

14 July 2009 – Ministry of Health Press release

Influenza A (H1N1) Swine Flu - Update 105

The number of confirmed deaths in New Zealand from Novel Influenza A (H1N1) 09 swine flu is now nine, up two since yesterday and both people had underlying health conditions. A 56-year-old man died in Wellington and a 79-year-old woman died in the Hutt Valley last week.

Latest Numbers

The cumulative total of confirmed cases of Novel Influenza A (H1N1) 09 swine flu is 1984, up from 1779 yesterday.

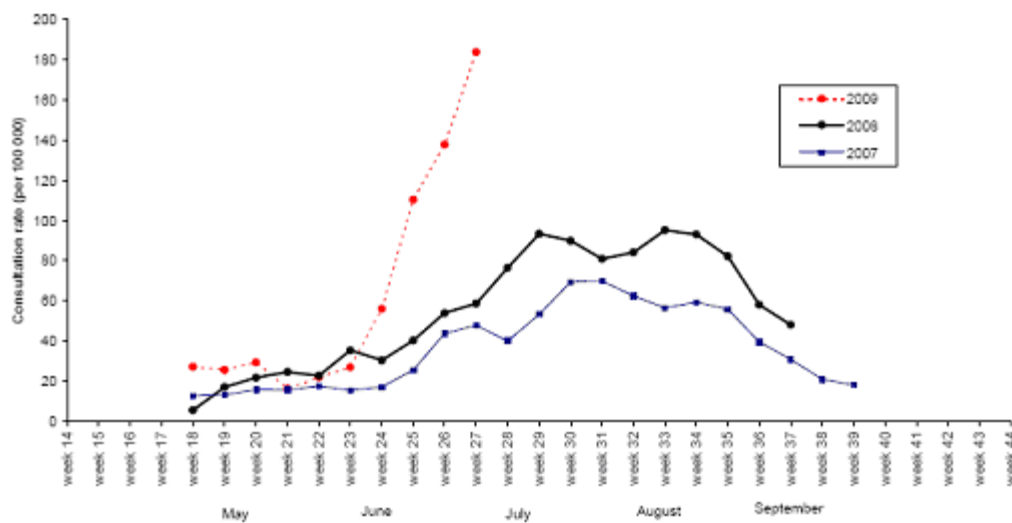
Healthline Calls

Healthline continues to receive a high number of calls from people with influenza-like symptoms.

GP Consultations

Weekly consultation rates for influenza-like illness in New Zealand continue to increase, most likely due to Novel Influenza A (H1N1) 09 swine flu, and are nearly three times higher than the winter peak experienced in the last two years. This data from ESR's GP sentinel surveillance system shows that the highest weekly influenza-like illness (ILI) consultation rates have been reported for children and teenagers up to 19 years.

Attached is a table showing weekly consultation rates from ESR's GP sentinel surveillance system for influenza-like illnesses for the past three years.



"We are experiencing a steady increase in flu consultation rates in the primary health sector and that will put considerably more pressure on health services", says Health Minister Tony Ryall. "The public can expect to see full Intensive Care Units and some surgery being cancelled at various public hospitals around the country over the next few weeks. "

"I would like to acknowledge the efforts being made by our health professionals including the nurses working the phones at Healthline."

Numbers of people in hospitals with the Novel Influenza A (H1N1)

Today a total of 113 people are reported to be in hospital with the new influenza A (H1N1) or its complications, 23 of which are in intensive care.

The number of patients currently in intensive care is:

Northland (2), Auckland (5), Waitemata (2), Counties Manukau (4), Waikato (2), Hawkes Bay (1), Hutt Valley (2), Capital and Coast (2), Canterbury (3).

Deputy Director of Public Health Dr Fran McGrath says for most people, influenza will be a mild to moderate illness. Some people may develop complications, such as asthma, pneumonia or heart problems and should phone for a health assessment. Complications can develop with seasonal influenza as well as the new pandemic influenza. Signs to look for include:

The ill person

- starts to feel better, then gets worse
- has a temperature of 38°C or greater
- has chills or severe shaking
- has difficulty breathing or chest pain
- has purple or blue discolouration of the lips
- is less responsive than normal, is unusually quiet, or becomes confused
- is vomiting and unable to keep liquids down
- has signs of dehydration such as dizziness when standing, not urinating, and in infants, a lack of tears when they cry, or few wet nappies
- has seizures or convulsions.

If any of these things occur, call a doctor or Healthline 0800 611 116 for advice.

ENDS

Information in this update can be attributed to Dr Fran McGrath, Deputy Director of Public Health, Ministry of Health.

For health information and advice: visit <http://www.moh.govt.nz> or call Healthline 0800 611 116

For latest updates on novel Influenza A (H1N1) 09 - Swine Flu: visit <http://www.moh.govt.nz>

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