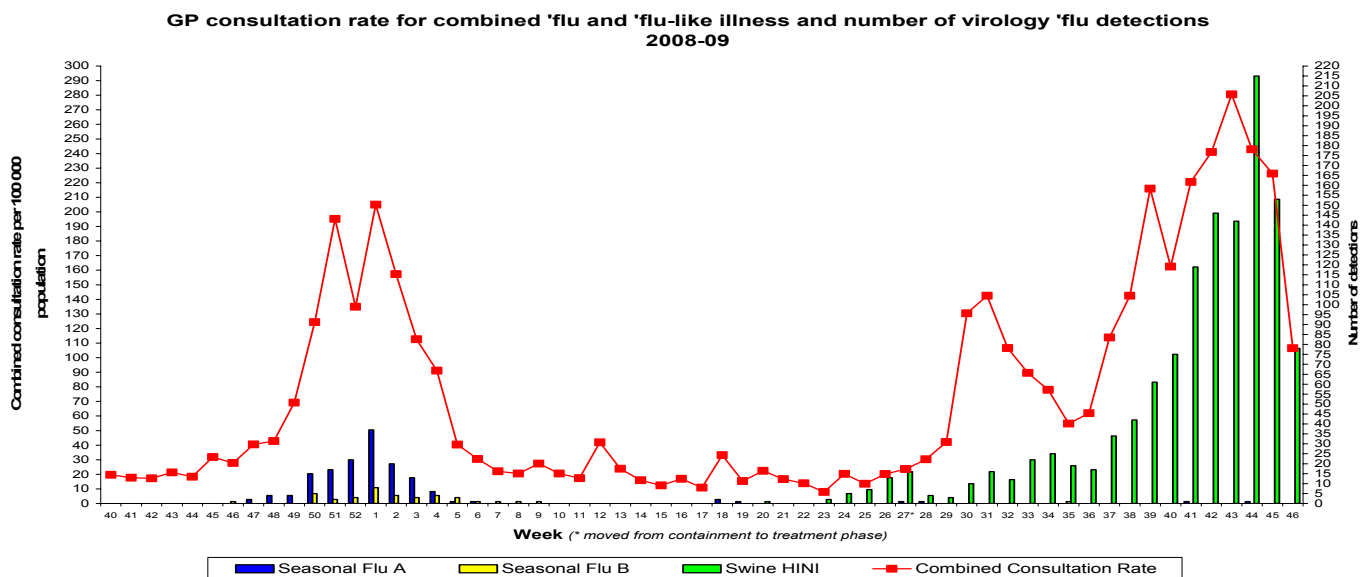


**Summary**

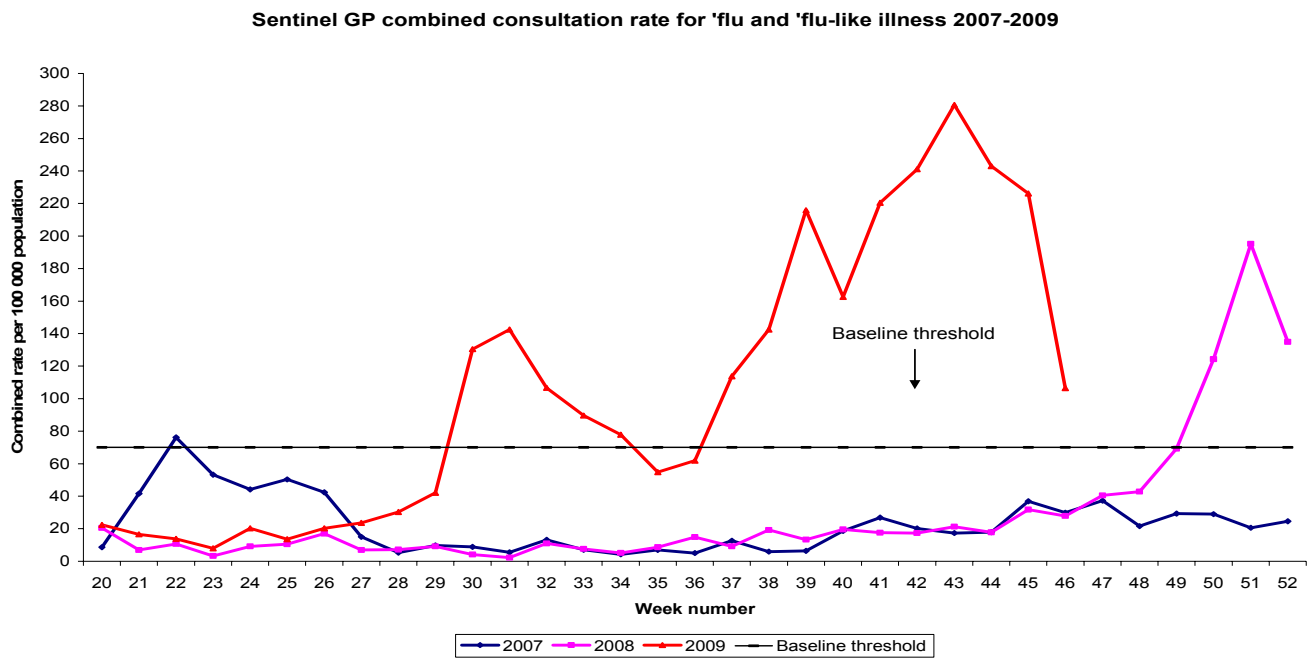
- ❖ GP consultation rates for combined 'flu/ FLI have decreased again this week from 226.2 (updated) in Wk 45 to 106.5/100,000 population in Wk 46 (53% decrease). Rates are highest this week in the 0-4 year age group.
- ❖ OOH calls for 'flu/FLI have decreased from 663 in Wk 45 to 403 in Wk 46 (39% decrease).
- ❖ Seventy-eight influenza detections A/H1N1v in Wk 46 compared to 153 in Wk 45 (49% decrease).
- ❖ A cumulative total of 1265 swine influenza detections in Northern Ireland as at noon 18th November 2009.
- ❖ A cumulative total of 545 hospitalised swine flu cases as at noon on 18th November 2009.
- ❖ The number of new hospitalised cases decreased from 50 in Wk 45 to 24 in Wk 46 (52% decrease).
- ❖ Two deaths, both adults who tested positive for swine flu, bring the total number of swine flu related deaths to 13.
- ❖ Antiviral prescriptions have decreased from 1374 in Wk 45 to 857 in Wk 46 (38% decrease).

**Sentinel GP Clinical Consultation Data**

**Figure 1. Consultation rates and virology for Influenza and Influenza-Like Illness**

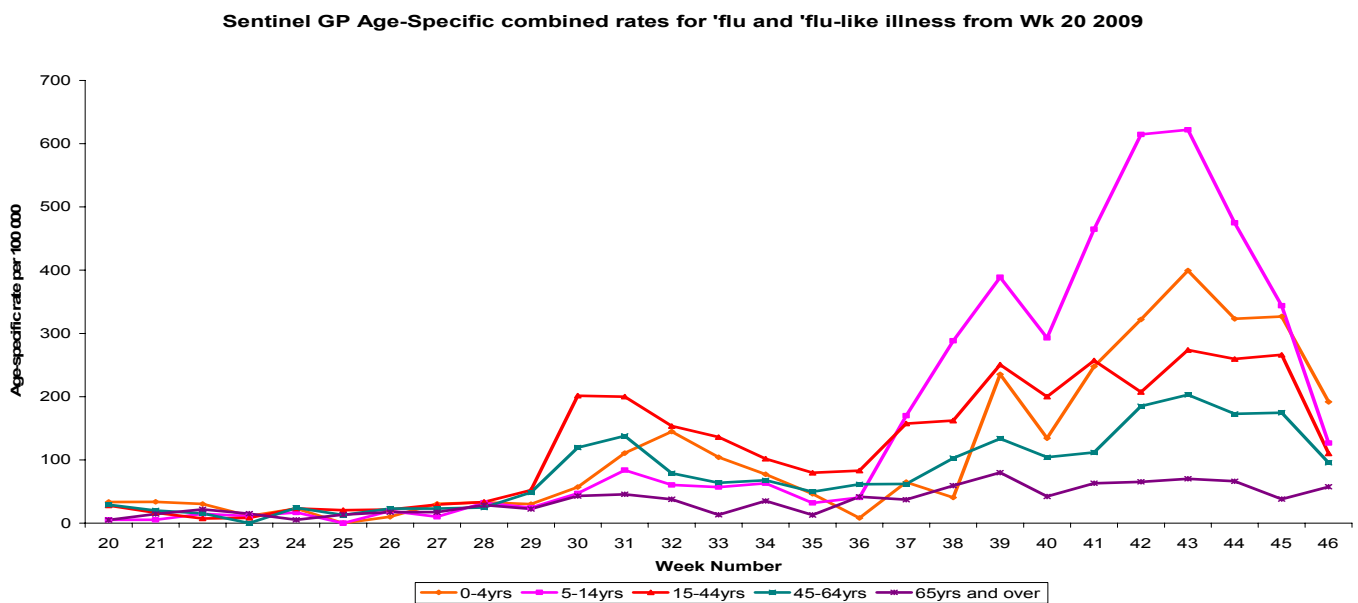


**Figure 2. Consultation rates for Influenza and Influenza-Like Illness by year**



Following a review of consultation data over the past 9 years, a provisional baseline threshold of 70/100,000 has been proposed to distinguish baseline from seasonal activity.

**Figure 3. Weekly consultation rate for combined influenza and influenza-like illness in Northern Ireland by age-group**



**Comments:** The GP combined consultation rate per 100,000 population has decreased again this week from 226.2 (updated rate) in Wk 45 to 106.5 in Wk 46. While this is now the third consecutive week that rates have dropped, the rates continue to be considerably higher than previous years and remain above the baseline threshold (Figure 2).

Rates decreased in the majority of age groups in Wk 46 with the exception of the 65 years and over age group which increased slightly. Unlike previous weeks where the highest age specific combined rates were in the 5-14 year age group, highest rates in Wk 46 were recorded in the 0-4 year age group, with the 5-14 year age group having the second highest rate.

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

Figure 4. Weekly OOH total calls and estimated call numbers for influenza and influenza-like illness.

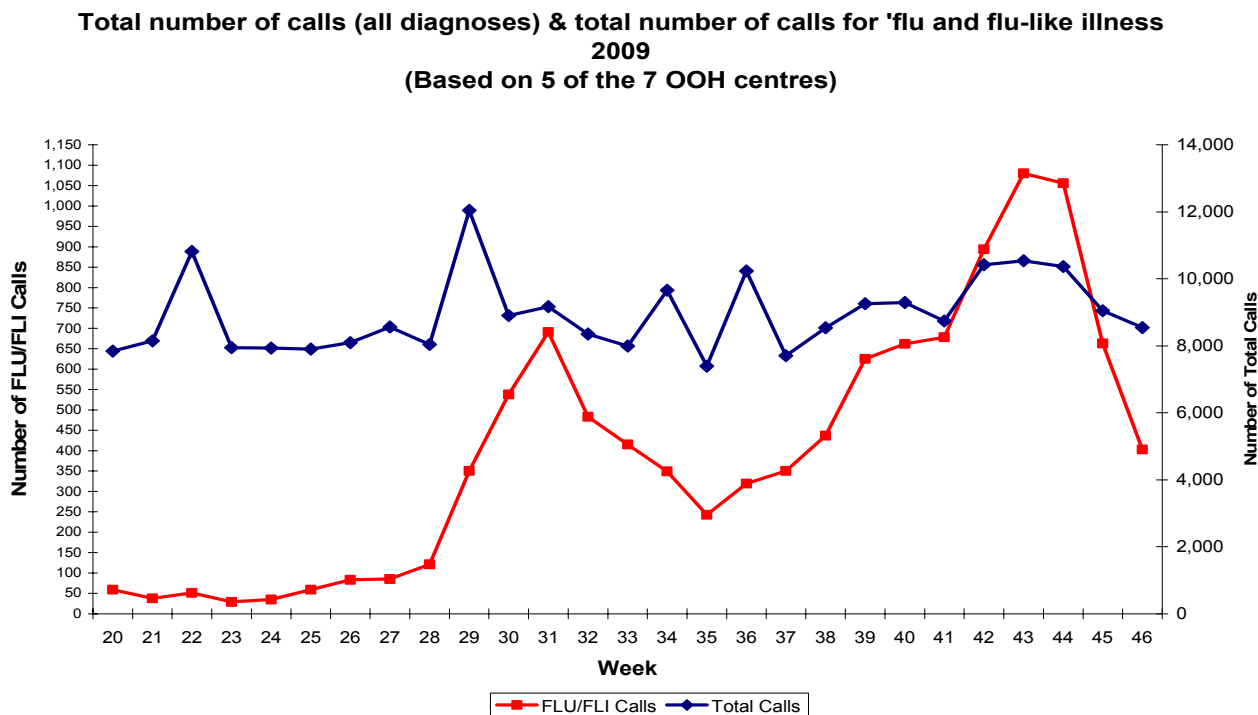
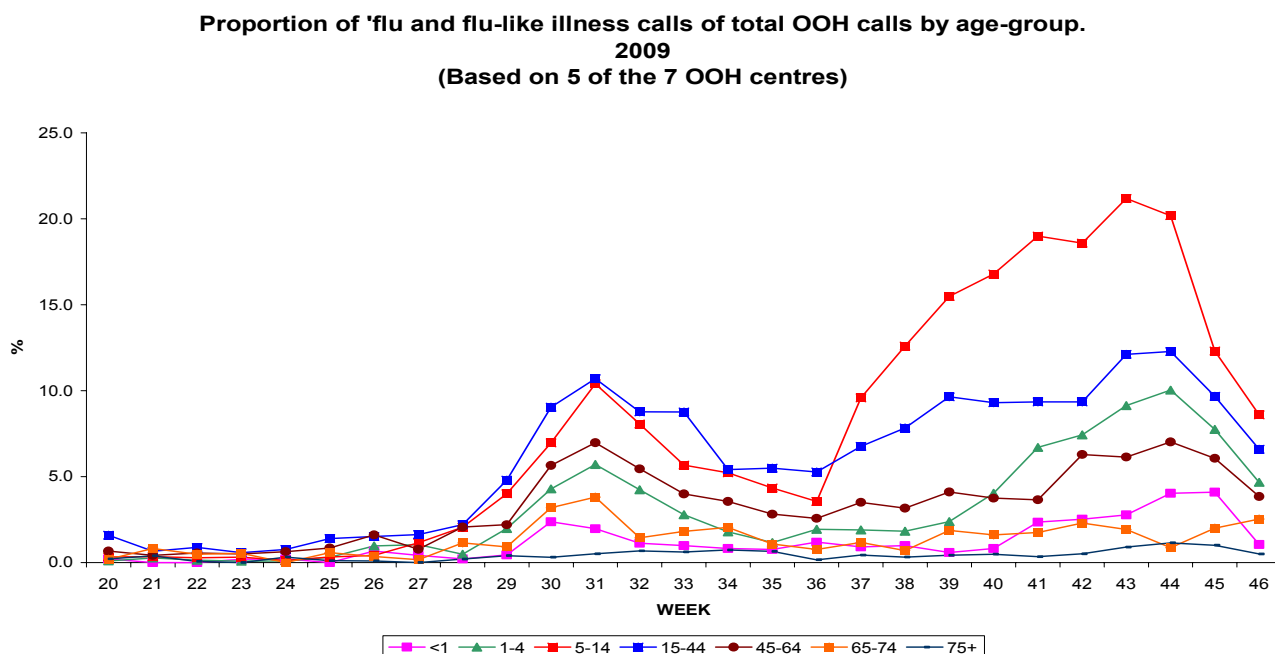


Figure 5. Proportion of 'flu and flu-like illness calls to OOHs by age-group.



**Comments:** The number of calls to OOH centres (all diagnoses) decreased again this week from 9046 calls in Wk 45 to 8545 calls in Wk 46 (5% decrease). The proportion of calls for 'flu/FLI has also decreased from 7.3% in Wk 45 to 4.7% in Wk 46. In Wk 46 the proportion of calls relating to 'flu/FLI decreased in the majority of age groups except for the 65-74 year age group. The 5-14 age group continues to remain highest overall.

## Virological Data

**Table 1. Virus activity in Northern Ireland**

Week Number	Source	Specimens Tested	Influenza A		Influenza B	RSV	Total influenza Positive	% Influenza Positive
			Seasonal	Swine				
46	Sentinel	62	0	27	0	NT	27	44
	Non-sentinel	459	0	51	0	11	51	11
	<b>Total</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>15</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**

**Table 2. Cumulative virus activity by age-group for NI 2009**

Cumulative Total Wk 20 - Wk 46					
AGE	FluA		FluB	RSV	Total
	Seasonal	Swine			
0-4	1	202	0	41	244
5-14	0	360	0	0	360
15-64	1	634	0	0	635
65+	0	33	1	0	34
Unknown	2	6	0	0	8
<b>All ages</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1235</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>1281</b>

The first swine influenza detection in 2009 was reported in Wk 20 (Mid May). By the end of Wk 46 there had been 1235 laboratory confirmed detections in Northern Ireland.

Provisional information indicates an additional 30 cases reported up to noon 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in Northern Ireland to date to 1265.

During Wk 46 a total of 521 specimens were tested by the Regional Virus Laboratory (459 non-sentinel and 62 sentinel). There were 78 swine influenza detections (27 from sentinel practices).

As of 12<sup>th</sup> November 2009, 28 pandemic influenza samples from Northern Ireland have been tested for antiviral susceptibility at the Health Protection Agency Respiratory Virus Unit, London. Samples were screened for the marker commonly associated with resistance to oseltamivir in seasonal influenza (H275Y). None of the Northern Ireland samples showed resistance to oseltamivir.

Figure 6. Total number of samples tested and percentage positive.

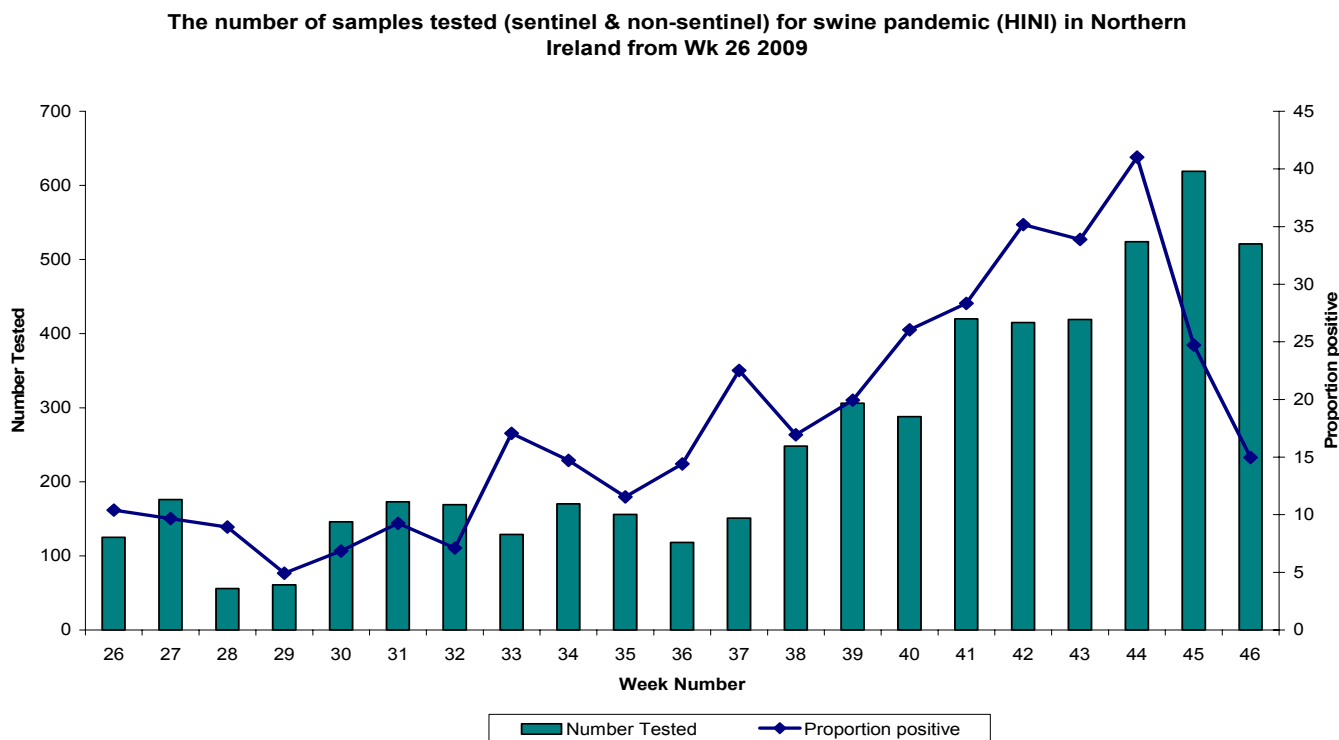
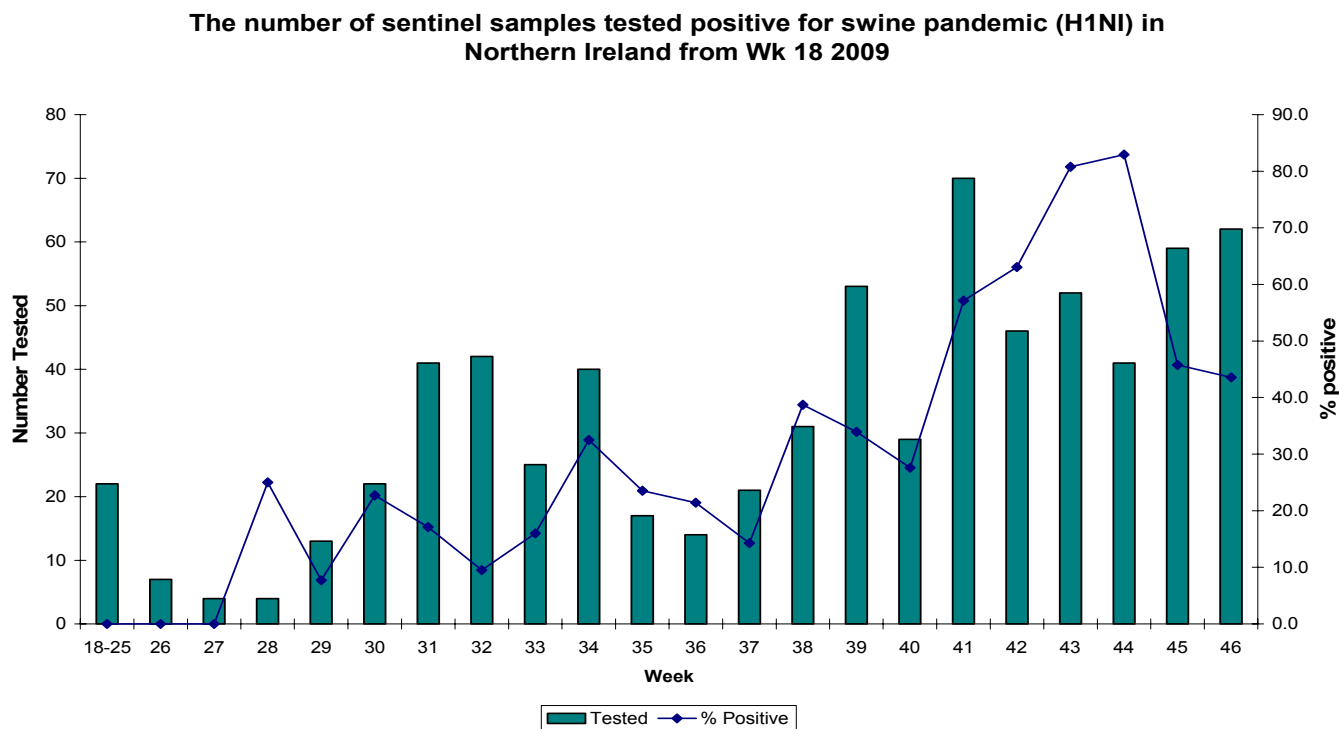


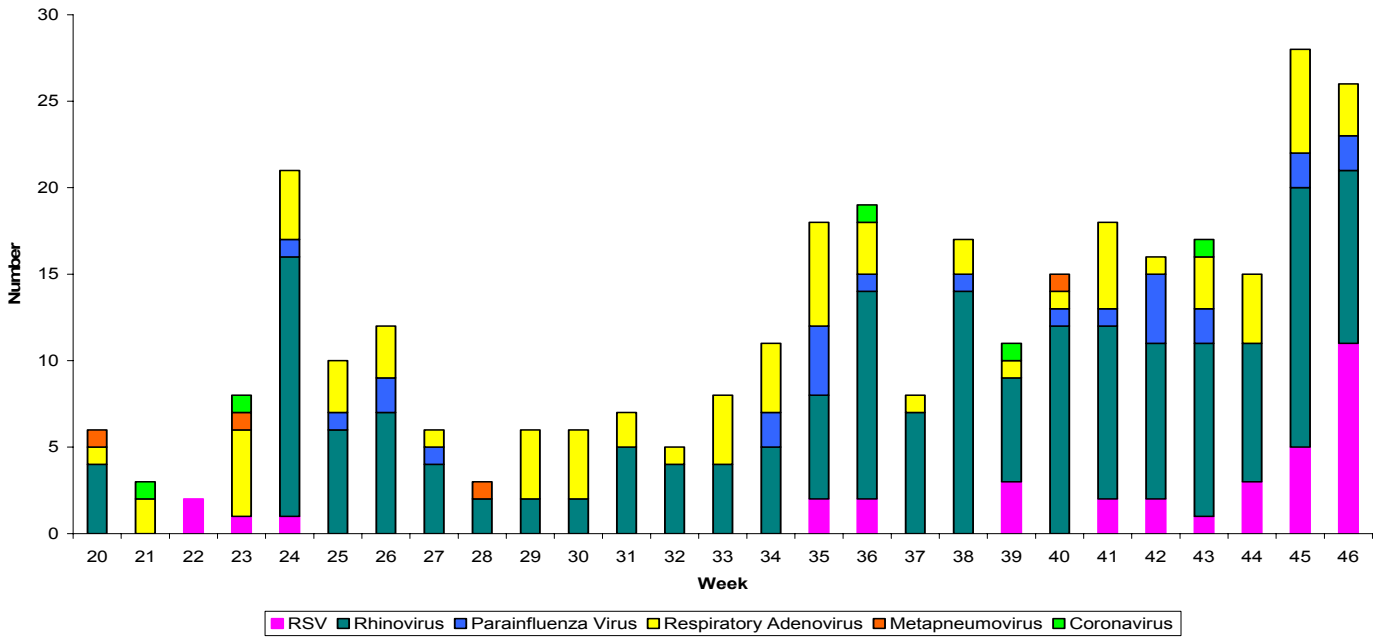
Figure 7. Number of swabs from sentinel practices and percentage positive for A/H1N1v.



**Comments:**

The proportion of samples (sentinel and non-sentinel) that tested positive for A/H1N1v decreased from 25% in Wk 45 to 15% in Wk 46 (Figure 6). The proportion of sentinel swabs positive also decreased slightly from 46% in Wk 45 to 44% in Wk 46 (Figure 7).

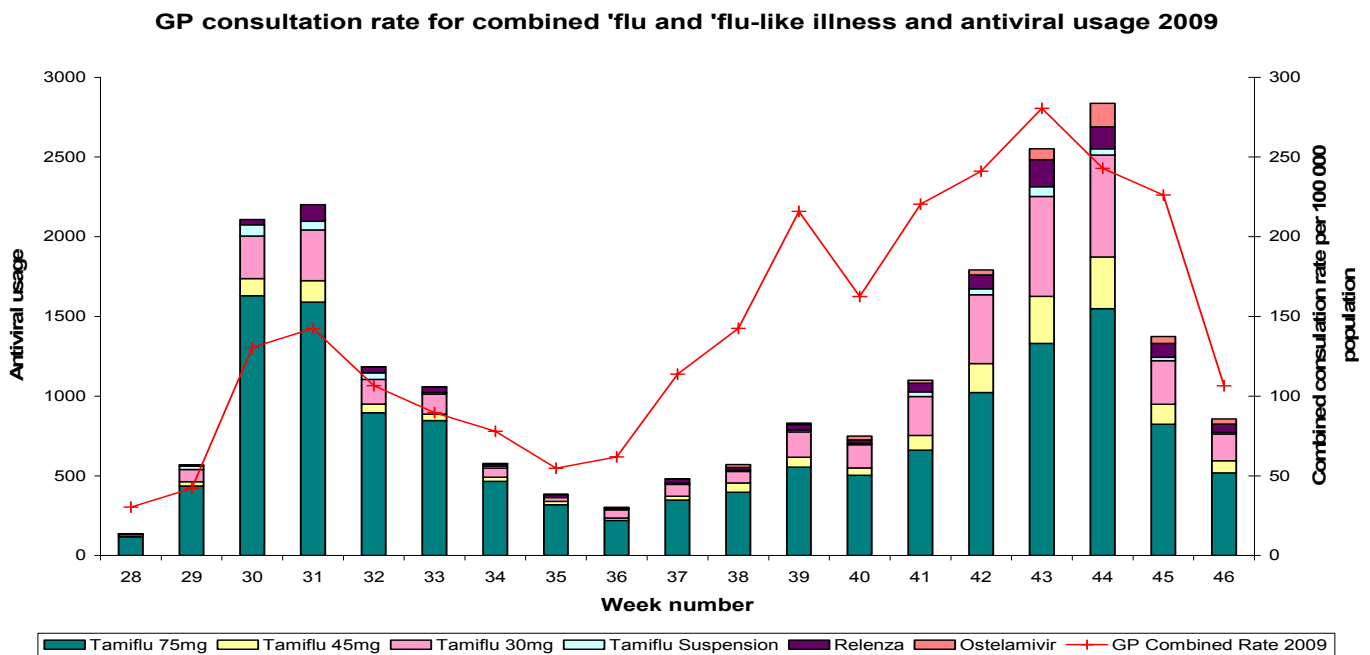
### Other respiratory viruses Northern Ireland 2009



**Comments:** The number of other respiratory viruses recorded has decreased slightly from 28 in Wk 45 to 26 in Wk 46. The number of RSV increased significantly this week, with 11 detections compared with 5 last week and accounted for 42% of all other respiratory viruses recorded. There were also 10 rhinovirus (38%), three respiratory adenovirus and two parainfluenza detections in Wk46.

### Antiviral usage

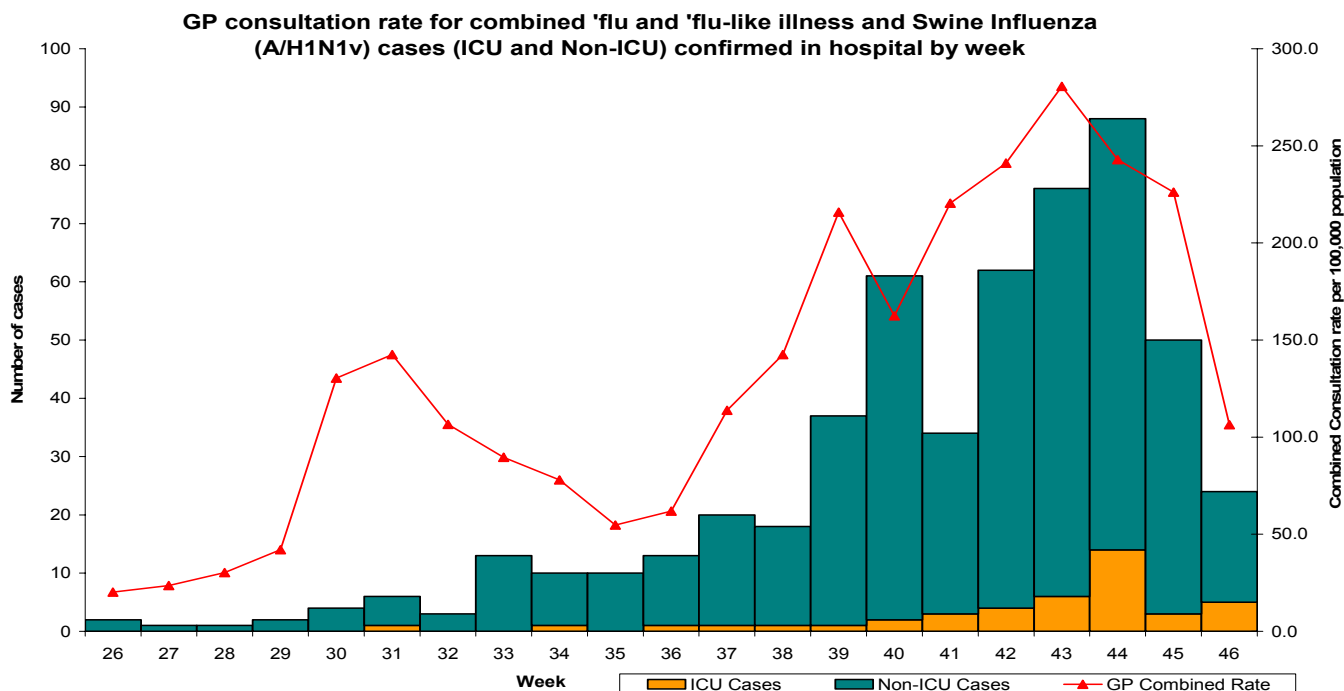
**Figure 9. GP consultation rate for 'flu/flu-like illness and number of antiviral prescriptions**



**Comments:** In Wk 46, 857 antiviral courses were prescribed compared with 1374 courses in Wk 45 (38% decrease).

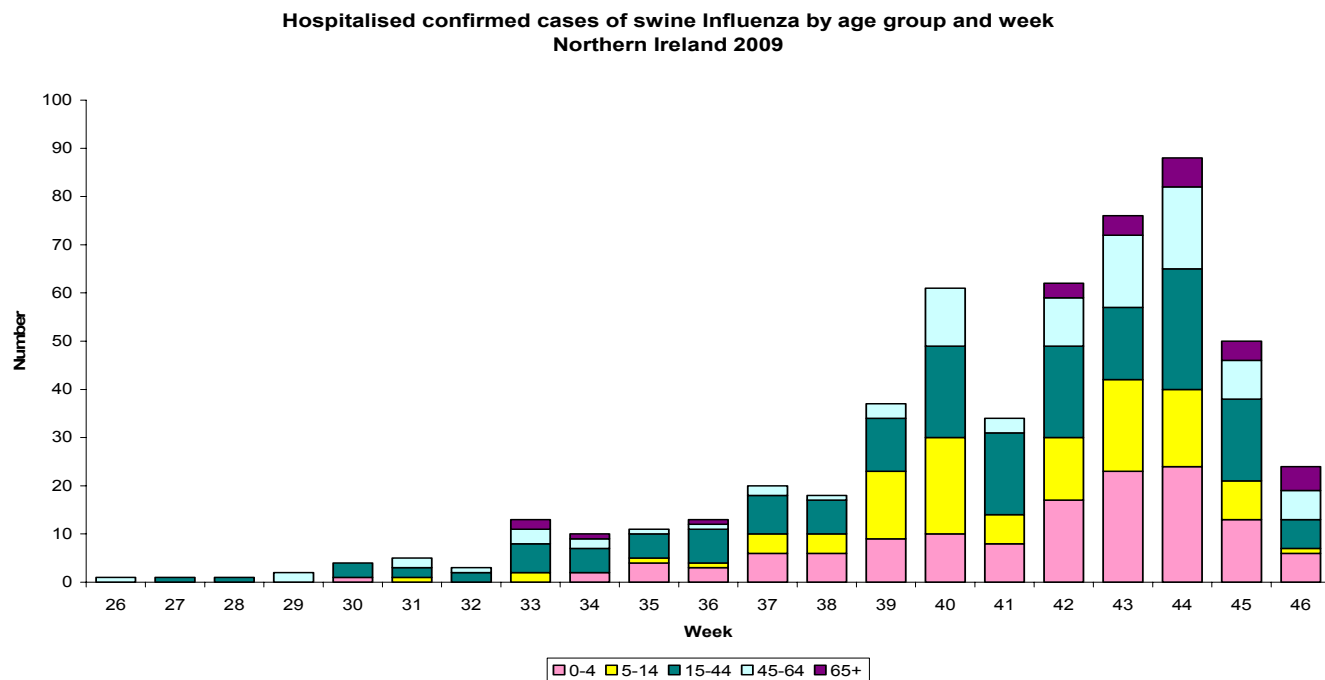
## Swine influenza cases confirmed in Hospitals

Figure 10. Swine influenza cases confirmed in hospital by week.



Note: Graph has been updated due to late returns, numbers may vary slightly from previous week

Figure 11. Swine influenza cases confirmed in hospital by age group.



**Comments:** CDSC (NI) have been recording the number of swine influenza cases confirmed in hospitals in Northern Ireland on a daily basis. As at 18<sup>th</sup> November 2009 there have been five hundred and forty-five cases in hospitals in Northern Ireland. The number of hospitalised cases

confirmed with A/H1N1v decreased again this week from 50 in Wk 45 to 24 in Wk 46 (figures provisional) (Figure 10). In Wk 46 there was a decrease in hospitalised cases in all age groups except the 65 years and over age group which had a slight increase. In Wk 46, 5 cases were admitted to ICU compared with 3 cases in Wk 45. Forty-four cases with confirmed swine influenza were admitted to Intensive Care Units up until 18<sup>th</sup> November in Northern Ireland.

## Outbreaks

For the period 9<sup>th</sup> November to 15<sup>th</sup> November there were no new school outbreaks reported in Northern Ireland. The cumulative number of reported school outbreaks since the beginning of September is twenty-five.

All special schools have been asked to notify the PHA if they have 1 or more children with swine flu. If a case occurs in a special school, those with swine flu are advised to stay at home until they are better, and if necessary, antiviral prophylaxis is given to other children. The highest risk children (those in special schools for severe learning disability) have been offered the swine flu vaccine, with over 2,100 having been vaccinated to date, giving an uptake rate of 76% (revised).

There have been no school closures as a result of the outbreaks and appropriate public health advice has been given.

The following caveats apply:

- The Public Health Agency is not routinely informed of influenza-like illness resulting in school absenteeism.
- These figures include outbreaks confirmed and under investigation.
- As this is a non-statutory reporting system it will incompletely capture the true numbers of outbreaks.

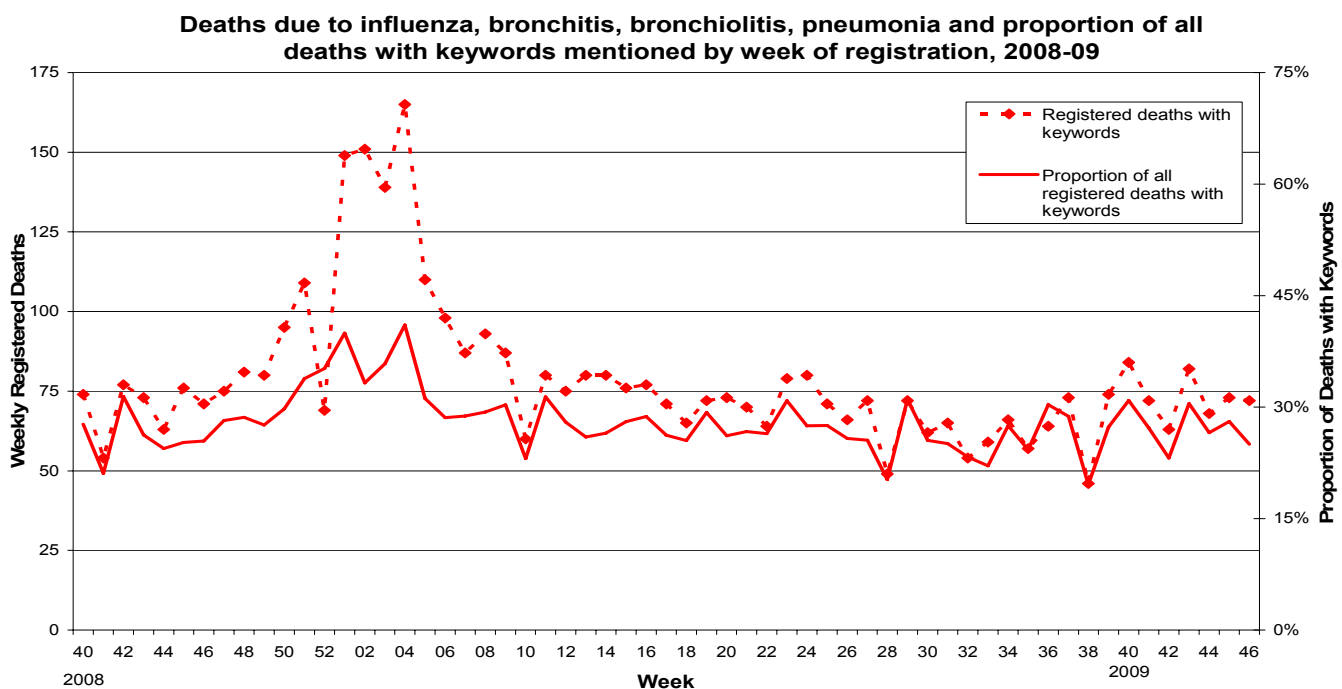
**Note:** *The definition of a school outbreak:*

- *Schools with confirmed case or cases*
- *50% or more of class off with any illness*
- *10% or more of the school pupils absent/ill*

## Mortality Data

Daily mortality data is provided from Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. The 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

Figure12. Weekly registered deaths



**Comments:** The proportion of deaths related to respiratory keywords has decreased from 28% in Wk 45 to 25% in Wk 46. In Wk 46, there were 288 registered deaths of which 72 related to these specific respiratory infections.

We have been notified of the deaths of two adults who have tested positive for swine flu, bringing the total number of swine flu related deaths to 13.

**Note:** *The definition of a swine flu related death is: "Death caused directly by swine flu (Part I of the death certificate); Swine flu contributed to death (Part II of death certificate) and/or patient tested positive for swine flu".*

## Further information

Further information on pandemic (H1N1) 2009 is available at the following websites:

<http://www.hpa.org.uk>

<http://www.publichealth.hscni.net>

<http://www.who.int>

<http://ecdc.europa.eu>

<http://euroflu.org>

Detailed Influenza weekly reports can be found at the following websites:

**England, Scotland and Wales:**

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics\\_az/influenza/seasonal/activity0809/flureport.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/influenza/seasonal/activity0809/flureport.htm)

**Republic of Ireland:**

<http://www.ndsc.ie/hpsc/>

For further information on the Enhanced Surveillance of Influenza in Northern Ireland scheme or to be added to the circulation list for this bulletin please contact:

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***This report was compiled by Cathriona Kearns, Joy Miskimmons and Dr. Brian Smyth, with data input assistance from Paul Cabrey.***

## Appendix (1)

<b>2008 -2009 Season Week No</b>	<b>Total cases FLI</b>	<b>Total cases 'Flu</b>	<b>Proportion due to clinical 'flu</b>	<b>Combined Rate for 'Flu and FLI (per 100 000 population)</b>
Wk 20	25	7	22%	22.4
Wk 21	22	2	8%	16.6
Wk 22	21	1	5%	13.8
Wk 23	10	1	9%	7.9
Wk 24	25	6	19%	20.3
Wk 25	20	2	9%	13.5
Wk 26	30	3	9%	20.2
Wk27	32	6	16%	23.6
Wk28	36	9	20%	30.3
Wk29	54	14	21%	42.1
Wk30	179	37	17%	130.4
Wk31	175	47	21%	142.5
Wk32	130	32	20%	106.6
Wk 33	131	16	11%	89.6
Wk 34	118	25	17%	77.9
Wk 35	77	15	16%	54.8
Wk 36	89*	29*	25%*	61.9
Wk 37	177	45	20%	113.8
Wk 38	226	52	19%	142.5
Wk 39	287*	103*	26%*	215.9
Wk 40	250	54	18%	162.5
Wk 41	285	137	32%	220.5
Wk 42	305	168	36%	241.1
Wk 43	411	132	24%	280.6
Wk 44	383	114	23%	242.9
Wk 45	261	171	40%	226.2* <i>updated</i>
<b>Wk 46</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>106.5</b>