

THE SENTINEL SYSTEM AS THE MAIN INFLUENZA SURVEILLANCE TOOL

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Since 2004 Poland has an influenza surveillance system called SENTINEL, which includes both epidemiological and virological surveillance. This is a very important tool for monitoring the situation in the entire country. The National Influenza Centre coordinates the system. In the SENTINEL system, during the epidemic season 2015/2016, more than 1,600 samples were tested, of which 38.6 % were positive. The samples were analyzed in 7 age groups: 0-4, 5-9, 10-14, 15-25, 26-44, 45-64, and over 65 years of age. Significant differences in the number of confirmed cases of infection caused by influenza and influenza-like viruses, depending on the age group, were reported. The highest number of confirmed cases of influenza infections were reported for the age range of 26-44 years, which accounted for 30 %. In each age group the presence of infection caused by influenza-like viruses, which together accounted for only 3.78 % of all positive tests, was also confirmed. Weekly reports generated by the system SENTINEL allow to determine the current influenza activity in the country, which is extremely important in the case of the emergence of a new strain with pandemic potential.

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