	1	0	1	3	4	0	4
	SHSSB	2	3	0	3	10	9	1	8
	EHSSB	2	1	0	1	6	2	0	2
	WHSSB	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	Total	5	5	0	5	20	15	1	14
Mumps	NHSSB	6	4	1	3	335	132	97	35
	SHSSB	32	20	8	12	567	112	68	44
	EHSSB	33	8	2	6	911	100	75	25
	WHSSB	12	8	1	7	605	72	53	19
	Total	83	40	12	28	2418	416	293	123
Rubella	NHSSB	0	2	0	2	3	0	0	0
	SHSSB	5	1	0	1	4	1	0	0
	EHSSB	3	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
	WHSSB	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
	Total	8	4	0	4	9	3	0	0

*Data Provisional

**to week 13

Source: CDSC (Colindale), CDSC (NI)

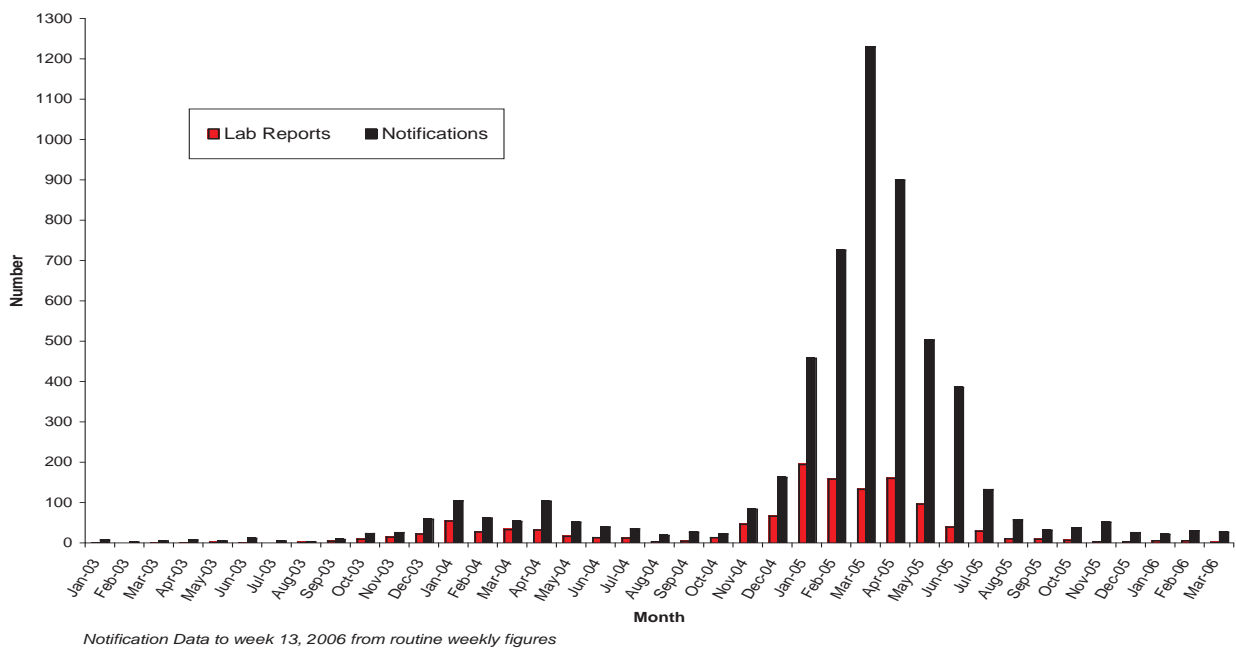
- Salivary testing completed on 51% (49/96) notifications of measles, mumps and rubella for the first quarter of 2006; compared with 18% (434/2447) for the same period last year
- Twelve cases of mumps confirmed
- No cases of measles or rubella confirmed

Mumps Outbreak

Summary points at week 13, 2006:

- 83 mumps notifications have been received to week 13, 2006 compared with 605 for the same period in 2005
- 17 laboratory confirmed (Regional Virus Laboratory & Salivary Antibody Testing) cases of mumps have been received
- Notifications continue to be just above baseline levels.

Fig 1: Epidemic' Curve: Provisional Mumps Laboratory Reports (RVL and Salivary Ab), and Notifications by Month, 2003 - 2006, Northern Ireland



Vaccination Coverage Statistics for Children in Northern Ireland

COVER/Korner statistics now available for quarter October to December 2005:

- **MMR uptake at 24 months remains at 90.6%**
- **Uptake is 95.0% or above for other vaccinations at 12 and 24 months**

The vaccination coverage statistics for Northern Ireland (COVER/Korner Programme) are now available for the fourth quarter of 2005. The statistics give detailed coverage data and numbers of children in the four Boards in Northern Ireland. The tables below show the coverage data for the children in the four Boards in Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom as a whole.

Table 4a: Completed Primary Immunisations by 12 months of age (October - December 2005), Northern Ireland

Board	No of children in cohort	% Coverage at 12 months						
		Dip3	Tet3	Pol3	Pert3	Hib3	MMR	MenC
Eastern	2037	93.50%	93.50%	93.50%	93.50%	93.50%	~	94.10%
Northern	1452	96.30%	96.30%	96.30%	96.30%	96.30%	~	96.80%
Southern	1214	96.00%	96.00%	96.00%	96.00%	96.00%	~	96.40%
Western	982	96.80%	96.80%	96.80%	96.80%	96.80%	~	97.10%
NI Total	5685	95.30%	95.30%	95.30%	95.30%	95.30%	~	95.80%

- Uptake of Pol3 and MenC remains stable
- Uptake of other primary vaccines has decreased by 0.1 – 0.3 percentage points compared to last quarter
- Uptake of all vaccines at 12 months remains at 95% or above

Table 4b: Completed Primary Immunisations by 24 months of age (October - December 2005), Northern Ireland

Board	No of children in cohort	% Coverage at 24 months						
		Dip3	Tet3	Pol3	Pert3	Hib3	MMR	MenC
Eastern	1970	96.20%	96.20%	96.20%	95.90%	96.20%	89.50%	96.60%
Northern	1360	97.20%	97.20%	97.20%	96.80%	96.80%	92.00%	97.30%
Southern	1236	96.90%	96.90%	96.90%	96.70%	96.90%	90.90%	97.10%
Western	980	96.90%	96.90%	96.90%	96.70%	97.00%	90.70%	97.20%
NI Total	5546	96.80%	96.80%	96.80%	96.50%	96.70%	90.60%	97.00%

Fig 2: Vaccination uptake rates at 24 months Northern Ireland: 1996 - 2005

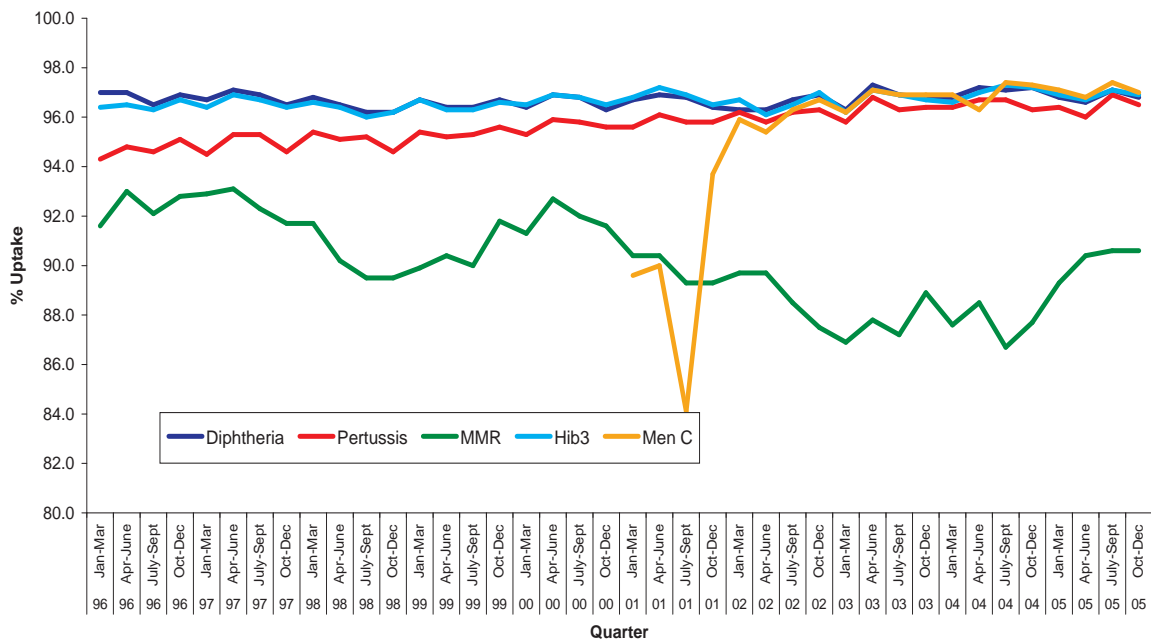


Table 4c: Completed Primary Immunisations by 12 and 24 months of age (October - December 2005), UK

Country	% Coverage at 12 months				% Coverage at 24 months				
	Dip3	Pert3	Hib3	MenC	Dip3	Pert3	Hib3	MenC	MMR
England	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wales	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	94.80%	96.40%	95.80%	96.20%	96.10%	85.90%
Scotland	96.00%	96.00%	96.00%	95.70%	97.10%	96.90%	96.70%	96.00%	90.70%
UK	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

10 of the 31 PCTs in London were unable to submit data this quarter due to problems relating to the implementation of the new CHS. It is planned to publish English and complete London data retrospectively for this quarter when this data becomes available.

Table 5: Vaccine Coverage at 5 years (October - December 2005), Northern Ireland

Board	Dip3	Pert3	Hib3	Dip4	MMR1	MMR2	MenC
Eastern	97.20%	97.00%	96.70%	85.80%	94.30%	82.30%	95.90%
Northern	97.90%	97.20%	97.30%	88.70%	94.90%	88.00%	97.00%
Southern	97.20%	96.50%	96.40%	85.10%	93.70%	85.00%	95.50%
Western	97.50%	97.00%	96.90%	90.80%	95.20%	87.30%	96.20%
NI	97.50%	96.90%	96.80%	87.30%	94.50%	85.20%	96.20%
England	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wales	95.50%	94.20%	95.20%	84.00%	87.40%	74.50%	9470.00%
Scotland				94.60%		88.30%	
England, Wales & NI	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

- Uptake of MMR2 decreased by 0.2 percentage points to 85.2%
- Uptake of Dip4 increased by 0.5 percentage points
- Uptake of other primary vaccines at 5 years decreased by 0.1 – 1.3 percentage points compared to last quarter

Influenza Vaccination Programme: Winter 2005/06

- Regional targets for influenza vaccination met, and exceeded, by all four Health Boards – 77.0% uptake in the 65 years and over age group
- Large increase in uptake rates for under 65's "at risk" - 81.0% in 2005/06 (compared to 65.2% in 2004/05)
- Almost ninety percent of all GP practices in Northern Ireland achieve uptake rates of $\geq 70\%$ in patients aged 65 years and over

Analysis of the winter 2005/06 Influenza Vaccination Programme was completed at the end of March 2006.

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) set a regional target of 70% influenza immunisation uptake among the 65 years and over population for winter 2005/06. Prior to the commencement of the 2005/06 campaign it was once again agreed that, across Northern Ireland, a nominal 10% of the under 65 population should also be considered "at risk". DHSSPS also set an additional target of 60% influenza immunisation uptake among the under 65 "at risk" population. These targets are, therefore, unchanged from those first set in 2002/03.

As in previous campaigns, the following groups of patients were considered "at risk" and were offered influenza vaccination; all those aged 65 years and over, all those in long stay residential care, all children who had previously been admitted to hospital for lower respiratory tract disease and all those with underlying "high risk" conditions (chronic respiratory, cardiac or renal disease, immunosuppression through disease or chemotherapy and diabetes). In addition, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation recommended that, during 2005/06, all those with chronic liver disease should be included in the risk groupings for influenza and should be offered vaccination. Over three hundred thousand influenza vaccines were administered to all groups of patients considered "at risk" during the 2005/06 campaign.

In a new addition to the annual UK campaign, the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation also recommended that, in 2005/06, carers who were the main carer for an elderly or disabled person should be offered influenza vaccination. ("Carer" is defined as a person who is *not* 65+ years, is *not* under 65 years of age and in an "at risk" group listed above but who *is* the main carer for an elderly or disabled person).

At the close of the winter 2005/06 campaign, 356 of the 364 practices in the Province were included in the analysis. Of the total 303,815 vaccines administered, 179,973 (59.2%) were given to the 65+ age group. By the end of the campaign, the regional target uptake rate of 70% in the over 65 population had been exceeded in each of the four Health Boards (range 75.7% - 78.8%). The overall uptake in the over 65 population for 2005/06 was 77.0%, a considerable increase on that achieved during winter 2004/05 (72.7%) – particularly as the number of individuals aged 65 years or over registered with the Central Services Agency increased by 0.5% (1,140 persons), between October 2004 and October 2005. In 2005/06, eighty-seven percent of GP practices in Northern Ireland achieved an uptake rate of 70% or more in the 65+ age group. This compares to sixty-nine percent of practices in 2004/05.

A total of 123,824 vaccines were administered to under 65 “at risk” patients. Of these, 13,635 were administered to patients under 15 years of age, 88% of whom were children with chronic respiratory disease. Of the 110,207 patients within the 15-64 years age group who were vaccinated: 45% were categorised as suffering from chronic respiratory disease, 24% from chronic cardiac disease and 18% from diabetes. The overall uptake in the under 65 “at risk” population for 2005/06 was 81.0% and each Board exceeded the regional target (inter-Board range 73.1% - 85.1%). There has, therefore, been a very substantial increase in the uptake rate within the under 65 “at risk” group when compared to 2004/05 (65.2%).

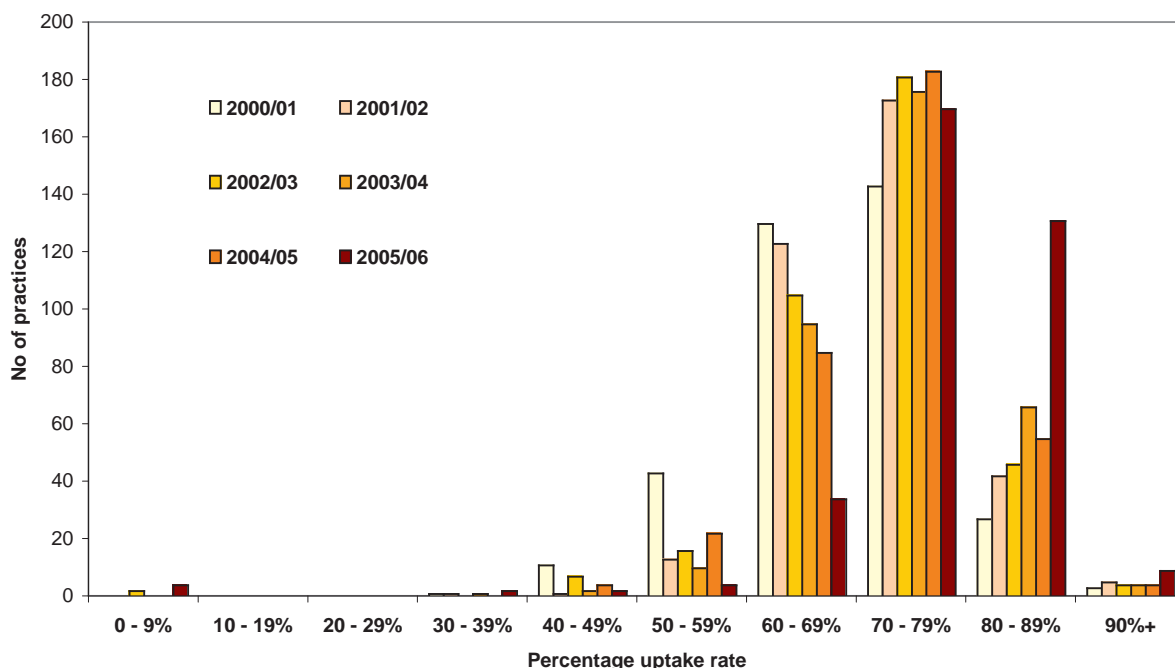
Of the 356 GP practices that submitted a return, 291 (82%) also provided data on vaccination of Carers. Across Northern Ireland, a total of 4197 Carers received influenza vaccination during the 2005/06 campaign.

CDSC (NI) appreciates the efforts of all those involved in the timely supply of influenza vaccination uptake data. In particular, staff from the GP Units of each Health and Social Service Board.

Table 6: Influenza Vaccine Programme Summary: Winter 2005/06

	EHSSB	NHSSB	SHSSB	WHSSB	NI
No of practices in Board (CSA Oct 05)	147	82	77	58	364
Size of registered population in Board (CSA Oct 05)	711,252	425,051	351,228	306,857	1,794,388
Size of registered 65+ population in Board (CSA Oct 05)	101,982	58,982	42,676	34,144	237,784
No of practices submitting return by specified date	140	82	77	57	356
Size of total registered population of practices which submitted return	682,942	425,051	351,228	303,928	1,763,149
% of registered Board population covered by practices which submitted a return	96.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.0%	98.3%
No of influenza vaccines administered per practice which submitted return					
Total number administered in Board	124,554	76,279	55,730	47,252	303,815
Range	145 - 3423	140 - 2567	207 - 2038	224 - 1686	140 - 3423
Median	700	812	623	782	715
Mean	890	930	724	829	853
% vaccine uptake rate among 65+ population per practice submitting return					
Total no of vaccines administered to 65+ population	74,810	46,467	33,166	25,530	179,973
Range	0 - 2358	59 - 1713	103 - 1242	78 - 985	0 - 2358
Median	414	495	367	410	428
Mean uptake rate as percentage of 65+ population (CSA Oct 05) in practices which submitted a return	76.0%	78.8%	77.7%	75.7%	77.0%
Percentage of practices achieving >= 70% uptake rate	85.7%	91.5%	89.6%	80.7%	87.1%

Figure 3: Percentage Uptake Rate in 65+ age Group: Winter 2000/01 to Winter 2005/06



Management of spa pools: controlling the risks of infection

Guidance has been produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Health Protection Agency (HPA) to increase understanding of the microbiological risks associated with using a spa pool or whirlpool bath, and to give advice on some of the control measures that can be used to manage these risks effectively.

Spa pools are becoming increasingly popular, providing health benefits through massage, relaxation and pain relief. They can be found in sports complexes, health clubs, hotels, holiday complexes, cruise ships, private houses and on display. They are of varying size. The agitated water is usually maintained at a relatively high temperature. Such factors place a high demand on the pool's disinfection and filtration systems and this can lead to an increase in microbial growth and a consequent risk of infection. The spa pool must, therefore, be managed carefully to ensure water quality does not deteriorate. Experience has shown that inadequate management has led to illness for users, people in the vicinity or passing nearby the spa pool. Such illnesses include Legionnaires' disease, which in some cases has proven fatal.

This guidance is intended to help those designing, manufacturing, supplying, installing, displaying and most importantly managing spa pools meet their legal responsibilities under health and safety legislation, but may also be useful for the domestic owner.

Other water systems, eg cooling towers, also have associated microbiological risks that need to be managed under health and safety legislation – further information on this can be obtained from the HSE (<http://www.hse.gov.uk>).

Reference: Management of spa pools – controlling the risks of infection (www.hpa.org.uk/publications/2006/spa_pools/default.htm)

Mycobacteria: Laboratory Reports, Weeks 01-12

	Number of Reports received			Cumulative total	
	06/01-04	06/05-08	06/09-12	06/01-12	05/01-12
<i>M. abscessus</i>	0	0	0	0	1
<i>M. avium-intracellulare</i> group	5	0	3	8	9
<i>M. bovis</i>	0	0	0	0	1
<i>M. chelonae</i>	2	0	0	2	1
<i>M. goodii</i>	0	0	1	1	7
<i>M. kansasii</i>	1	0	0	1	0
<i>M. malmoense</i>	0	0	1	1	1
<i>M. peregrinum</i>	0	0	0	0	1
<i>M. tuberculosis</i>	2	3	0	5	7
TOTAL	10	3	5	18	28

Comment:

Eight cases of *M. avium intracellulare* were reported during weeks 01 - 12, 2006. Six cases were female, aged between 51 and 87 years; two cases were male, aged 27 and 73 years. Seven cases were isolated from sputum and one from lower respiratory tract.

There were two cases of *M. chelonae* isolated from sputum during this reporting period. One case was male, aged 77 years and one case was female, aged 51 years.

There was one case of *M. goodii* during this twelve-week reporting period. The case was male, aged 62 years and the specimen was from sputum.

One case of *M. kansasii* was isolated from lower respiratory tract. The case was male, aged 58 years.

One case of *M. malmoense* was isolated from sputum. The case was male, aged 73 years.

Five cases of *M. tuberculosis* were reported during this reporting period. Four cases were male, aged between 33 and 84 years; one case was female, aged 81 years. Four cases were isolated from sputum and one from lower respiratory tract.

Contributing Laboratories

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Belfast City	Regional Mycology
Belvoir Park	Regional Virus
Causeway	Royal Victoria
Craigavon	Tyrone County
Daisyhill	Ulster
Erne	

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