

Influenza Influences

A pilot project to increase uptake of seasonal influenza vaccine by targeting GP practices, nursing homes & community hospitals in the HSE-NW

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Background

- Influenza is a major cause of preventable morbidity and mortality in the elderly population worldwide.
- Influenza vaccination is thought to reduce influenza-related morbidity by 60% and influenza-related mortality by 70-80% in the elderly.¹
- In Ireland, annual influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 65 years or older.
- The World Health Organisation has recommended the implementation of strategies to increase vaccination coverage, with the goal of attaining vaccination coverage of 75% in the elderly population by 2010.
- In the HSE NW uptake of the Influenza vaccine in those aged over 65 years was 64% in 2005 -06 and fell to 61% during 2006 – 07.
- Nationally the uptake fell from 63% to 61%

¹WHO. *Influenza vaccines. WER 2000; 75: 281-288.*

²*Prevention and control of influenza pandemics and annual epidemics, 2003, WHO, the Fifty-sixth World Health Assembly, Recalling resolutions WHA22.47 and WHA48.13;*

Aim

The aim of this project was to increase uptake of the Influenza Vaccine in those aged over 65 years by:

1. Increasing public awareness of the benefits and availability of the vaccine.
2. Piloting a community intervention study aimed both at people living at home as well as those living in residential facilities.
3. To ascertain attitudes to the Influenza Vaccine and to identify barriers that influence uptake.

Methodology 1

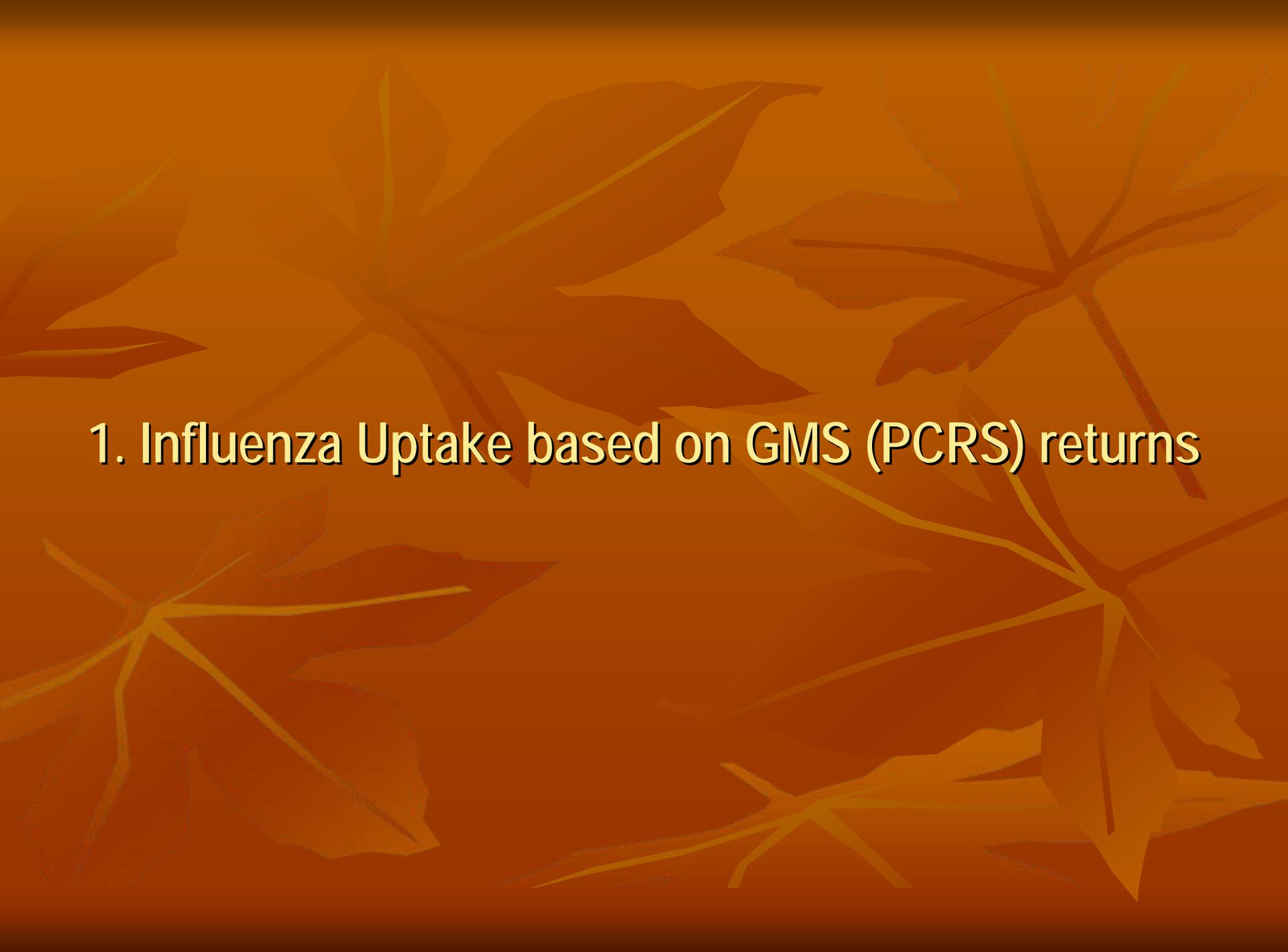
- Each of the nine pilot GP practices participating in this study were sent lists of their over 65 year population taken from the GMS database held locally, these lists were used by the practice to record vaccinations given.
- 5,789 personalised letters and the national HSE influenza information leaflet were posted to all over 65 year olds registered with the nine pilot GP practices.
- A local media campaign was initiated and consisted of:
 - A radio jingle promoting influenza vaccination (played on 2 radio stations over a six week period, 75 plays per station in total).
 - Posters promoting vaccination were sent to all GP Practices, Community Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Day Centres.
 - 190 parish leaders of the major religious denominations in the North West were asked to promote influenza vaccination either verbally at services or in the church bulletin.

Methodology 2

- A database was established to record details of those vaccinated in the four Community Hospitals and four Nursing Homes participating in this study
(To ensure accurate uptakes statistics could be calculated for this group.)
- The Public Health Nurse specific to Immunisation in each LHO area in the North West liased with each GP practice, Community Hospital and Nursing Home involved in this study.
- A Telephone Survey was conducted on 100 clients from the target GP practices. (50 vaccinated and 50 non vaccinated clients)

Results

1. Influenza Uptake based on GMS (PCRS) returns
2. Practice Returns v GMS (PCRS) Returns
3. Results from Nursing Homes & Community Hospitals
4. Telephone Survey

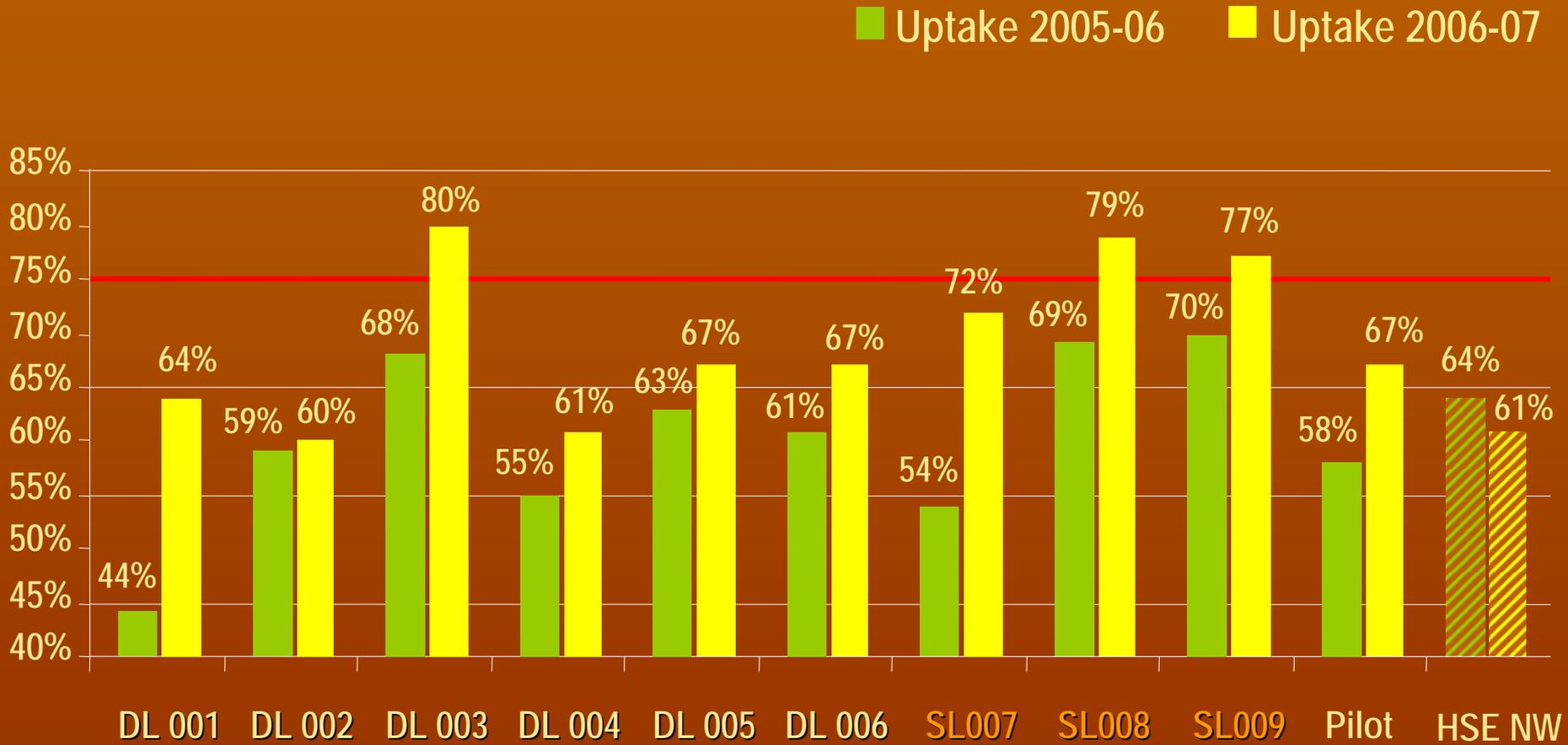
The background of the slide features a pattern of stylized autumn leaves in various shades of orange and brown, set against a darker orange gradient background. The leaves are scattered across the frame, with some showing detailed vein structures.

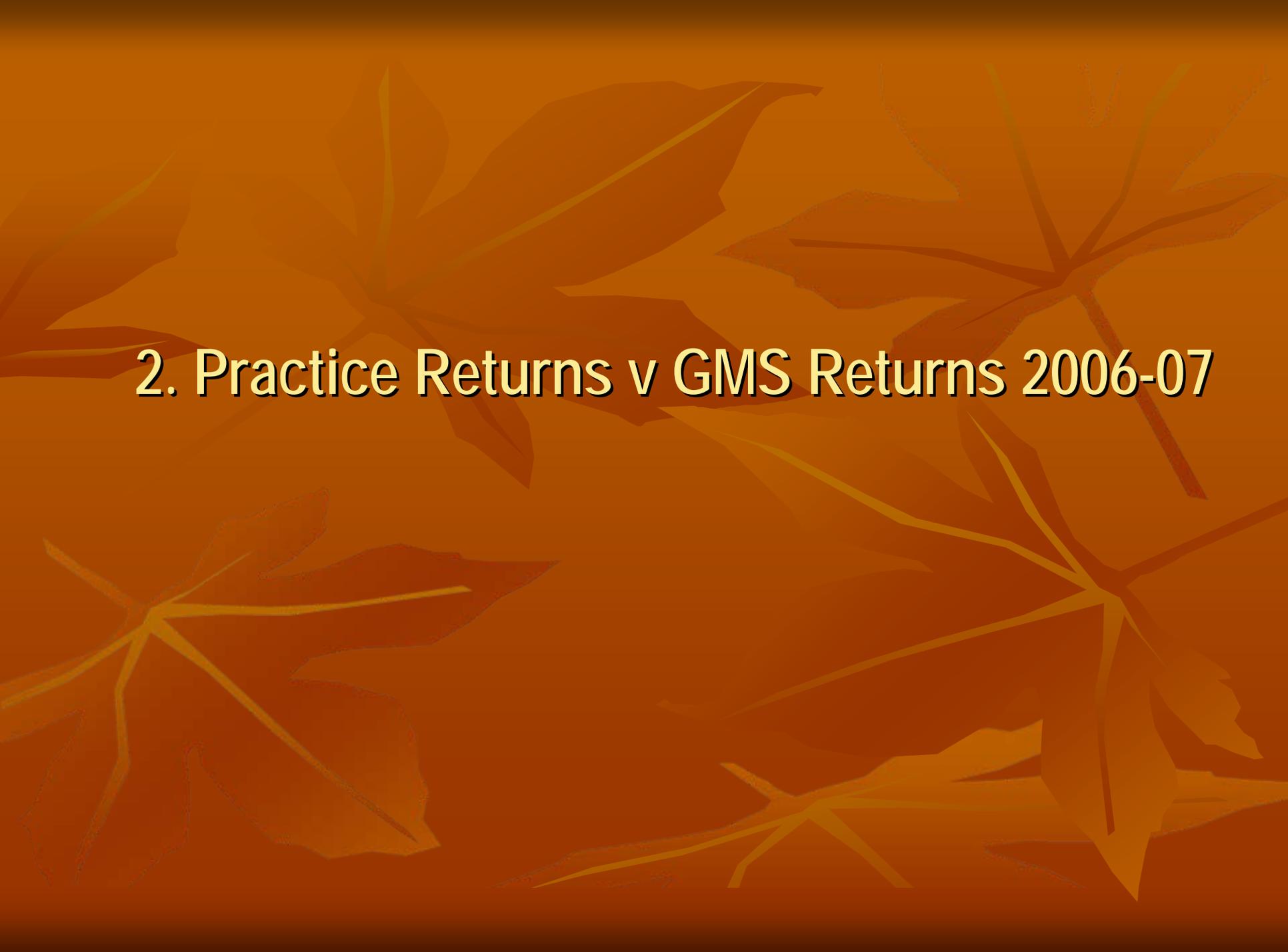
1. Influenza Uptake based on GMS (PCRS) returns

Influenza Uptake based on GMS returns

- Uptake of the influenza vaccine was calculated for each participating practice based on returns made to the GMS (PCRS) by the practice.
- Overall uptake of the flu vaccine increased by almost 10% (1-20%) in the practices involved in this study from 58% to 67% .
- However vaccination uptake fell from 64% to 61% in the HSE NW during the 2006-2007 influenza season.
- Nationally the uptake fell from 63% to 61%

Influenza Uptake based on GMS returns





2. Practice Returns v GMS Returns 2006-07

Practice Returns v GMS Returns 2006-07

■ Returns received by GMS (PCRS)	3925
■ Clients vaccinated by practice	<u>3700</u>
	225 (+/-100)

- 6 practices reported less returns than PCRS received
- 2 practices reported more returns
- 1 practice reported same number of returns

Reporting Issues

- GMS (PCRS) – payment driven system
- Delay in returning claims to GMS (PCRS)
- Small number of duplicate claims
- GPs using paper based system
 - lost claims,
 - inaccuracies in form completion,
 - forms filed in client records and not filed centrally therefore never sent for payment to GMS (PCRS)

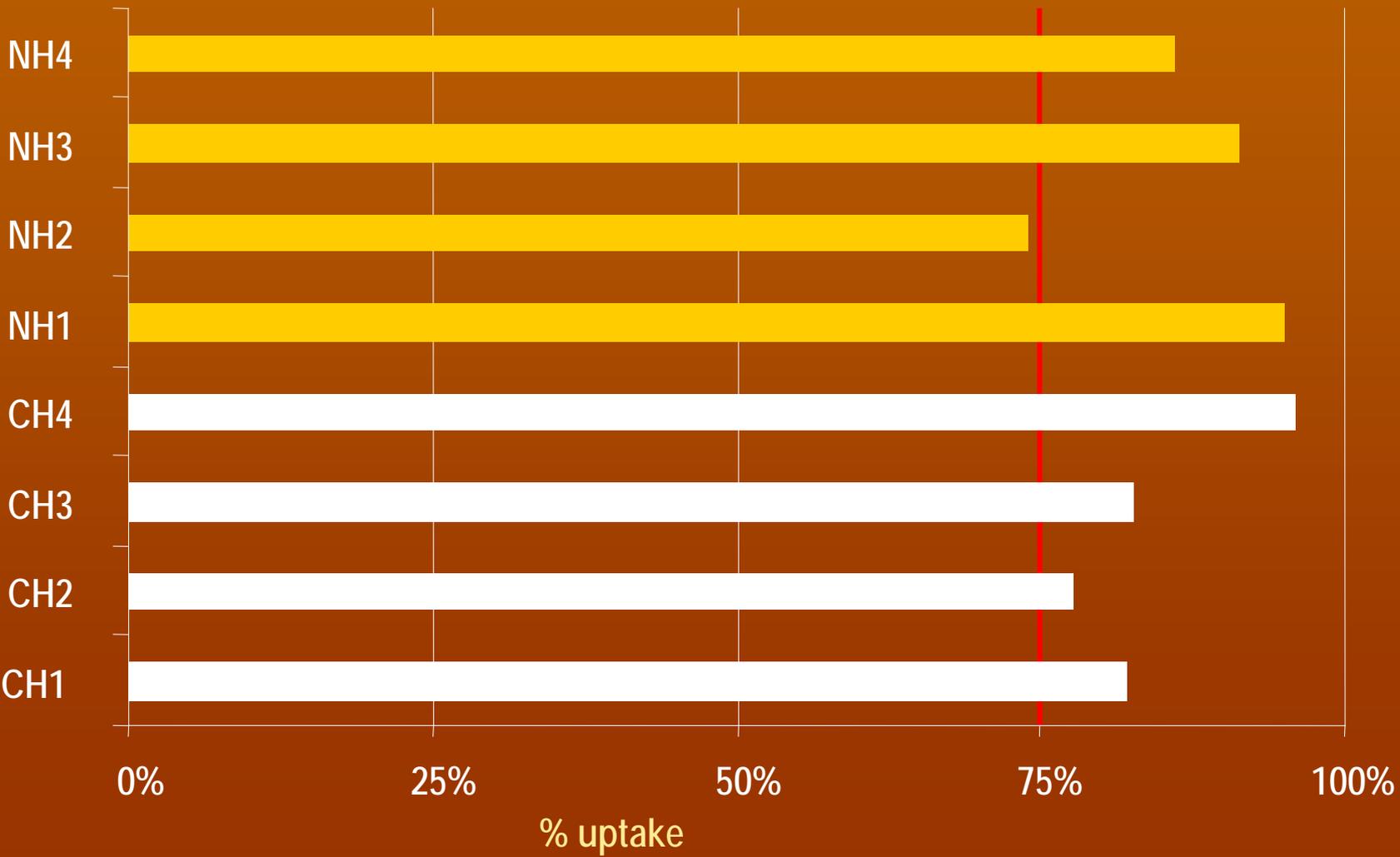


3. Nursing Homes (NH) & Community Hospitals (CH)

Nursing Homes (NH) & Community Hospitals (CH)

- Various methods used to record client vaccination e.g. patients notes, central register,
- Small number of returns sent to the PCRS
- Clients vaccinated by their own GP rather than designated clinics in the nursing homes / community hospitals

Nursing Homes (NH) & Community Hospitals (CH)





4. Telephone Survey

Telephone Survey

- Randomly selected 50 clients (Control) from the pilot practices who had received their influenza vaccine and 50 (Target) who had not.
- Administered a telephone questionnaire (10 mins).
- Analysis was preformed using EPI INFO.

Media Campaign

- Did you see or hear any advertisements for the flu vaccine since Sept 2006?
 - Control Group 85%
 - Target Group 90%

	Radio	Newspaper	Parish B.	TV
Control Group	1 st	2 nd	4 th	3 rd
Target Group	1 st	4 th	2 nd	3 rd

- Posters in GP premises also effective.

Since September 2006 -
has any one talked to you about the flu vaccination?

- Control Group 57%
GP - 52%
- Target Group 56%
GP - 82%

Access for vaccination

- Do you live alone? - Yes

Control - 32%

Target - 38%

- Do you have easy access to transport? - Yes

Control - 92%

Target - 86%

- Dependent on someone else for transport to GP? -
Yes

Control 35%

Target 36%

Any factors that made it difficult to get the vaccine this year ?

- Lack of transport to the GP surgery - Yes

Control - 2 % Target - 9 %

- Worried about side effects of the vaccine - Yes ***

Control - 0 % Target - 30 %

- The vaccine doesn't work – Yes***

Control - 6 % Target - 34 %

- Don't like vaccines – Yes**

Control - 0 % Target - 17 %

- Currently unwell - Yes

Control - 0 % Target - 13 %

- Vaccine gives you the flu – Yes***

Control - 8 % Target - 49 %

- Previous negative experience of vaccination – Yes*

Control - 0 % Target - 17 %

Summary

- Results for the practices involved in this study show that uptake of the vaccine increased by almost 10%
- Difference between the uptakes recorded by each practice and those obtained from GMS (PCRS) returns
- Results from the telephone survey showed that in the target group;
 - 49% believed that the 'vaccine gives you the flu'
 - 30% were worried about side effects of vaccination
 - 21% of the target group felt that they would get the vaccine next year, compared to 90% of the control group



Work in Progress 2007-08

Work in Progress 2007-08

- As a result of these findings, a modified initiative was widened to all GP practices in the North West for the 2007 – 2008 campaign.
78 practices with 28,000 clients over 65 years with a GMS card.
- Sent a database/list of all those aged over 65 yrs with a GMS card to each practice and asked them to use this to record when a client received vaccination.
- Letters / information leaflet sent to clients who defaulted in 2006-07 and those who reached 65 years before 15th August 2007 (~10,000) .
- We asked them to keep claims forms in a central file system.
- We liased closely with practice nurses through:
 - The regular Practice Nurse meetings
 - Practice Development Co-ordinators

Preliminary Results 2007-2008

- Increase in flu vaccine uptake?
 - Final uptakes cannot be calculated until June 2008 when processing of the GMS returns is completed
 - Taking a snapshot – uptake seems to be up 3-4%
- Questionnaire to all GP practices
 - 25% returned to date

Practice Questionnaire 2007-08

- Did you keep the flu claim forms in a central file?
Yes - 73%
- Have you returned these forms for payment to the PCRS?
Yes - 100%
- How frequently were these returned?
Monthly - 87% End of Campaign - 13%
- Did you find the flu list / database helpful?
Yes - 63%
- Did you feel the letters sent to clients who had previously defaulted were helpful in encouraging them to have the vaccine this year?
Yes - 60%

Comments about the letters

- Letters should go from the HSE not the GP
- Some practices already have a system in place
- Some clients had already told the GP they didn't want the vaccine and then get the letter

- Please include us on the database for next year
- The letters were useful some clients came with the letter in their hand
- Vaccination appointment allowed for other opportunistic procedures e.g. BP check or bloods
- Send out lists earlier as would be useful for planning

General Comments

- Ran out of vaccines and had to borrow from other practices
- Vaccines purchased in a pharmacy not reimbursed by PCRS
- Better health promotion information regarding the benefits of the vaccine and that the vaccine does not give you the flu

Conclusions

- There is scope for improving influenza uptake by placing more emphasis on patient information delivered by health professionals
- Need national immunisation database if accurate uptake stats are to be calculated
- Electronic database for GPs to allow:
 - Scheduling of appointments
 - Electronic returns
 - Payments

2008 - 2009

- Send to each practices
 - Influenza uptake for 2007-08
 - The amount of vaccine ordered and sent back 2007-08
 - Findings of this study

Repeat this intervention next year?

- Look at effect of the this initiative on uptake compared to 2006-07
- Primary Childhood Immunisation Changes
- Target age reducing to 50 years
- Resource dependent !!!

Thanks to

- GPs & practices nurses in the practices
- Mary Redmond, Primary Care Reimbursement Service
- Managers of the Nursing Homes & Community Hospitals
- Lisa Domegan, Health Protection Surveillance Centre
- Regional Influenza Working Group

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