

INFLUENZA WEEKLY UPDATE

2010/3: 18-24 January 2010

The national influenza surveillance system in New Zealand is an essential public health component for assessing and implementing strategies to control influenza. This report summarises the data collected from sentinel general practice (GP) surveillance and non-sentinel surveillance for week 3 (18-24 January 2010).

SUMMARY OF THIS REPORT:

- Influenza-like illness (ILI) through sentinel surveillance was reported from 21 out of 24 health districts with a national consultation rate of 11.9 per 100 000 (42 ILI consultations). Eight swabs were received from sentinel surveillance. No influenza viruses were identified in the sentinel or laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance.
- Pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 09 is a notifiable disease in New Zealand. As of 24 January 2010, there have been 3299¹ cases recorded in EpiSurv with 20 deaths.

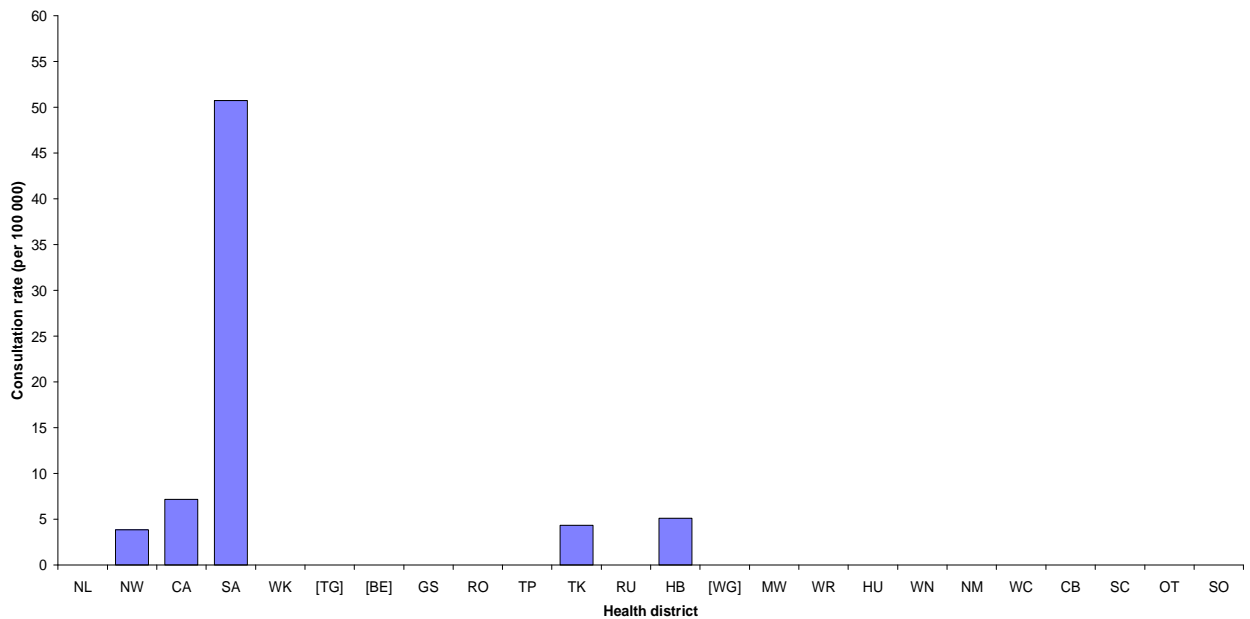
(Note: For further information please refer to the Ministry of Health's website:
<http://www.moh.govt.nz/influenza-a-h1n1>)

¹ Data source: EpiSurv as of 27 January 2010.

In the past week, a total of 42 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 74 general practices in 21 out of 24 health districts. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 11.9 per 100 000 patient population.

The graph below compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each health district over the past week. South Auckland had the highest consultation rate (50.7 per 100 000, 38 cases), followed by Central Auckland (7.2 per 100 000, 1 case) and Hawke’s Bay (5.1 per 100 000, 1 case).

Figure 1: Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness by health district week ending 24 January 2010

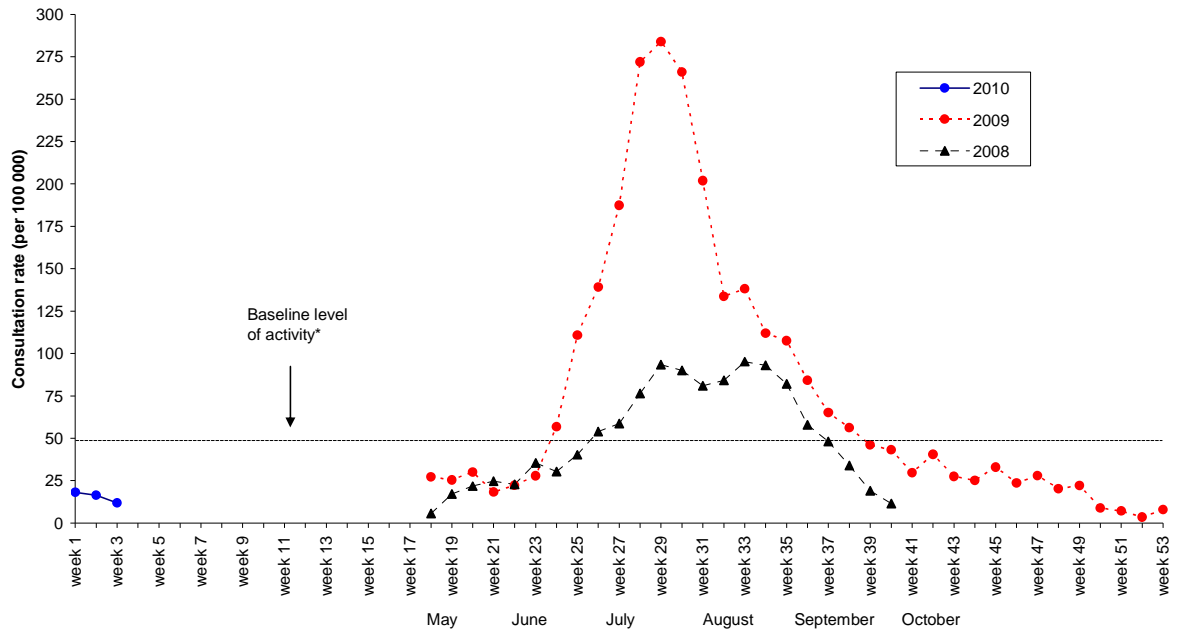


*Health districts did not participate for the week.

Eight swabs were received by the virology laboratories from sentinel surveillance. No influenza viruses were identified in the sentinel or laboratory-based (non-sentinel) surveillance.

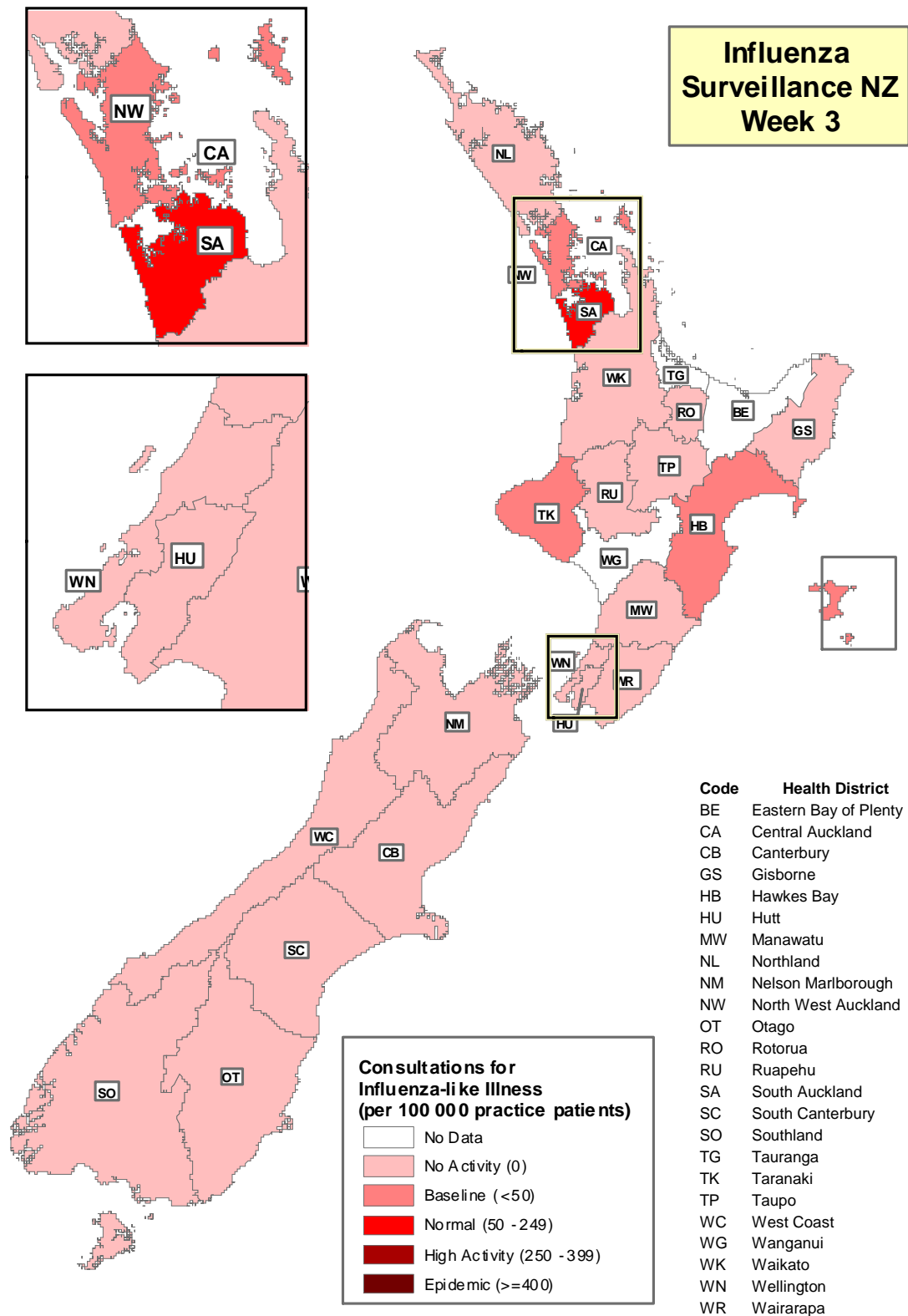
Figure 2 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2008, 2009 seasons, and 2010 so far. The current rate of influenza-like illness is below the baseline.

Figure 2: Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness in New Zealand, 2008, 2009 and 2010



* A weekly rate <50 ILI consultations per 100,000 patient population is considered baseline activity. A rate of 50–249 is considered indicative of normal seasonal influenza activity, and a rate of 250–399 indicative of higher than expected influenza activity. A rate ≥ 400 ILI consultations per 100,000 patient population indicates an epidemic level of influenza activity.

Figure 3 illustrates consultation rates for influenza-like illness mapped by health district for week 3, 2010.



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