

INFLUENZA WEEKLY UPDATE

2010/12: 22-28 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 12 (22-28 March 2010).

SUMMARY OF THIS REPORT:

- Influenza-like illness (ILI) through sentinel surveillance was reported from 18 out of 21 District Health Boards (DHB) with a national consultation rate of 11.1 per 100 000 (36 ILI consultations). Twenty-one swabs were received from sentinel and non-sentinel surveillance. No influenza viruses were identified.
- Pandemic influenza A (H1N1) 09 is a notifiable disease in New Zealand. As of 28 March 2010, there have been 3301¹ cases recorded in EpiSurv with 20 deaths.

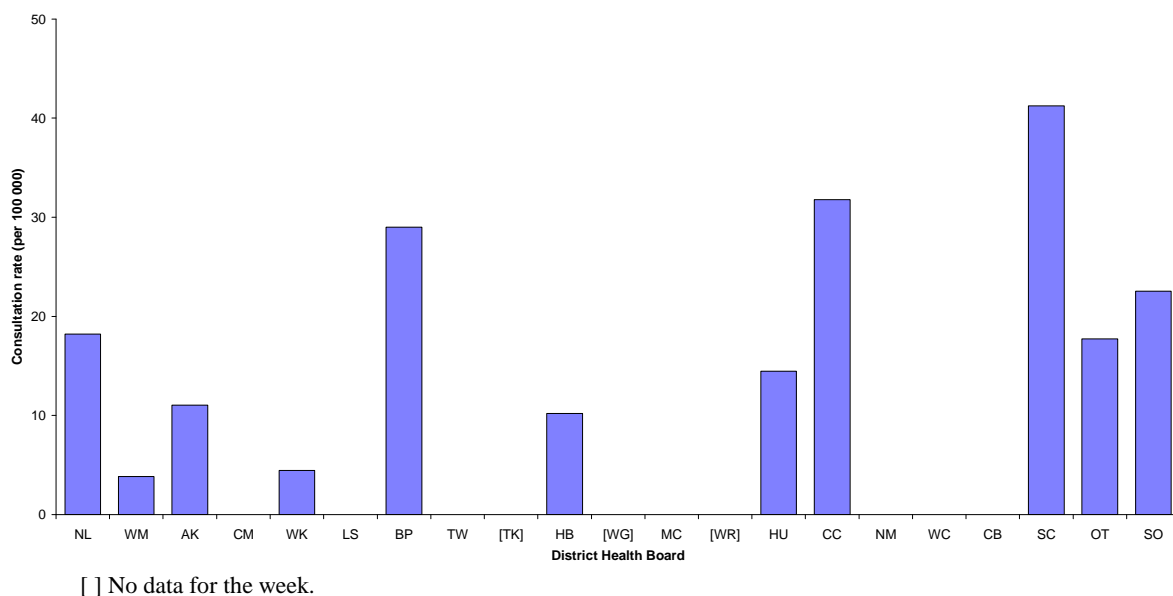
(Note: For further information please refer to the Ministry of Health's website:
<http://www.moh.govt.nz/influenza-a-h1n1>)

In the past week, a total of 36 consultations for influenza-like illness were reported from 80 general practices in 18 out of 21 DHBs. This gives a weekly consultation rate of 11.1 per 100 000 patient population.

The graph below compares the consultation rates for influenza-like illness for each DHB over the past week. South Canterbury DHB had the highest consultation rate (41.2 per 100 000, 4 cases), followed by Capital and Coast (31.8 per 100 000, 7 cases) and Bay of Plenty (29.0 per 100 000, 1 case).

¹ Data source: EpiSurv as of 31 March 2010.

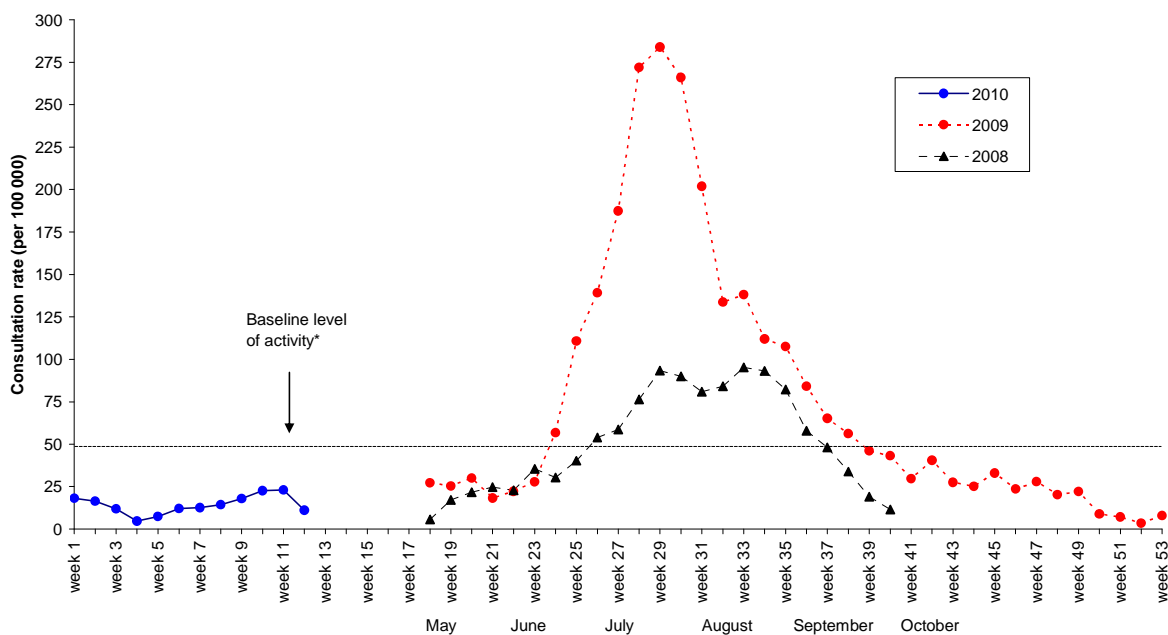
Figure 1: Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness by DHB week ending 28 March 2010



Twenty-one swabs were received by the virology laboratories from sentinel surveillance (8 swabs) and non-sentinel surveillance (13). No influenza viruses were identified.

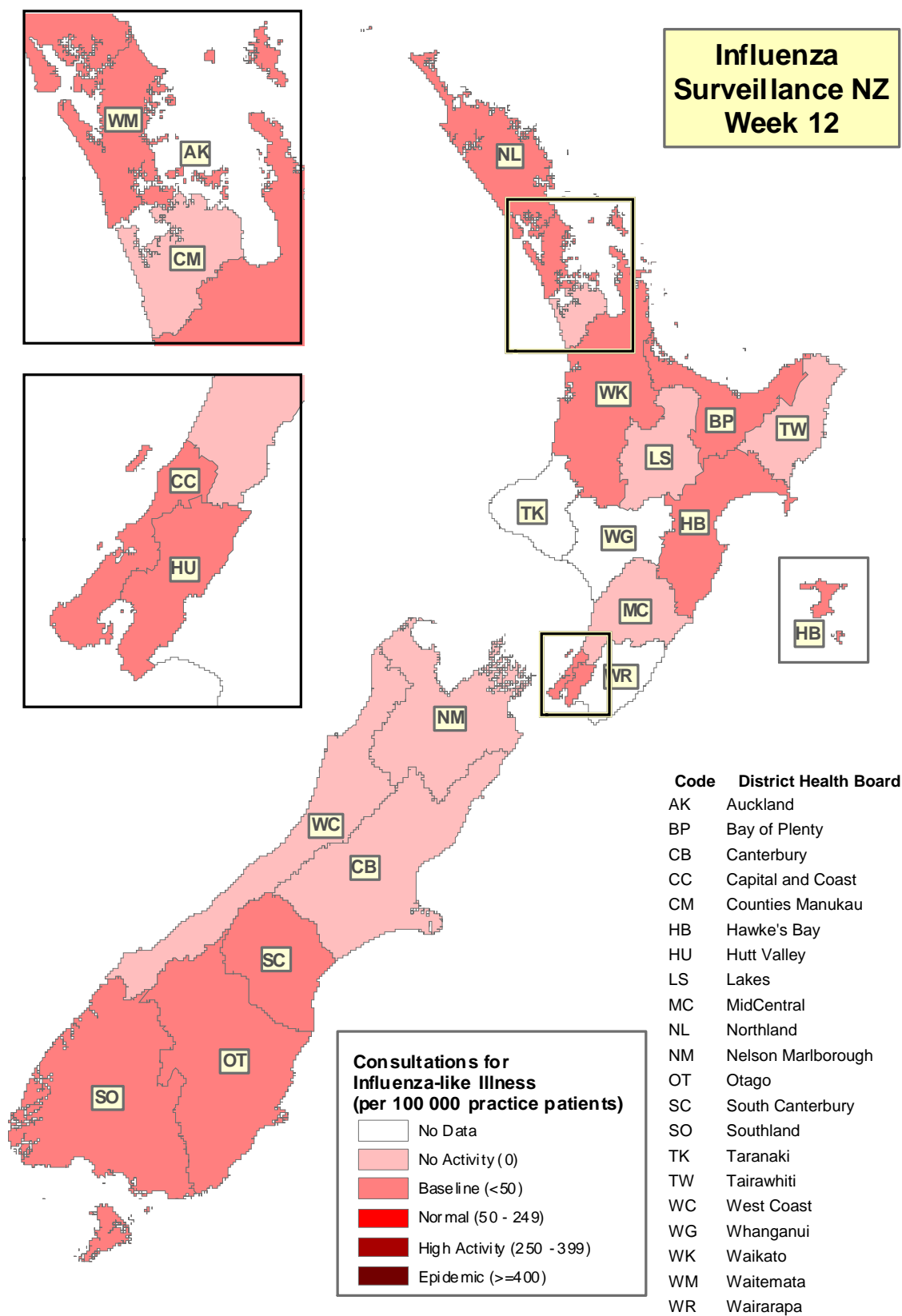
Figure 2 shows the weekly national consultation rates for 2008, 2009 seasons, and 2010 so far. The current rate of influenza-like illness is below the baseline.

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 12, 2010.



Compiled by:
 Liza Lopez
 Population and Environmental Health
 ESR Kenepuru Science Centre
 PO Box 50 348, PORIRUA
 Tel : 04 914 0647 Fax: 04 978 6699 Email:liza.lopez@esr.cri.nz

Dr. Sue Huang
 WHO National Influenza Centre
 ESR Wallaceville Science Centre
 PO Box 40158, Upper Hutt