In the past week, a total of 70 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 80 general practices in 22 out of 24 health districts. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 23.0 per 100,000 patient population.

Figure 1 compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each health district over the past week. Eastern Bay of Plenty had the highest consultation rate (146.3 per 100,000), followed by Hutt (142.9 per 100,000).

Figure 1

* No sentinel practice to date
[ ] Health District not participating

Twenty-six swabs were sent from the sentinel surveillance in the past week. Twenty-nine swabs were received by virology laboratories. The influenza virus is yet to be identified.

One influenza A isolate (yet to be sub-typed) from Central Auckland was reported from the laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance.
Figure 2 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2002 and 2003 seasons, and 2004 so far. The current rate of influenza is higher than at the same time last year.

Figure 2

*Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness in New Zealand, 2002, 2003 and 2004*
Figure 3 illustrates consultation rates for influenza-like illness mapped by health district for week 21, 2004.

The threshold used to describe the influenza-like activity can be referred in New Zealand Public Health Report 2001, 8 (1): 9-12 "Influenza surveillance and immunisation in New Zealand, 1990-1999"

Compiled by: Liza Lopez
Population and Environmental Health Phone: 04 914-0700
ESR Kenepuru Science Centre Fax: 04 914-0770
PO Box 50 348 Email: liza.lopez@esr.cri.nz
PORIRUA