In the past week, a total of 199 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 78 general practices in 19 out of 24 health districts. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 64.7 per 100,000 patient population.

Figure 1 compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each health district over the past week. Otago had the highest consultation rate (197.8 per 100,000), followed by Rotorua (187.5 per 100,000).

Forty-four swabs were sent from the sentinel surveillance in the past week. Fifty-nine swabs were received by virology laboratories. Of these, 35 influenza viruses were identified, 21 as influenza A/Fujian/411/02 (H3N2) viruses and 14 as influenza A (yet to be subtyped). The distribution by health district is shown in Table 1.

In addition, 125 influenza isolates were reported this week for the laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance. Of these, 81 were identified as influenza A (yet to be...
subtyped), 39 influenza A/Fujian/411/02 (H3N2) viruses, and five as influenza B. The distribution by health district is shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NW</th>
<th>CA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WK</th>
<th>GS</th>
<th>HB</th>
<th>WG</th>
<th>WN</th>
<th>CB</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>OT</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (not subtyped)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A/Fujian/411/02</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (not typed)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 shows the cumulative total of influenza isolates confirmed (sentinel and laboratory-based surveillance) to the end of week 40, 1 October 2004. A total of 730 isolates were identified. Of these, 385 were influenza A (yet to be subtyped), 314 were subtyped as A/Fujian/411/02 (H3N2), 23 as influenza B (not typed), five as B/Sichuan/379/99, and three as B/Shanghai/361/02.

**Figure 2**

Cumulative laboratory-confirmed isolates by health district to 01 October 2004

[ ] Two A/Fujian/411/2002 (H3N2) viruses reported from South Auckland were specimens taken in March.

Figure 3 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 4 illustrates consultation rates for influenza-like illness mapped by health district for week 40, 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”

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