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 Hawke’s Bay. 59% of the cases this week were in adults aged between 20 and 64 years and 19% were in children aged 5-19 years.

So far this year 98% of the laboratory tested cases were influenza A with a small number of influenza B cases.

Thresholds used to describe influenza-like activity*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term used</th>
<th>Consultation rate (per 100 000 population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>&lt;= 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal seasonal</td>
<td>50-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>activity</td>
<td>100-149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>higher than expected</td>
<td>150-249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>severe epidemic</td>
<td>250-399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;= 400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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 342 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 97.4 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 (274.2 per 100 000), followed by Hawke’s Bay (273.5 per 100 000).
Sixty-five swabs were sent from the sentinel surveillance in the past week. Ninety-three swabs were received by virology laboratories. Of these, 28 influenza viruses were isolated, 17 as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed) and 11 as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2)-like. The distribution by health district is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NW</th>
<th>CA</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>WK</th>
<th>TG</th>
<th>WG</th>
<th>WN</th>
<th>HU</th>
<th>NM</th>
<th>CB</th>
<th>OT</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, 15 influenza viruses were reported this week from the laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance. Thirteen were identified as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed) and two as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2)-like. 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>MW</th>
<th>CB</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2 shows the cumulative total of influenza isolates confirmed (sentinel and laboratory-based surveillance) to the end of week 27, 7 July 2006. A total of 175 influenza viruses were identified, 99 as A/New York/55/2004 (H3N2) - like, 64 as influenza A (yet to be sub-typed), seven as A/California/7/2004-like, one as A/New Caledonia/20/19999 (H1N1)-like, two as B/Shanghai/361/2002-like, one as B/Hong Kong/330/2001-like, and one as B/Malaysia/2506/2004-like.
Figure 2

*Cumulative laboratory-confirmed isolates by health district to 7 July 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 27, 2006.
Figure 4

Influenza Surveillance NZ Week 27

Consultations for Influenza-like Illness (per 100 000 practice patients)

- No Data
- No Activity (0)
- Baseline (<50)
- Normal (50 - 248)
- High Activity (250 - 399)
- Epidemic (>=400)

Code | Health District
---- |------------------
BE   | Eastern Bay of Plenty
CA   | Central Auckland
CB   | Canterbury
GS   | Gisborne
HB   | Hawkes Bay
HU   | Hutt
MW   | Manawatu
NL   | Northland
NM   | Nelson Marlborough
NW   | North West Auckland
OT   | Otago
RO   | Rotorua
RU   | Ruapehu
SA   | South Auckland
SC   | South Canterbury
SO   | Southland
TG   | Tauranga
TK   | Taranaki
TP   | Taupo
WC   | West Coast
WG   | Wanganui
WK   | Waikato
WN   | Wellington
WR   | Wairarapa

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