

**Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre (NI)  
Dept. of General Practice, QUB, Data Retrieval Project  
Regional Virus Laboratory  
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency**

**Enhanced Surveillance of Influenza  
In Northern Ireland**

**2009**

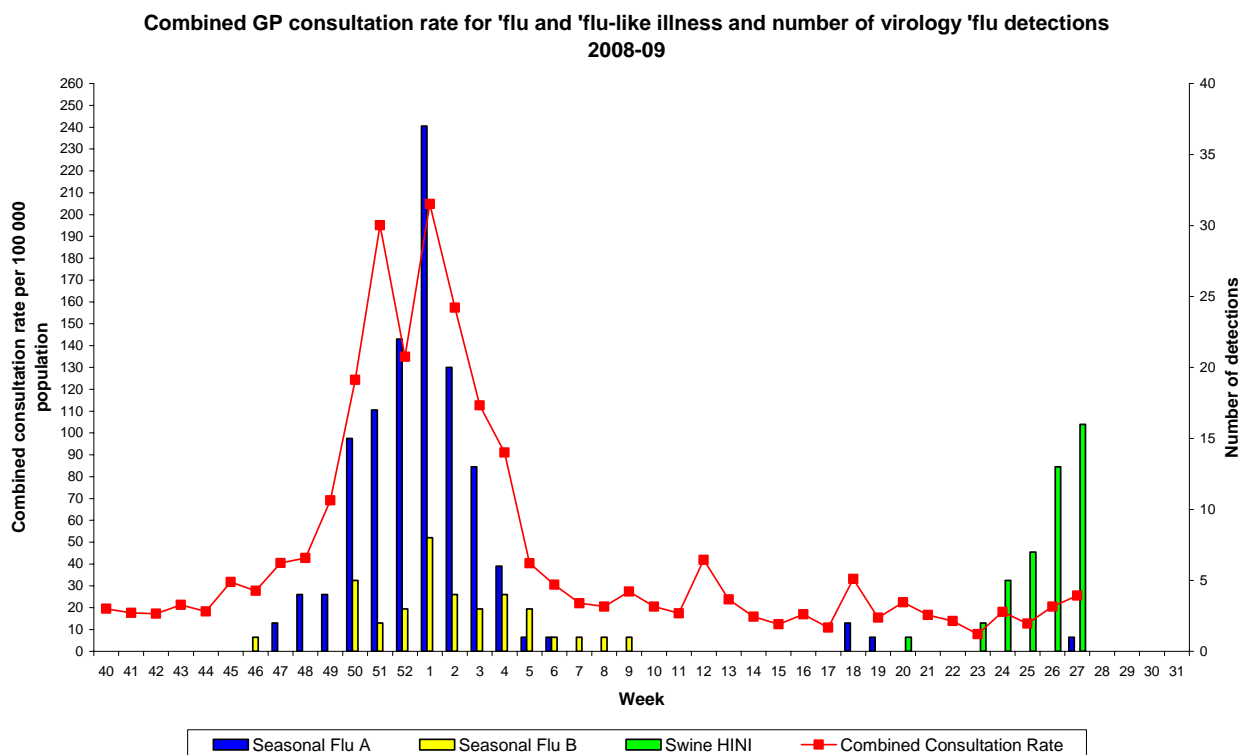
**Week 27**

**(27/06/09 – 03/07/09)**

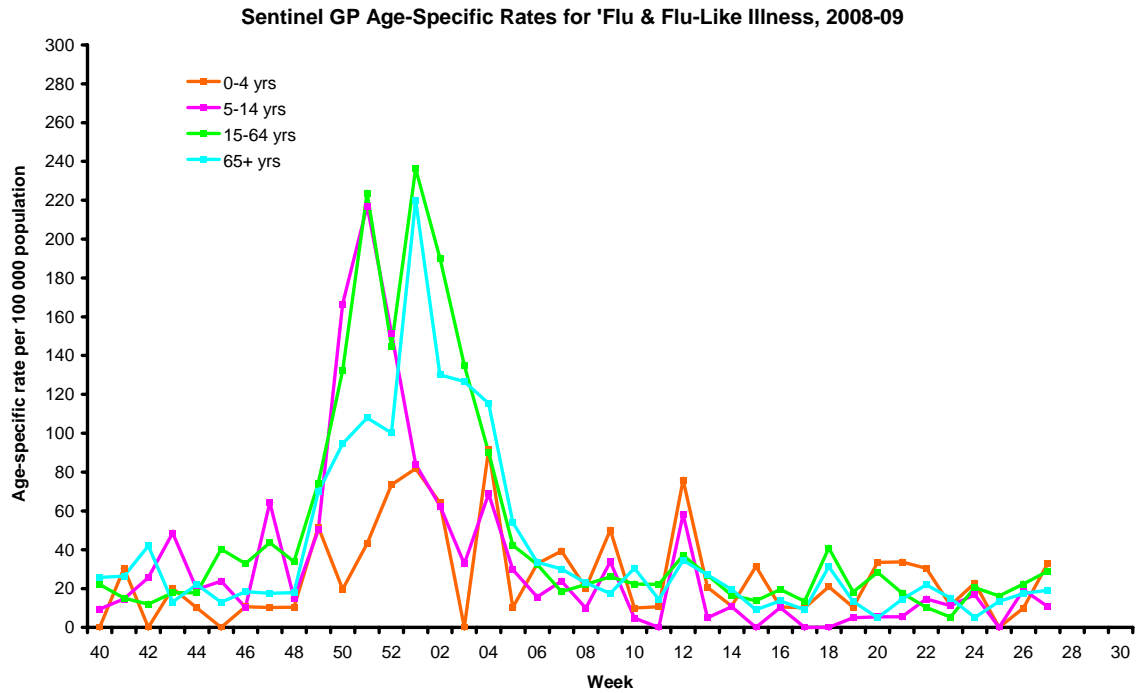
This bulletin is circulated to Trust Chief Executives, Directors of Public Health, Consultants in Communicable Disease Control, participating practices and other interested parties. We would encourage you to disseminate it internally to any relevant personnel. For further information or any comments on the contents or presentation of this bulletin, please contact Eileen Morelli at 028 9026 3386 or E-mail at [eileen.morelli@hpa.org.uk](mailto:eileen.morelli@hpa.org.uk) if you wish to be added to the mailing list, please contact CDSC (NI) at the above telephone number or E-mail address. Further copies may be downloaded from <http://www.cdscni.org.uk/>

- ❖ *In Wk 27, Combined GP consultation rates for 'flu/ FLI have increased for the second consecutive week but remain at low levels though higher than in previous years.*
- ❖ *Sixteen swine influenza detections in Wk 27.*
- ❖ *OOH calls for 'flu/ FLI have increased in Wk 27 for the fourth consecutive week but constitute <1% of all calls.*
- ❖ *Mortality indices are stable*
- ❖ *Conclusion: while flu monitoring indices are low there is some evidence of a recent rise perhaps indicating the impact of A/H1N1v*

## Sentinel GP Clinical Consultation Data

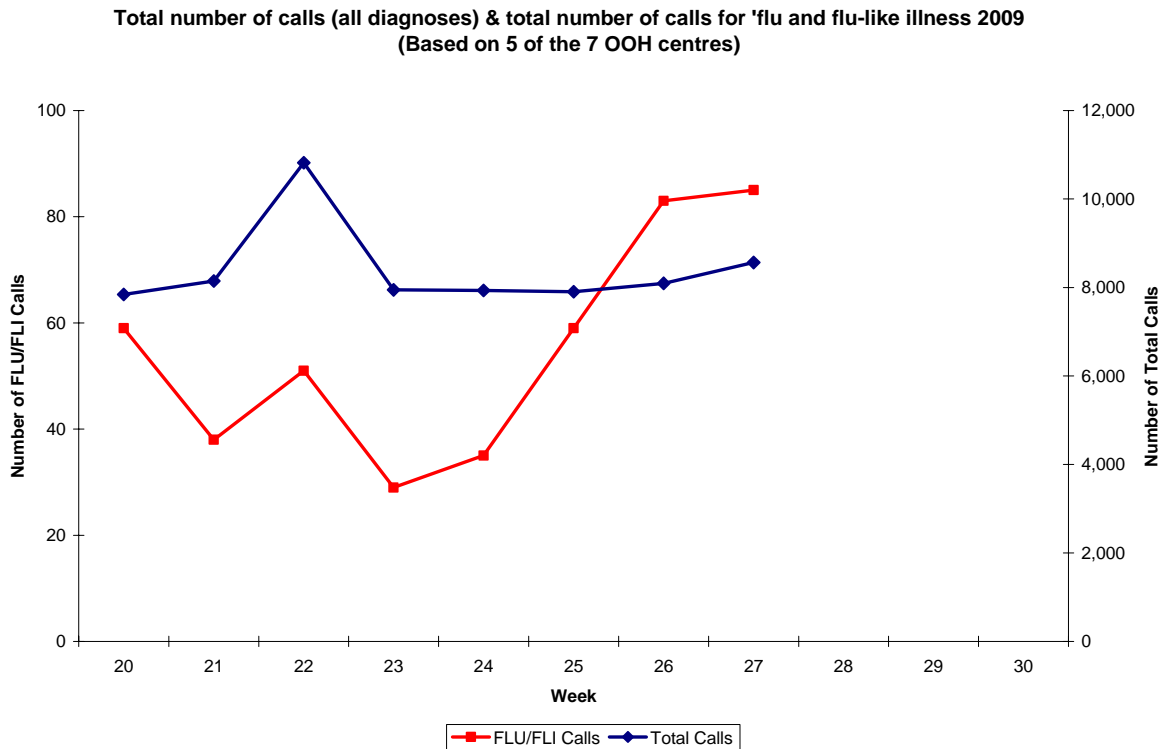


The above graph compares the number of positive virology detections by week broken down into Flu A, Flu B, and Swine 'flu H1N1v with the weekly GP consultation rate per 100,000 population. The highest consultation rate for 2008/09 was reported in Wk 01 (Appendix 1). This coincides with the highest seasonal influenza detections (37 Flu A & 8 Flu B). The first Swine flu H1N1v detection was reported in Wk 20 (Mid May). To date there have been forty-five detections in Northern Ireland (this total includes provisional data for Wk 28). In Wk 27, the GP combined consultation rate per 100,000 population has risen from 20.5 in Wk 26 to 25.5 per 100,000 population. This is the second consecutive week the consultation rate has risen and this trend will remain under close scrutiny as the current rate is higher than those noted in previous years. This rise may be influenced by changes in health seeking behaviour as a result of public concern about swine flu with patients more likely to seek primary care advice for flu symptoms than before. Positive influenza detections remain low with 17/176 (10%) of specimens positive for swine or seasonal flu last week (see virology table). Work is underway with the HPA Centre for Infections in determining appropriate baseline consultation thresholds.



Rates for flu/FLI remain at low levels however in Wk 27 rates have increased in all age groups except the 5-14 year old age group.

### Out-of-Hours (OOH) Centres Call Data



The OOH graph illustrates the total number of calls (all diagnoses) and the total number of calls for 'flu/FLI. At this time of the year the volume of calls for 'flu/FLI is relatively low and subject to weekly fluctuations. Calls for 'flu/FLI increased from 59 in Wk 25 to 83 in Wk 26. In Wk 27 calls have increased yet again to 85 for 'flu/FLI. However this represents less than 1% of all calls.

## Virus activity in Northern Ireland

| Week Number | Source       | Specimens Tested | Influenza A |           | Influenza B | RSV      | Total influenza Positive | % Influenza Positive |
|-------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------|
|             |              |                  | Seasonal    | Swine     |             |          |                          |                      |
| 27          | Sentinel     | 4                | 0           | 1         | 0           | NT       | 1                        | 25                   |
|             | Non-sentinel | 172              | 1           | 15        | 0           | 0        | 16                       | 9                    |
|             | <b>Total</b> | <b>176</b>       | <b>1</b>    | <b>16</b> | <b>0</b>    | <b>0</b> | <b>17</b>                | <b>10</b>            |

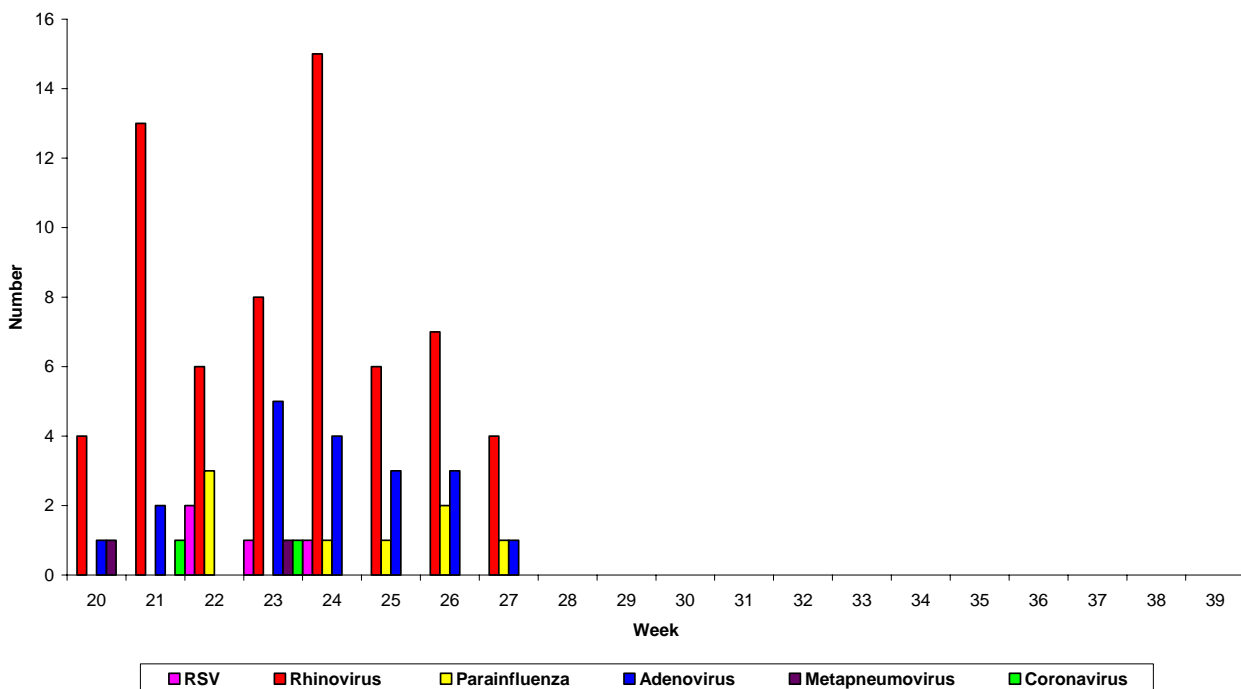
**NB: All virology data is provisional. Specimens tested refer to the date of laboratory reports and not the date the specimen was received by the laboratory. \* Nt = not tested**

## Virus activity broken down by age group

| Cumulative Total Wk 40 - Wk 27 |            |           |           |            |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|
| AGE                            | FluA       |           | FluB      | RSV        | Total      |
|                                | Seasonal   | Swine     |           |            |            |
| 0-4                            | 43         | 2         | 12        | 361        | <b>418</b> |
| 5-14                           | 12         | 3         | 7         | 7          | <b>29</b>  |
| 15-64                          | 65         | 36        | 16        | 9          | <b>126</b> |
| 65+                            | 24         | 3         | 4         | 8          | <b>39</b>  |
| Unknown                        | 5          | 0         | 0         | 2          | <b>7</b>   |
| <b>All ages</b>                | <b>149</b> | <b>44</b> | <b>39</b> | <b>387</b> | <b>619</b> |

During Wk 27 a total of 176 specimens were tested by the Regional Virus Laboratory (172 non-sentinel and 4 sentinel). There were 16 swine Influenza detections during Wk 27.

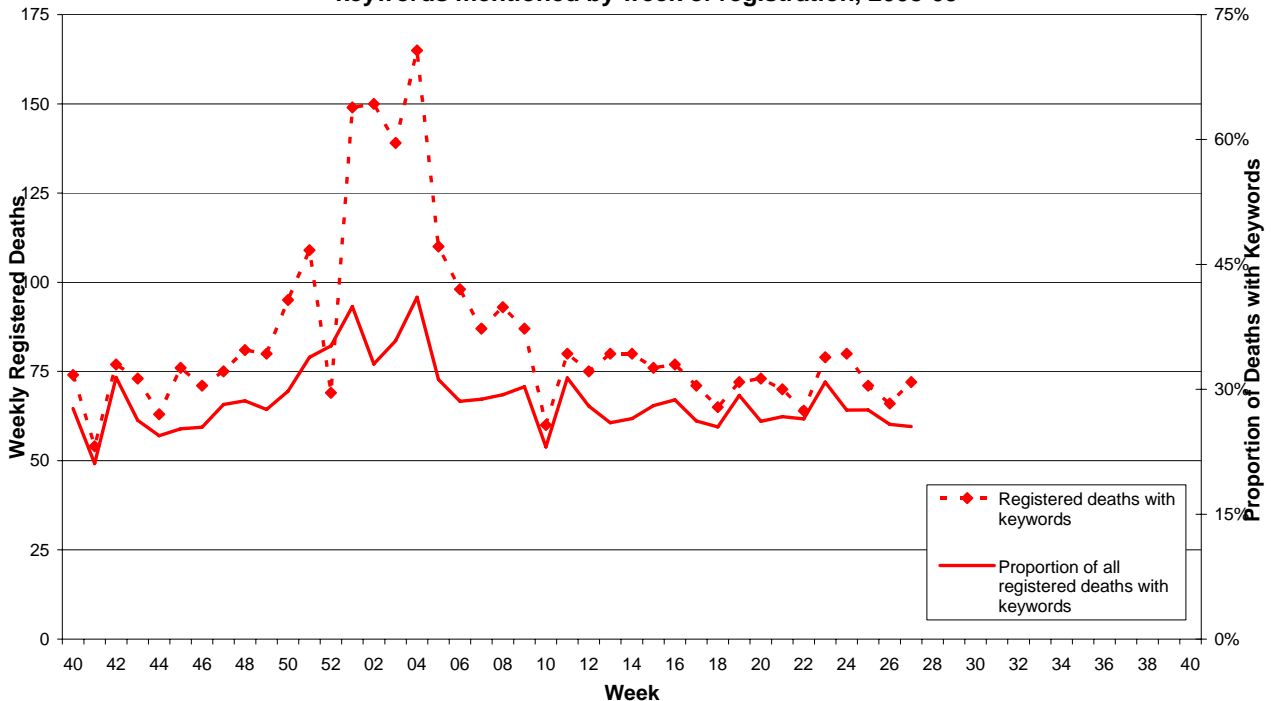
Other Respiratory Viruses 2009



From Wk 20 CDSC (NI) has been receiving information on other respiratory virus detections. In Wk 27 there were 4 rhinovirus, 1 adenovirus and 1 parainfluenza virus detections.

## Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) Mortality Data

Deaths due to influenza, bronchitis, pneumonia and proportion of all deaths with keywords mentioned by week of registration, 2008-09



The above data relates to the number of deaths from selected respiratory infections (some of which may be attributable to influenza, and other respiratory infections or complications thereof) registered each week in Northern Ireland. This is not necessarily the same as the number of deaths occurring in that period. Searches of the medical certificates of the cause of death are performed using a number of keywords that could be associated with influenza (bronchiolitis, bronchitis, influenza and pneumonia). Death registrations containing these keywords are presented as a proportion of all registered deaths. In Wk 27, there were 282 registered deaths of which 72 (26%) related to these specific respiratory infections.

### Flu Surveillance Elsewhere

(Detailed Weekly Reports can be found on the associated web sites)

**England, Scotland and Wales:**

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics\\_az/influenza/seasonal/activity0607/flureport.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/influenza/seasonal/activity0607/flureport.htm)

**Republic of Ireland:**

<http://www.ndsc.ie/hpsc/A-Z/Respiratory/Influenza/Publications/20062007Season/>

[http://www.eiss.org/cgi-files/bulletin\\_v2.cgi](http://www.eiss.org/cgi-files/bulletin_v2.cgi)

The next bulletin will be next week and will continue on a weekly basis in light of international events.

**Many thanks to all who have provided data for this weekly bulletin:**

Sentinel GPs and their Practice Staff, Out-of-Hours Centres, Regional Virus Laboratory, NISRA and Influenza Surveillance Centres throughout the UK and Republic of Ireland.

## Appendix (1)

| <b>2008 -2009<br/>Season</b> | <b>Total cases<br/>FLI</b> | <b>Total cases<br/>'Flu</b> | <b>Proportion due to<br/>clinical 'flu</b> | <b>Combined Rate for 'Flu<br/>and FLI<br/>(per 100 000 population)</b> |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Week No</b>               |                            |                             |  |  |
| Wk 40                        | 29                         | 3                           | 9%   | 19.6   |
| Wk 41                        | 22                         | 6                           | 21%  | 17.6   |
| Wk 42                        | 24                         | 2                           | 8%   | 17.3   |
| Wk 43                        | 29                         | 5                           | 15%  | 21.3   |
| Wk 44                        | 29                         | 0                           | -  | 17.8   |
| Wk 45                        | 46                         | 6                           | 12%  | 31.8   |
| Wk 46                        | 40                         | 3                           | 7%   | 27.8   |
| Wk 47                        | 51                         | 13                          | 20%  | 40.5   |
| Wk 48                        | 61                         | 8                           | 12%  | 42.8   |
| Wk 49                        | 92                         | 14                          | 13%  | 69.2   |
| Wk 50                        | 174                        | 29                          | 13%  | 124.3  |
| Wk 51                        | 234                        | 55                          | 19%  | 195.2  |
| Wk 52                        | 153                        | 46                          | 23%  | 134.9  |
| Wk 01                        | 221                        | 71                          | 24%  | <b>204.9</b>   |
| Wk 02                        | 186                        | 47                          | 20%  | 157.3  |
| Wk 03                        | 141                        | 23                          | 14%  | 112.6  |
| Wk 04                        | 131                        | 13                          | 9%   | 91.1   |
| Wk 05                        | 49                         | 14                          | 22%  | 40.4   |
| Wk 06                        | 40                         | 5                           | 11%  | 30.5   |
| Wk 07                        | 34                         | 2                           | 6%   | 22.1   |
| Wk 08                        | 26                         | 6                           | 19%  | 20.5   |
| Wk 09                        | 15                         | 34                          | 31%  | 27.4   |
| Wk 10                        | 29                         | 4                           | 12%  | 20.5   |
| Wk 11                        | 19                         | 7                           | 27%  | 17.4   |
| Wk 12                        | 20                         | 41                          | 67%  | 42.0   |
| Wk 13                        | 29                         | 8                           | 22%  | 23.8   |
| Wk 14                        | 23                         | 0                           | -  | 15.9   |
| Wk 15                        | 17                         | 2                           | 11%  | 12.4   |
| Wk 16                        | 20                         | 6                           | 23%  | 17.0   |
| Wk 17                        | 12                         | 5                           | 29%  | 10.9   |
| Wk 18                        | 38                         | 13                          | 25%  | 33.1   |
| Wk 19                        | 21                         | 3                           | 13%  | 15.4   |
| Wk 20                        | 25                         | 7                           | 22%  | 22.4   |
| Wk 21                        | 22                         | 2                           | 8%   | 17.5   |
| Wk 22                        | 21                         | 1                           | 5%   | 14.5   |
| Wk 23                        | 10                         | 1                           | 9%   | 7.9  |
| Wk 24                        | 25                         | 6                           | 19%  | 20.3   |
| Wk 25                        | 20                         | 2                           | 9%   | 13.7   |
| Wk 26                        | 30                         | 3                           | 9%   | 20.5   |
| <b>Wk27</b>                  | <b>31</b>                  | <b>6</b>                    | <b>16%</b>                                 | <b>25.5</b>  |