

INFLUENZA WEEKLY UPDATE

2006/25: 19 - 25 June 2006

Summary

Influenza in the population is estimated using the number of GP consultations for flu like illnesses. For 2006 this started on May 1. Current levels are low.

The health districts with the highest rate last week were Waikato and Eastern Bay of Plenty. 57% of the cases this week were in adults aged between 20 and 64 years and 26% were in children aged 5-19 years.

So far this year over 96% of the laboratory tested cases were influenza A with a small number of influenza B cases.

Thresholds used to describe influenza-like activity*

Term used	Consultation rate (per 100 000 population)
Baseline	<= 49
Normal seasonal activity	low 50-99
	moderate 100-149
	high 150-249
higher than expected	250-399
severe epidemic	>= 400

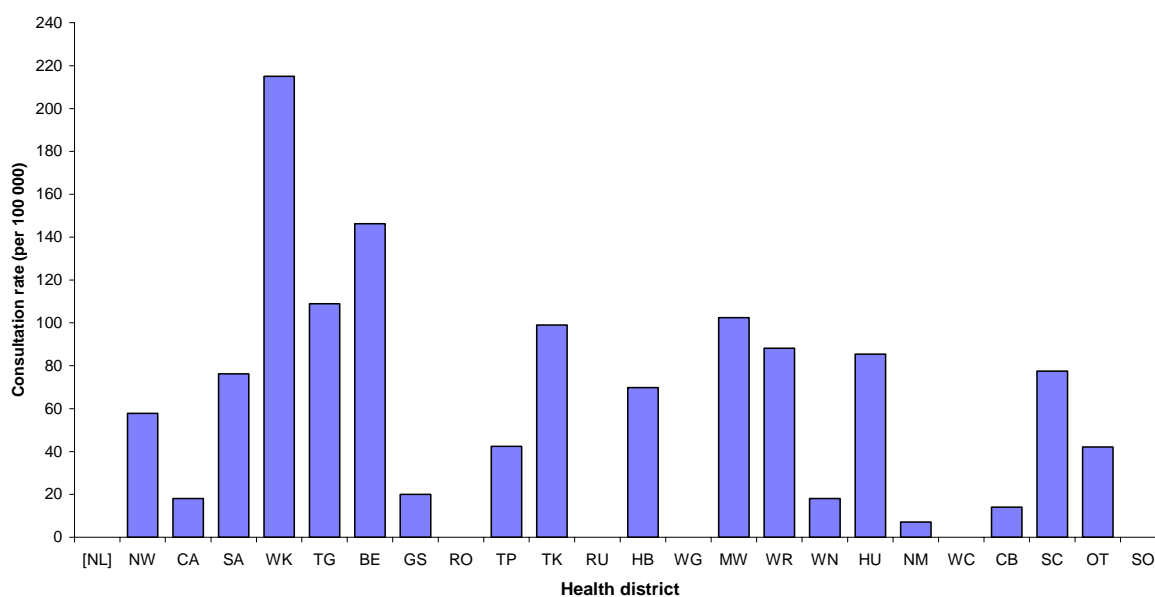
*Note: This was published in *New Zealand Public Health Report 2001, 8(1):9-12* "Influenza surveillance and immunisation in New Zealand, 1990-1999"

In the past week, a total of 207 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 86 general practices in 23 out of 24 health districts. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 53.4 per 100 000 patient population.

Figure 1 compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each health district over the past week. Waikato had the highest consultation rate (215.1 per 100 000), followed by Eastern Bay of Plenty (146.3 per 100 000).

Figure 1

*Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness by health district
week ending 25 June 2006*



[] Health district not participating

Forty-six swabs were sent from the sentinel surveillance in the past week. Fifty-four swabs were received by virology laboratories. Of these, 13 influenza viruses were isolated, nine as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed) and four as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like. The distribution by health district is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

	CA	WK	GS	WG	WN	HU	CB	Total
A	1	6	0	0	0	0	2	9
A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	4
Total	1	6	1	1	1	1	2	13

In addition, 29 influenza viruses were reported this week from the laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance. Twenty-eight were identified as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed) and one as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like. The distribution by health district is shown in Table 2.

Table 2.

	NW	CA	SA	WK	GS	WN	CB	Total
A	1	1	1	22	1	1	1	28
A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	2	1	1	22	1	1	1	29

Figure 2 shows the cumulative total of influenza isolates confirmed (sentinel and laboratory-based surveillance) to the end of week 25, 25 June 2006. A total of 87 influenza viruses were identified, 52 as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed), 30 as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like, two as A/California/7/2004-like, two as B/Shanghai/361/2002-like, and one as influenza B (yet to be antigenically typed).

Figure 2

Cumulative laboratory-confirmed isolates by health district to 25 June 2006

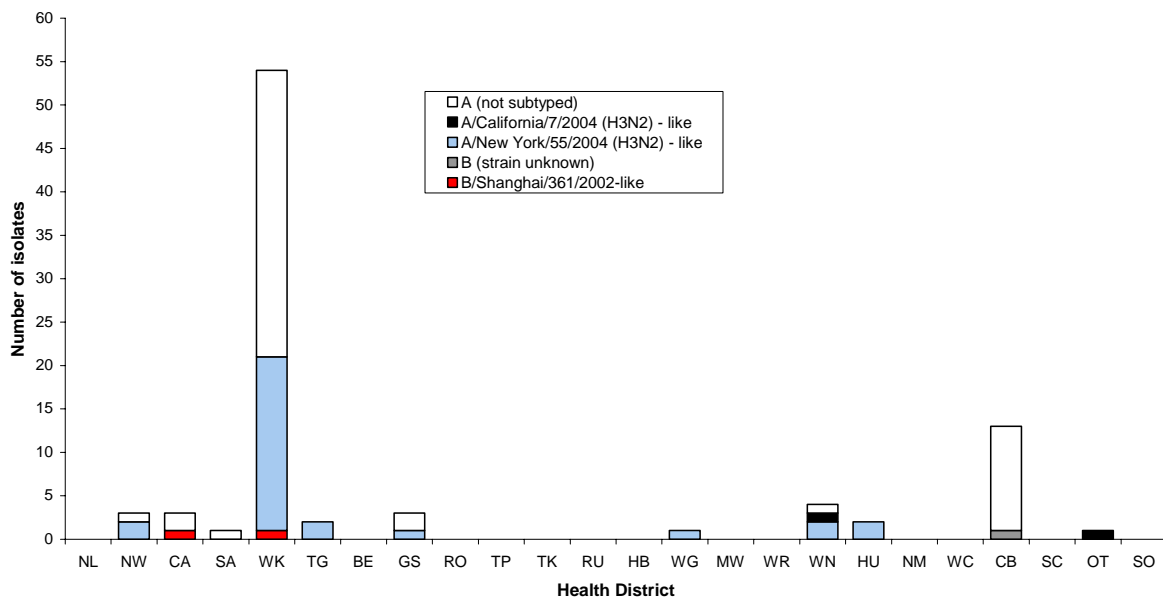


Figure 3 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2004 and 2005 seasons, and 2006 so far.

Figure 3

Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness in New Zealand, 2004, 2005 and 2006

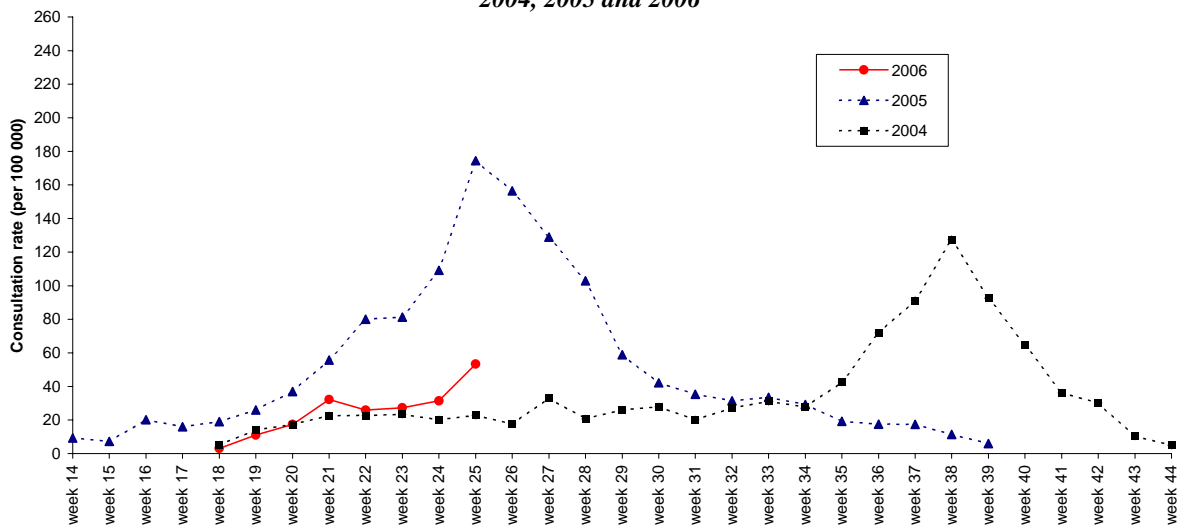
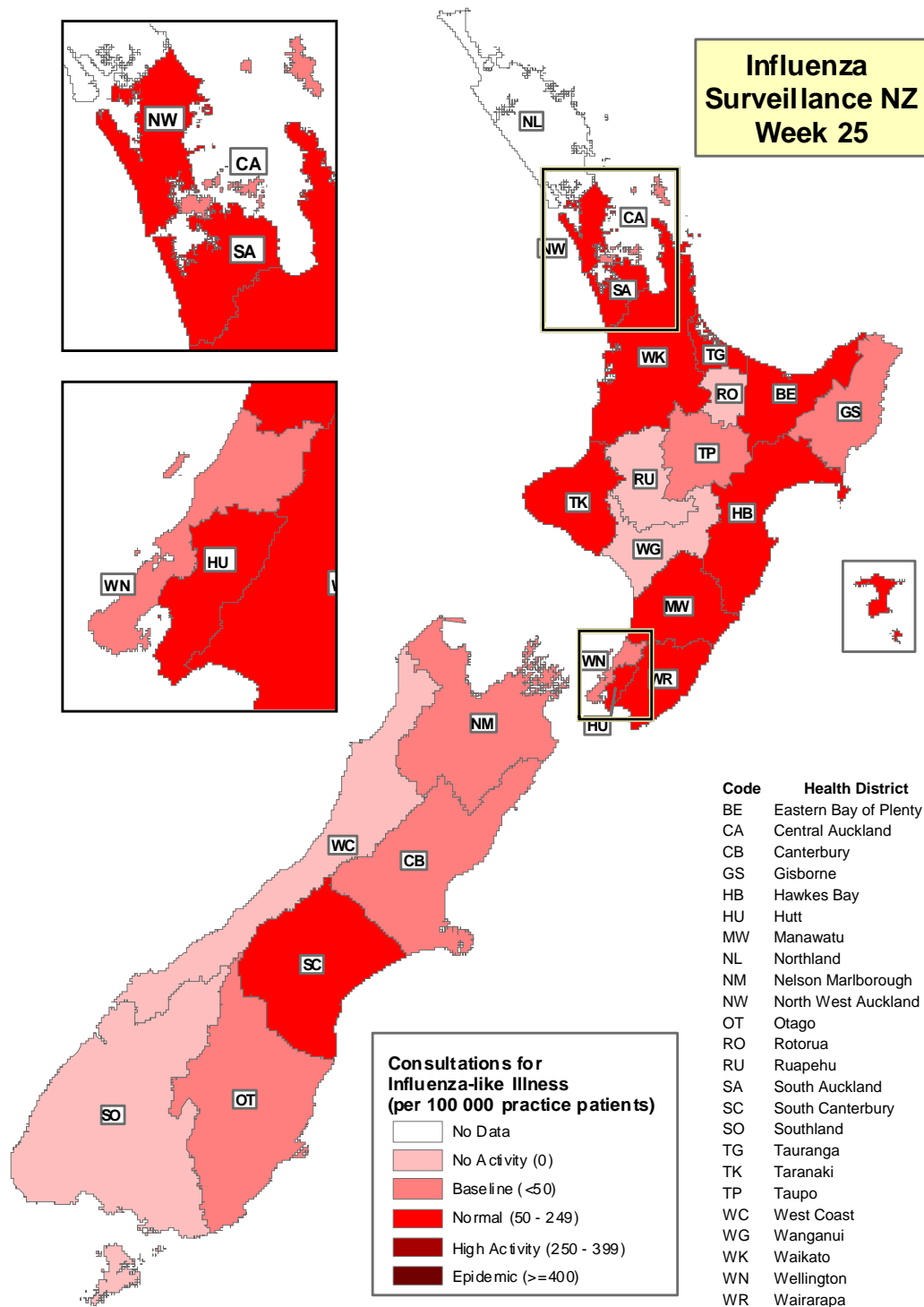


Figure 4 illustrates consultation rates for influenza-like illness mapped by health district for week 25, 2006.

Figure 4



Compiled by: Liza Lopez
 Population and Environmental Health
 ESR Kenepuru Science Centre
 P O Box 50 348
 PORIRUA

phone: 04 914-0647
 fax: 04 914-0770
 email: liza.lopez@esr.cri.nz