

# OXFORD-RCGP RSC DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



YOUR WEEKLY UPDATE FROM PROF. SIMON DE LUSIGNAN,  
DIRECTOR OF THE OXFORD-RCGP RSC

## *Why not join one of our sampling pathways?*

### RSC Virology & Serology Sampling Pathways 2026-27

Commissioned by UKHSA

LabReach In-Practice Swabbing AVAILABLE - NEW!	Serology In-Practice Sampling AVAILABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Latest Pathway (from Dec 2025)</li><li>👤 All age groups eligible</li><li>📄 Swab <b>MUST</b> be taken within 7 days of onset of symptoms</li><li>📦 Swab kits supplied directly to practices</li><li>🌿 Tested for Flu A/B, Covid and RSV</li><li>💷 £12.50 per valid sample received by the laboratory</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Established Pathway</li><li>⚠️ Paediatric sampling priority (under 18s) Adult sampling capacity currently full</li><li>📦 Sample kits supplied directly to practices</li><li>🩸 Practice collects the blood sample</li><li>🏷️ Tiered remuneration by age bands: 0-8 years old : £30 9-17 years old : £15 (previously £11) 18 years and above: £5.50</li></ul>

Interested in joining or learning more?

Contact the Practice Liaison Team: [practiceenquiries@phc.ox.ac.uk](mailto:practiceenquiries@phc.ox.ac.uk) to get started

Joining a pathway now will give your practice time to test the waters of our surveillance sampling opportunities and find the best workflow for your time just in time for the winter season.

## *Topic of Interest*

### *Linking Data, Improving Outcomes: Supporting Patients in Preconception Care*

Discussions about data sharing often focus on systems and infrastructure, but its practical value is simpler: it helps clinicians understand patient needs more accurately and act earlier.

At the recent *Connecting Expertise* webinar on Preconception Health, held on Thursday 23rd April, speakers showed how routinely collected health data and linked datasets are being used to examine maternal outcomes and identify persistent inequalities. For general practice, this kind of insight matters. Individual practices make up part of a bigger picture: linked data allows patterns to emerge across populations — highlighting where risks are higher, where access is uneven, and where earlier intervention could make a difference.

Collaboration is central to this. Data appropriately shared and linked across primary care, maternity services, and public health makes it possible to connect risk factors with outcomes. In preconception and maternal health, where clinical, behavioural, and social factors intersect, this broader view is essential.

For patients, the benefit can be tangible: earlier identification of risk, more tailored advice before and during pregnancy, and better-coordinated care. For general practice, it can support more informed decision-making and strengthens the evidence base for proactive, preventative care.

The discussion emphasised the importance of good data governance and public benefit. When handled appropriately, data sharing is a powerful and practical tool — one that enables GPs and primary care teams to contribute to, and benefit from, a wider understanding of patient populations, ultimately improving care and reducing avoidable differences in outcomes.

## *Reintroduction to the RSC Webinar*

Thank you to those who attended our webinar on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April. We hope you found it informative.

For anyone who was unable to attend, there is a recording available for you to watch in your own time.

### [Reintroduction to the RSC Webinar Link](#)

We welcome any feedback or questions you have about our network, sampling opportunities and resources the Practice Liaison Team provide.

# Sampling Is Informing

Welcome to the newest segment of our weekly newsletter

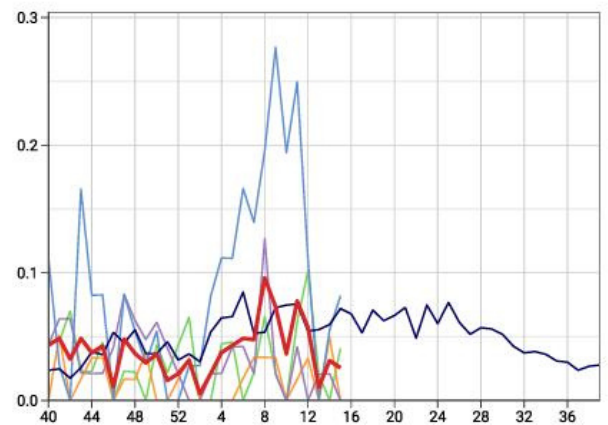
## Measles

This week we note a geographical contrast in measles cases with increasing trends seen in London and the Midlands/East, and decreasing rates in the North and South of England.

Though it's encouraging that the overall national average is trending downwards, we will continue to carefully monitor the numbers given the recent spikes of measles cases.

It remains important to offer catch-up vaccinations where necessary to protect as many patients as possible and strengthen our collective herd immunity.

Measles (ICD10: B05)  
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average

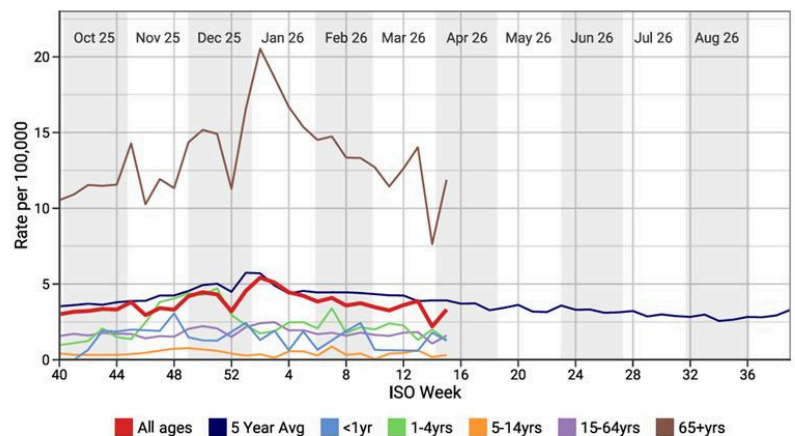


## Pneumonia

Pneumonia case frequency remain fairly constant among all age groups aside from in older adults (over 65 years).

Despite a small dip over the Easter holiday, the rates have bounced back and remain much higher than the other age groups, underscoring the importance of ensuring pneumococcal vaccination in this age group.

(E) Pneumonia: national incidence rate by age band



More information available here: [Pneumococcal vaccination for older adults and for individuals in a clinical risk group: Information](#)