

Rianne van Gageldonk-Lafeber Personal Statement



My name is Rianne van Gageldonk-Lafeber (PhD). I'm an epidemiologist and head of the department for respiratory infections within the Centre for Infectious Disease Control (CIb) at the National Institute of Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) in the Netherlands.

My team and I are responsible for the comprehensive surveillance of influenza, RSV, SARS-CoV-2, and other respiratory pathogens. This integrated approach includes using epidemiological, virological, molecular, and participatory surveillance data to produce a (complete) overview of the epidemiology of respiratory infections and pathogens.

Each week, we publish an update of the respiratory surveillance data on our website ([Actuele situatie luchtweginfecties | RIVM](#) - in Dutch), providing actionable insights for both healthcare professionals and the general public. These reports inform stakeholders about (amongst others) the start of the annual influenza epidemic. In addition, the information is used to educate the public on hygiene measures and guide general advice for people with symptoms, such as staying at home when ill and to avoid contact with individuals who are at higher risk of severe illness from a respiratory infection.

My department integrates data from multiple surveillance sources, including GP sentinel surveillance, laboratory surveillance, participatory surveillance ([Infectieradar](#) – in Dutch) and mortality monitoring ([Monitoring sterftecijfers Nederland | RIVM](#).- in Dutch). In addition, we are actively working on establishing SARI surveillance in hospitals. As a first step, we now receive weekly data on the number of SARI-patients admitted at the ICU ([Clearer overview of the severity of respiratory infections | RIVM](#)).

We recently, conducted an evaluation of the respiratory surveillance of influenza and RSV in the Netherlands. In this process, we focused on the objectives of surveillance in relation to public health actions (*surveillance=data for action*). We assessed the extent to which the collected data contributes to possible public health actions, which data sources are complementary, and what information is still missing. This aligns closely with the objective the ECDC working group, led by Nick Bundle, that was established because of the upcoming update of the guidance on respiratory virus surveillance in the EU/EEA. I am a member of this working group.

Curriculum Vitae A.B. (Rianne) van Gageldonk-Lafeber

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Education

2011 Ph.D. Vrije Universiteit (VU) Amsterdam. Thesis title: *Enhancing surveillance for control of respiratory infections in the Netherlands* (Ph.D. mentors prof. dr. F.G. Schellevis, prof. dr. M.A.B. van der Sande, and dr.ir. I.M. van der Lubben)

[Enhancing surveillance for control of respiratory infections in the Netherlands - Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam](#)

1992-1996 Radboud University Nijmegen, Biomedical Sciences (specialisation: Epidemiology)

Professional Positions

2020 – present Head department Respiratory Infections, Centre for Infectious Disease Epidemiology and Surveillance, RIVM.

2002 – 2020 (Senior) researcher/epidemiologist department Respiratory Infections

2019 – 2020 Programme coordinator, Centre for Population Screening, RIVM

1997-2002 Researcher, Immunology of Infectious Diseases and Vaccines, RIVM

1996-1997 Researcher department general practice, Utrecht University

Selected (recent) publications

- van Straten CGJl, Gaspersz J, de Keizer NF, van Werkhoven CH, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB, de Lange DW, Dongelmans DA, Bakhshi-Raiez F, van Asten L. Towards

robust real-time surveillance of severe acute respiratory infections: Exploring the potential of an existing national intensive care unit registry. *Ann Epidemiol.* 2025 Aug;108:47-55. doi: 10.1016/j.annepidem.

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- Carstens G, Kozanli E, Bultink K, McDonald SA, Elahi M, de Bakker J, Schipper M, van Gageldonk-Lafeber R, van den Hof S, van Hoek AJ, Eggink D. Co-infection dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 and respiratory viruses in the 2022/2023 respiratory season in the Netherlands. *J Infect.* 2025 Mar 21;90(5):106474. doi: 10.1016/j.jinf.2025.106474.
- Smit PW, Eggink D, Paltansing S, Hooiveld M, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB, Dunk D, Lekkerkerk S, Meijer A. *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* MLST detected in the upsurge of pneumonia during the 2023 to 2024 winter season in the Netherlands. *Sci Rep.* 2025 Feb 27;15(1):6985. doi: 10.1038/s41598-025-88990-6.
- McDonald SA, Jan van Hoek A, Paolotti D, Hooiveld M, Meijer A, de Lange M; Infectieradar team; van Gageldonk-Lafeber A, Wallinga J. A statistical modelling approach for determining the cause of reported respiratory syndromes from internet-based participatory surveillance when influenza virus and SARS-CoV-2 are co-circulating. *PLOS Digit Health.* 2024 Dec 9;3(12):e0000655. doi: 10.1371/journal.pdig.0000655.
- Keet MG, Boudewijns B, Jongenotter F, van Iersel S, van Werkhoven CH, van Gageldonk-Lafeber RB, Wisse BW, van Asten L. Association between work sick-leave absenteeism and SARS-CoV-2 notifications in the Netherlands during the COVID-19 epidemic. *Eur J Public Health.* 2024 Jun 7;34(3):497-504. doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckae051.
- den Boogert EM, de Lange MMA, Wielders CCH, Rietveld A; RIVM COVID-19 Surveillance and Epidemiology Team, Knol MJ, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB. Incidence and severity of SARS-CoV-2 infection in former Q fever patients as compared to the Dutch population, 2020-2021. *Epidemiol Infect.* 2022 Jun 8;150:e116. doi: 10.1017/S0950268822001029.
- Andeweg SP, Vennema H, Veldhuijzen I, Smorenburg N, Schmitz D, Zwagemaker F, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB, Hahné SJM, Reusken C, Knol MJ, Eggink D. Elevated risk of infection with SARS-CoV-2 Beta, Gamma, and Delta variant compared to Alpha

variant in vaccinated individuals. Sci Transl Med. 2022 Jul 21:eabn4338. doi: 10.1126/scitranslmed.abn4338.

- Reukers DFM, van Boven M, Meijer A, Rots N, Reusken C, Roof I, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB, van der Hoek W, van den Hof S. High Infection Secondary Attack Rates of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 in Dutch Households Revealed by Dense Sampling. Clin Infect Dis. 2022 Jan 7;74(1):52-58. doi: 10.1093/cid/ciab237.
- Van Asten L, Harmsen CN, Stoeldraijer L, Klinkenberg D, Teirlinck AC, de Lange MMA, Meijer A, van de Kasstele J, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB, van den Hof S, van der Hoek W. Excess Deaths during Influenza and Coronavirus Disease and Infection-Fatality Rate for Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus , the Netherlands. Emerg Infect Dis. 2021 Feb;27(2):411-420. doi: 10.3201/eid2702.202999. Epub 2021 Jan 4.
- Marbus SD, van der Hoek W, van Dissel JT, van Gageldonk-Lafeber AB. Experience of establishing severe acute respiratory surveillance in the Netherlands: Evaluation and challenges. Public Health Pract (Oxf). 2020 Nov;1:100014. doi: 10.1016/j.puhip.2020.100014. Epub 2020 Dec 22.