Epidemiological Analysis from a worldwide network of hospitals - “Global Influenza Hospital Surveillance Network” (GIHSN)

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BACKGROUND

The GIHSN focuses on estimating the incidence of severe influenza disease leading to hospitalization, documenting influenza strains that are circulating and the burden of disease attributable to each strain. If possible, also provides the framework for estimating effectiveness of the seasonal influenza vaccines in prevention of severe cases in various age and risk groups.

METHODS

A core protocol, questionnaire and spreadsheet were created to compile the essential elements of the influenza epidemiological research project.

RESULTS

During the influenza season of 2012-2013, the network was composed of 21 hospitals (5 hospitals in Spain, 5 in France, 4 from the Russian Federation and 7 from Turkey).

Descriptive qualitative characteristics of each site were gathered such to assess heterogeneity.

All sites’ spreadsheets were merged together into a pooled database. Summary tables, frequency tables and visual representations of representative values of the pooled database were used to detect irregular, absent and questionable values.

CONCLUSIONS

The study allowed for the collection of good quality data, however for complete assessment of all pooled data, further investigation and consistent results are needed.

A multi-centre hospital based study is feasible and maintaining a homogenous practice across sites through strong coordination and support ensures quality.

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