



Infection report

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Immunisation

Invasive meningococcal disease (laboratory confirmed reports in England): January to March 2015

In England, the national Public Health England (PHE) Meningococcal Reference Unit (MRU) confirmed 279 cases of invasive meningococcal disease (IMD) between January and March 2015 [1]. IMD cases were 32% higher in the quarter than the 211 cases confirmed in the equivalent quarter in 2014 (table 1). There were 178 cases confirmed in the October to December 2014 period [2].

The distribution of meningococcal capsular groups causing IMD by age is summarised in table 2, with capsular group B (MenB) accounting for 54% (151/279) of all cases, followed by MenW (n=69, 25%), MenY (n=46, 16%) and MenC (n=10, 4%). The number of MenW cases reported in the first quarter of 2015 (n=69) was two-fold higher than the 33 cases confirmed during the same period in 2014, whilst MenY increased by 39% from 33 to 46 cases. MenB cases increased from 132 in the first quarter of 2014 to 151 cases (14% increase) in the same quarter of 2015 and the number of MenC cases remained stable at 10 cases. During the first quarter of 2015, there were no reported cases for capsular groups A, X and Z/E (table 1) in England.

MenB was responsible for the majority of IMD cases in infants (76%) and toddlers (85%) but contributed to a lower proportion of cases in older age groups (table 2). The introduction of a routine national MenB immunisation programme for infants was announced earlier this week [3].

Capsular groups other than MenB were more prevalent in older age groups (table 2). Thirty-three percent of MenW cases were in older adults aged 65+ years, 20% in children younger than five years and 13% in 15-24 year-olds. The previously reported increase in MenW cases [4,5] has continued and has led to the introduction of MenACWY conjugate vaccine to the national immunisation programme in England [6]. MenACWY vaccine will directly substitute MenC vaccine in the routine adolescent schools programme (school year 9 or 10) from Autumn 2015 and in the existing time-limited 'freshers' programme from August 2015. In addition a catch-up campaign will be implemented offering MenACWY vaccine to all adolescents currently aged 14 to 18 years.

Table 1. Invasive meningococcal disease in England by capsular group and laboratory testing method: January – March (Q1): 2015

Capsular groups ~	Laboratory method						Total	
	CULTURE AND PCR		CULTURE ONLY		PCR ONLY			
	2014 (Q1)	2015 (Q1)	2014 (Q1)	2015 (Q1)	2014 (Q1)	2015 (Q1)	2014 (Q1)	2015 (Q1)
B	21	41	32	42	79	68	132	151
C	2	3	5	4	3	3	10	10
W	5	7	27	49	1	13	33	69
Y	3	5	24	36	6	5	33	46
Ungrouped	–	–	–	–	3	1	3	1
Ungroupable*	–	–	–	2	-	-	-	2
Total	31	56	88	133	92	90	211	279

~ Note: No cases capsulargroups A, X or Z/E were confirmed during any of the periods summarised in the table.

* Ungroupable refers to invasive clinical meningococcal isolates that were non-groupable, while ungrouped cases refers to culture-negative but PCR screen (*ctrA*) positive and negative for the four genogroups [B, C, W and Y] routinely tested for.

Table 2. Invasive meningococcal disease in England by capsular group and age group at diagnosis: January – March (Q1): 2015

Age groups	Capsular Group~										Total	
	B		C		W		Y		Other*		Q1	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
<1 year	29	(19)	0	–	7	(10)	2	(4)	0	–	38	(14)
1-4 years	52	(34)	0	–	7	(10)	2	(4)	0	–	61	(22)
5-9 years	13	(9)	3	(30)	1	(1)	0	–	0	–	17	(6)
10-14 years	5	(3)	0	–	1	(1)	1	(2)	0	–	7	(3)
15-19 years	8	(5)	1	(10)	6	(9)	6	(13)	0	–	21	(8)
20-24 years	12	(8)	0	–	3	(4)	1	(2)	1	(33)	17	(6)
25-44 years	6	(4)	2	(20)	3	(4)	5	(11)	0	–	16	(6)
45-64 years	15	(10)	4	(40)	18	(26)	14	(30)	0	–	51	(18)
>=65 years	11	(7)	0	–	23	(33)	15	(33)	2	(67)	51	(18)
Total	151		10		69		46		3		279	

~ Note: No cases capsulargroups A, X or Z/E were confirmed during any of the periods summarised in the table.

* Other includes Ungroupable and Ungrouped.

References

1. Data source: PHE Meningococcal Reference Unit.
2. PHE (2015). Fourth quarter 2014 report, [HPR 9\(7\)](#).
3. PHE and NHS England (2015). [Introduction of MenB immunisation for infants](#) (bipartite letter), 22 June.
4. PHE (2015). “[Continuing increase in meningococcal group W \(MenW\) disease in England](#)”. *HPR 9(7)*: infection (news) report.
5. “[Freshers told ‘it’s not too late’ for meningitis C vaccine](#)”, PHE press release, 27 Nov. 2014.
6. PHE and NHS England (2015). [Meningococcal ACWY conjugate vaccination \(MenACWY\)](#) (bipartite letter), 22 June.