

INFLUENZA WEEKLY UPDATE

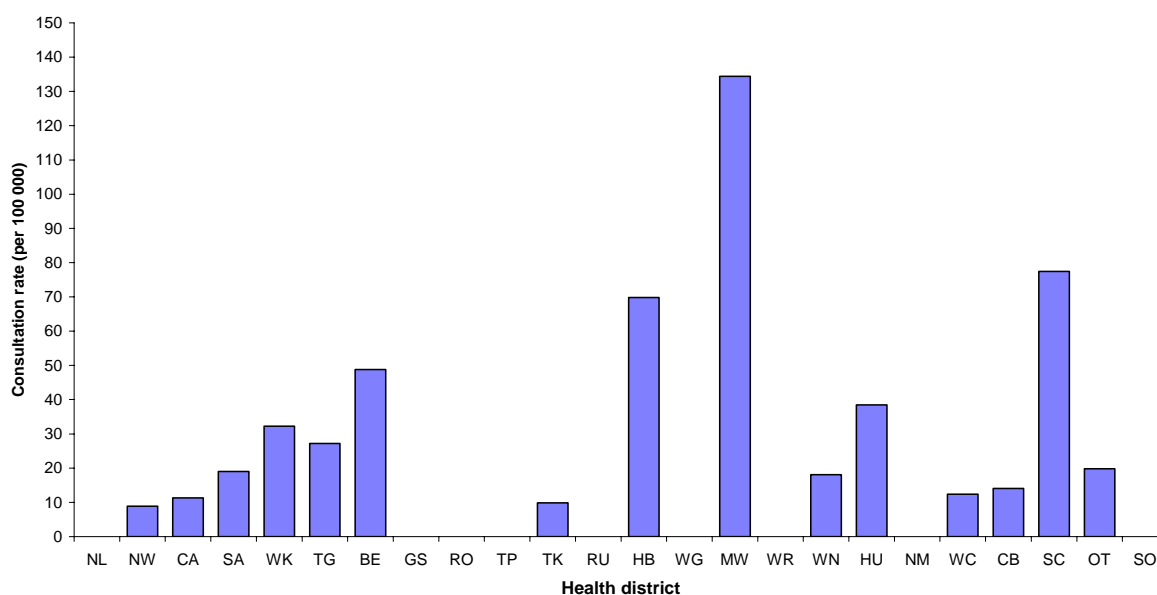
2006/22: 29 May – 04 June 2006

In the past week, a total of 89 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 81 general practices in 21 out of 24 health districts. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 25.9 per 100 000 patient population.

Figure 1 compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each health district over the past week. Manawatu had the highest consultation rate (134.4 per 100 000), followed by South Canterbury (77.5 per 100 000).

Figure 1

*Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness by health district
week ending 4 June 2006*



Twenty-four swabs were sent from the sentinel surveillance in the past week. Twenty-seven swabs were received by virology laboratories. Of these, three influenza viruses were identified, two as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) – like strains¹ from Wellington and Hutt, and one as influenza B/Shanghai/361/2002-like from Waikato.

¹ The H3 component of the influenza vaccine formulation for 2006 was A/California/7/2004 (H3N2)-like strain. Under the “like” strain concession in the vaccine recommendation, an antigenically similar strain can be substituted which has the qualities that may lack in the prototype strain. During the actual influenza vaccine production for 2006, A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) strain was used to represent A/California/7/2004-like strain. Therefore, the 2006 influenza vaccine can protect people well against A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) – like strain in the community.

In addition, three influenza viruses were reported from the laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance from Waikato, two as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed), and one as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) – like.

Figure 2 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2004 and 2005 seasons, and 2006 so far.

Figure 2

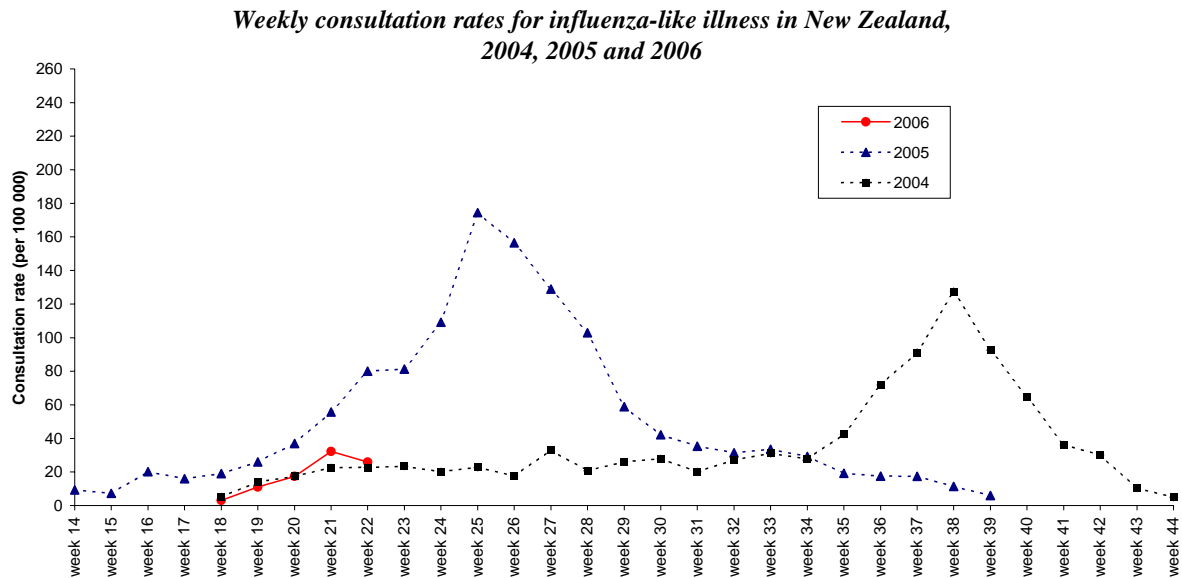
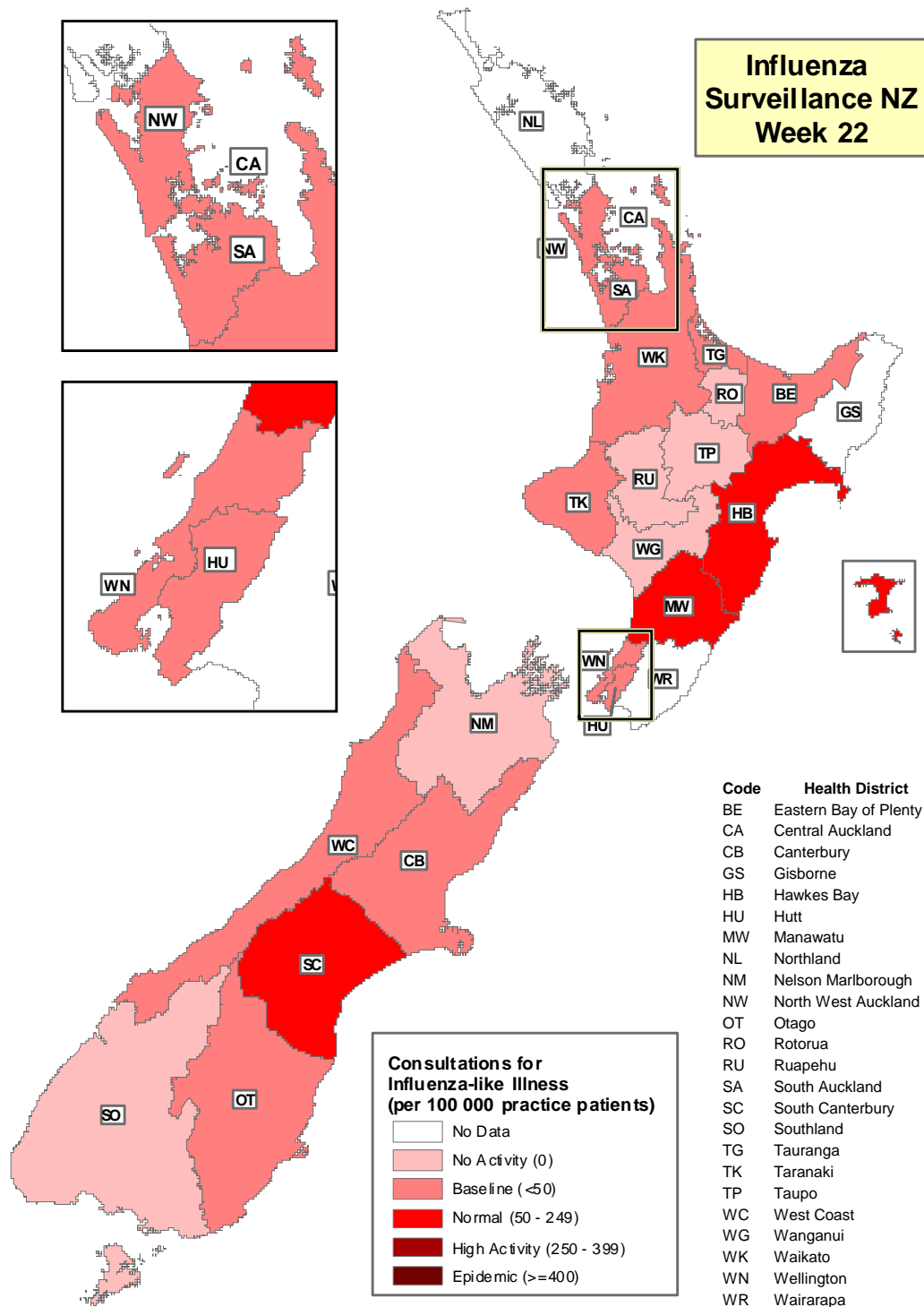


Figure 3 illustrates consultation rates for influenza-like illness mapped by health district for week 22, 2006.

Figure 3



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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