

INFLUENZA WEEKLY UPDATE

2010/9: 1-7 March 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 9 (1-7 March 2010).

SUMMARY OF THIS REPORT:

- Influenza-like illness (ILI) through sentinel surveillance was reported from 19 out of 21 District Health Boards (DHB) with a national consultation rate of 18.0 per 100 000 (66 ILI consultations). Six 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 7 March 2010, there have been 3300¹ cases recorded in EpiSurv with 20 deaths.

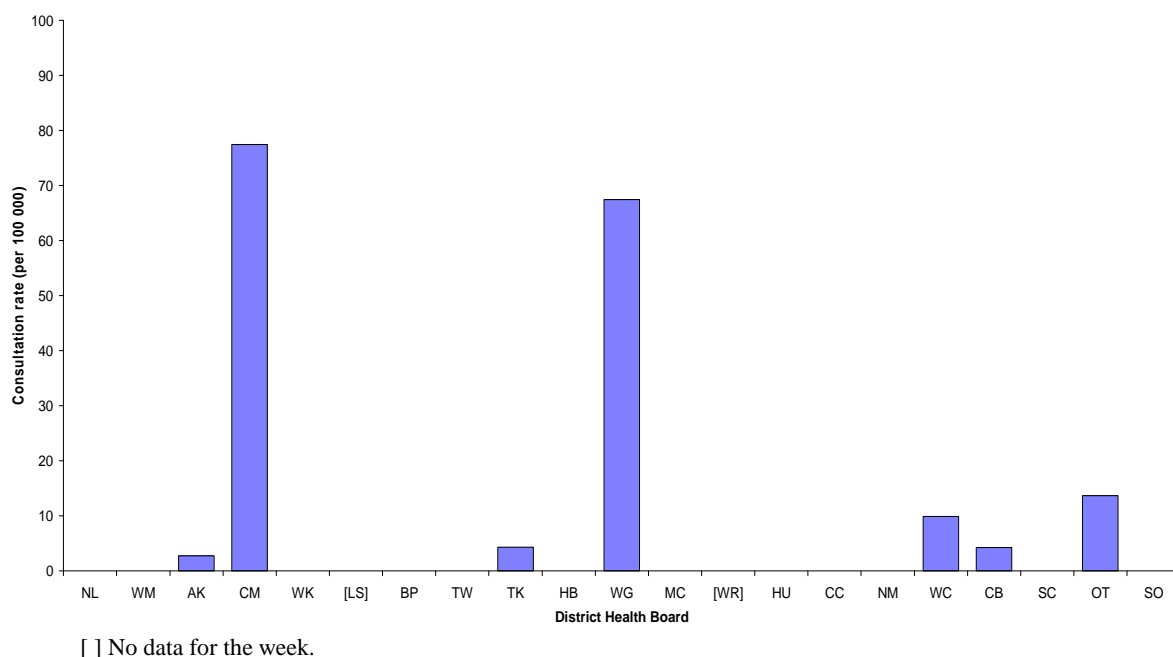
(Note: For further information please refer to the Ministry of Health's website:
<http://www.moh.govt.nz/influenza-a-h1n1>)

In the past week, a total of 66 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 83 general practices in 19 out of 21 DHBs. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 18.0 per 100 000 patient population.

The graph below compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each DHB over the past week. Counties Manukau DHB had the highest consultation rate (77.5 per 100 000, 58 cases), followed by Whanganui (67.4 per 100 000, 1 case) and Otago (13.7 per 100 000, 3 cases).

¹ Data source: EpiSurv as of 11 March 2010.

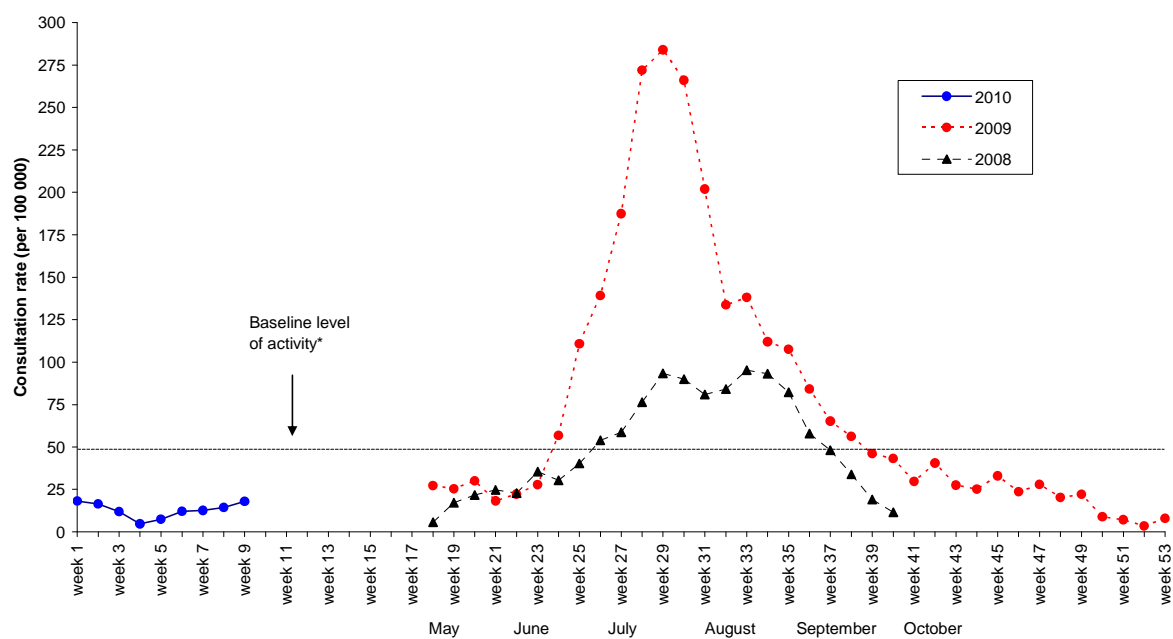
Figure 1: Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness by DHB week ending 7 March 2010



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

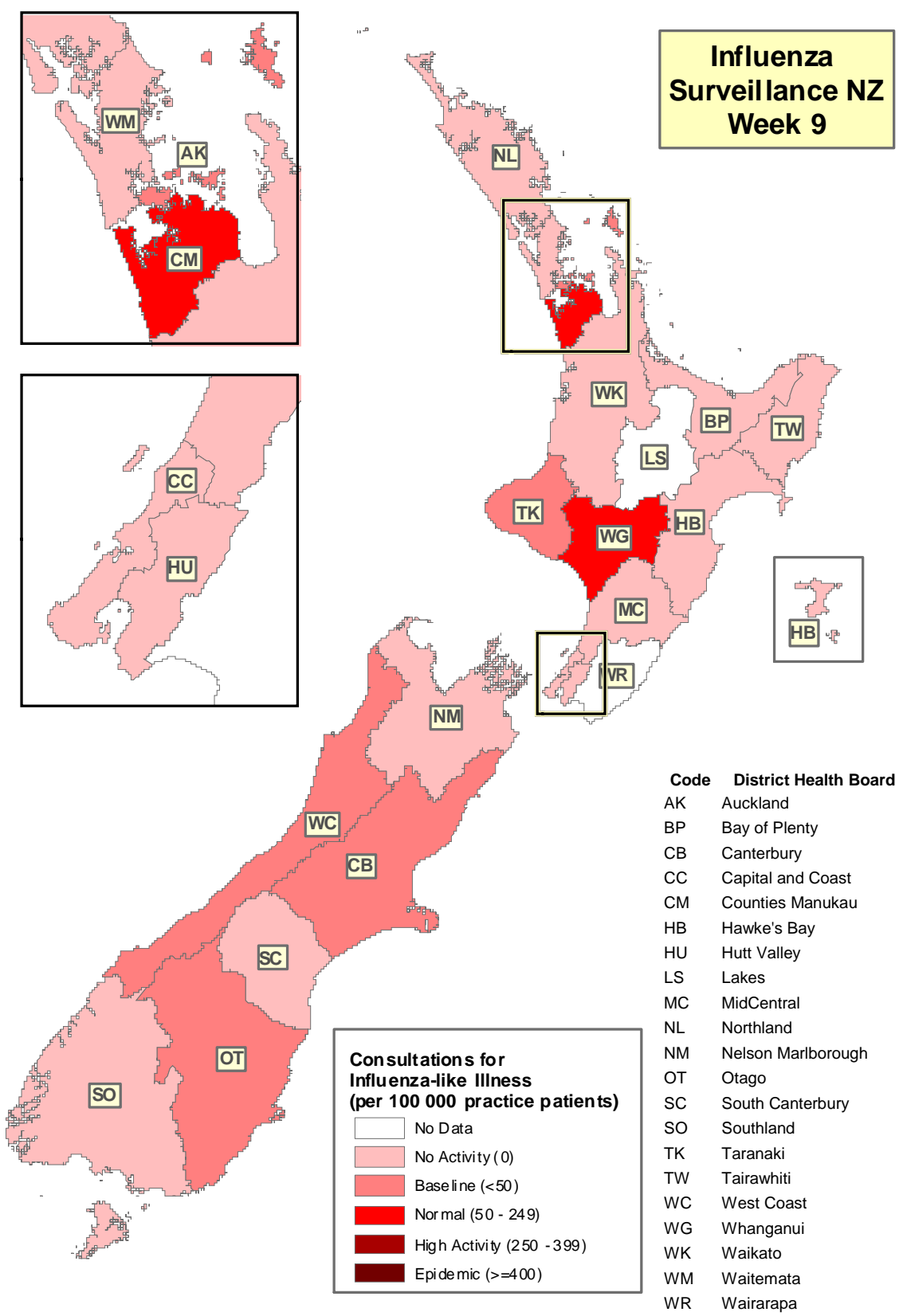
Figure 2 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2008, 2009 seasons, and 2010 so far. The current rate of influenza-like illness is below the baseline.

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 DHB for week 9, 2010.



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