



Royal College of  
General Practitioners

## Communicable and Respiratory Disease Report for England & Wales

### Key Statistics:

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Week Number/Year.....       | 51/2008           |
| Week Starting – Ending..... | 15/12/08-21/12/08 |
| No. of Practices.....       | 82                |
| No. of Doctors.....         | 420               |
| Population.....             | 808567            |

### Key Messages:

#### National (England & Wales)

- **Acute Bronchitis:** increased from **178.8** in week 50 to **218.7** in week 51.
- **Common Cold:** increased from **323.0** in week 50 to **357.2** in week 51.
- **Influenza-like Illness:** increased from **40.6** in week 50 to **68.5** in week 51.
- **Respiratory Symptom Diseases:** increased from **732.7** in week 50 to **853.6** in week 51.

#### Regional (North, Central and South)

- **Acute Bronchitis:** increased in the North from **178.0** in week 50 to **229.0** in week 51, increased in the Central region from **199.9** in week 50 to **224.4** in week 51 and increased in the South from **162.4** in week 50 to **209.1** in week 51.
- **Common Cold:** increased in the North from **322.1** in week 50 to **336.3** in week 51, increased in the Central region from **325.6** in week 50 to **348.8** in week 51 and increased in the South from **321.2** in week 50 to **373.5** in week 51.
- **Influenza-Like Illness:** increased in the North from **16.4** in week 50 to **43.8** in week 51, increased in the Central region from **59.0** in week 50 to **81.7** in week 51 and increased in the South from **35.6** in week 50 to **67.8** in week 51.
- **Respiratory Symptom Diseases:** increased in the North from **673.6** in week 50 to **796.4** in week 51, increased in the Central region from **793.3** in week 50 to **892.8** in week 51 and increased in the South from **707.8** in week 50 to **844.5** in week 51.

### Comments:

The incidence of ILI has increased in all age groups and all regions. Incidence is highest in the working population (15-44 and 45-64 years). However, we have seen a sharp increase of incidence in the 65+ age group. The incidence of acute bronchitis has also risen sharply in this age group.

**Autumn/Winter Focus 2008:**

During the winter (weeks 40 to 20) a special focus on influenza-like illness and acute bronchitis is provided below. Each weekly incidence rate is presented per 100,000 population. All presentations are for males and females in all age groups unless otherwise stated.

**Weekly influenza and influenza-like illness incidence rates per 100,000 persons**

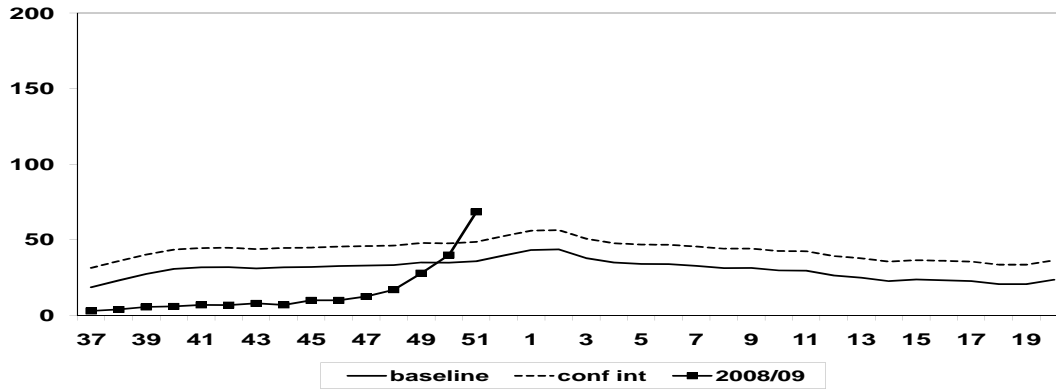
**All Regions**

|                 | Influenza-like illness | Bronchitis |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------|
| <b>0-4</b>      | 57.43                  | 340.35     |
| <b>5-14</b>     | 50.11                  | 82.10      |
| <b>15-44</b>    | 79.73                  | 114.80     |
| <b>45-64</b>    | 75.62                  | 258.43     |
| <b>65+</b>      | 44.73                  | 485.62     |
| <b>All Ages</b> | 68.52                  | 218.66     |

**Regional**

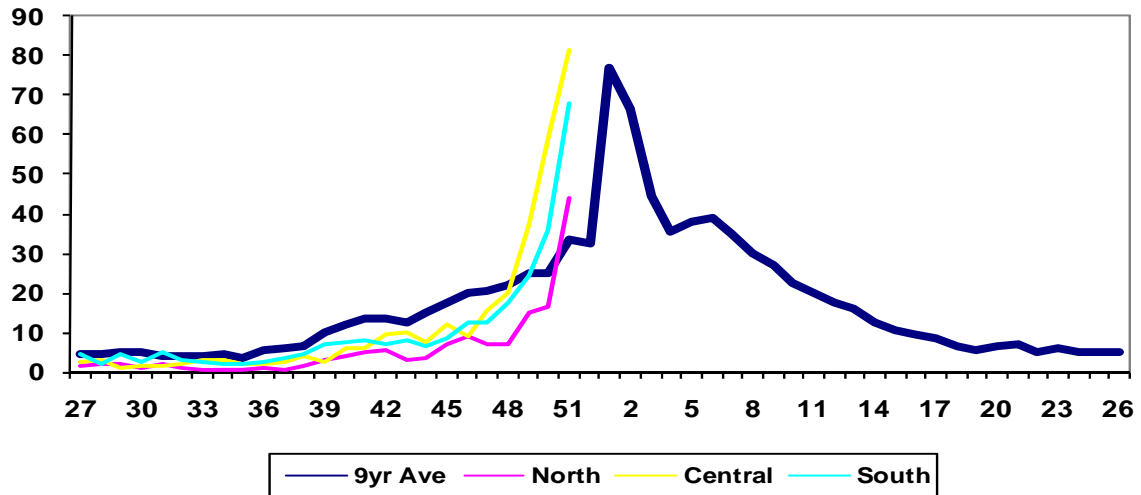
|                |       |
|----------------|-------|
| <b>North</b>   | 43.84 |
| <b>Central</b> | 81.70 |
| <b>South</b>   | 67.81 |

**(A) Influenza-like illness: national incidence rate\***

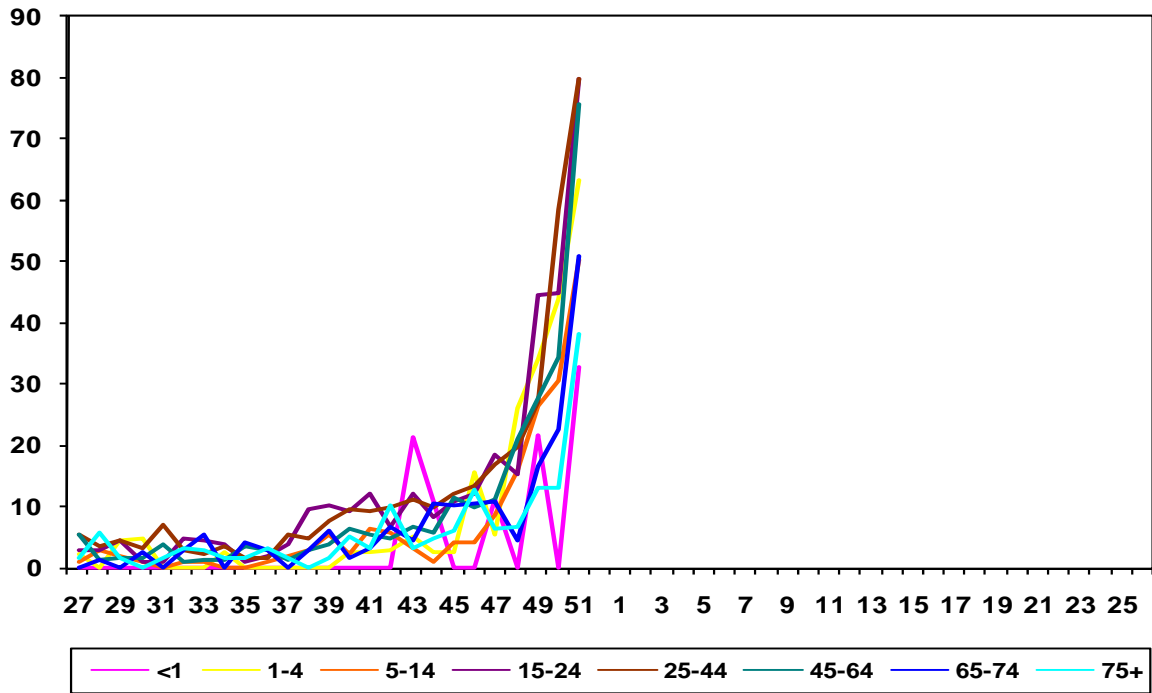


\*The incidence rate is plotted against a background of the average influenza incidence during periods when influenza has not been prevalent over the last ten winters. The baseline is presented as a moving average with an upper limit of 2 standard deviations above. Incidence data for the winter of 2007/08 are superimposed. Rates less than 30 are commonplace in winter; between 30 and 100 are usual when influenza viruses are circulating; rates exceeding 100 represent above average influenza activity and above 200 are exceptional.

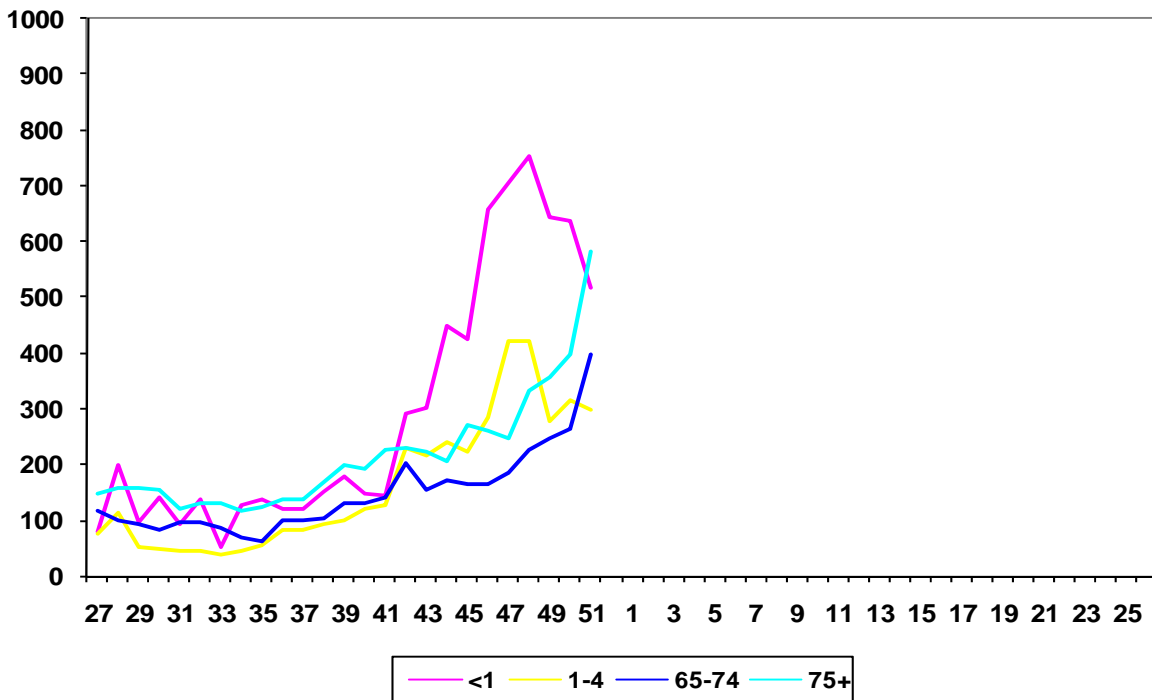
**(B) Influenza-like illness: regional incidence rates 2008/09 against a 9 year average (1999-2007)**



(C) Influenza-like illness: national incidence 2008/09 by age group

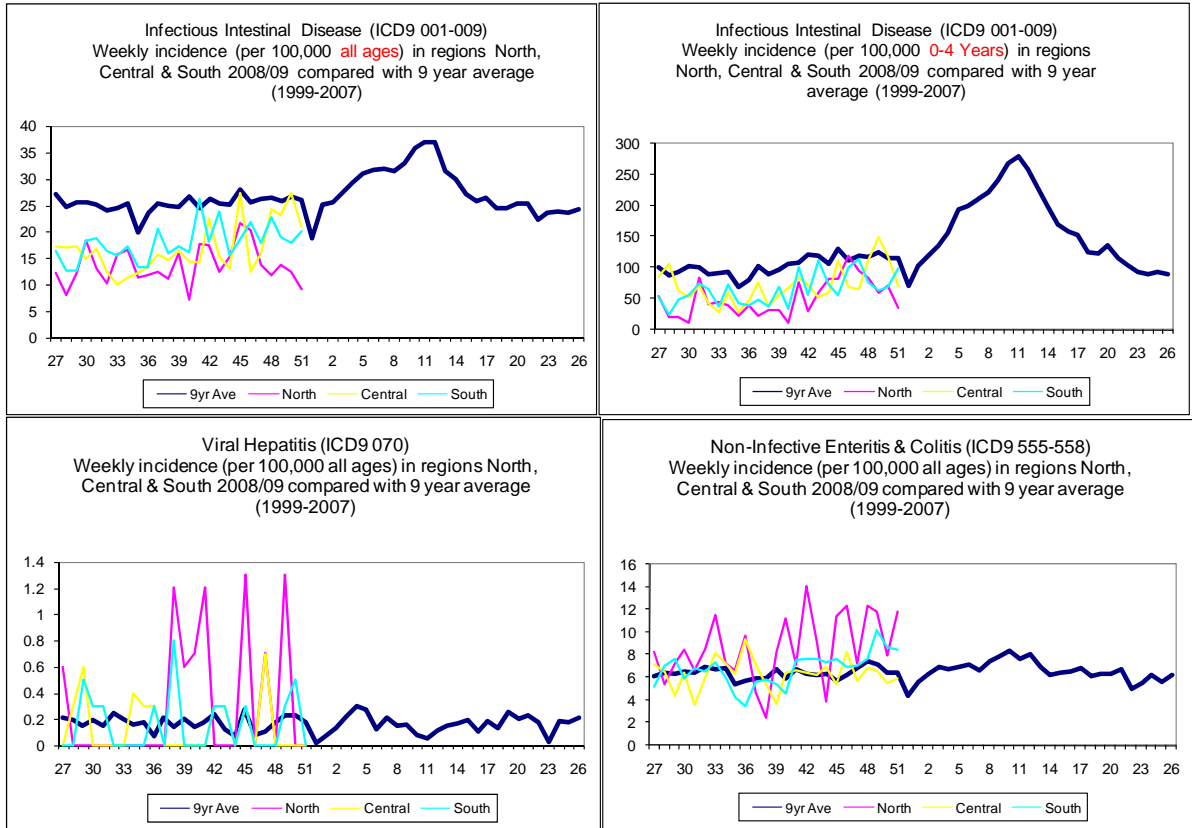


(D) Acute Bronchitis: national incidence 2008/09 in the young and elderly populations

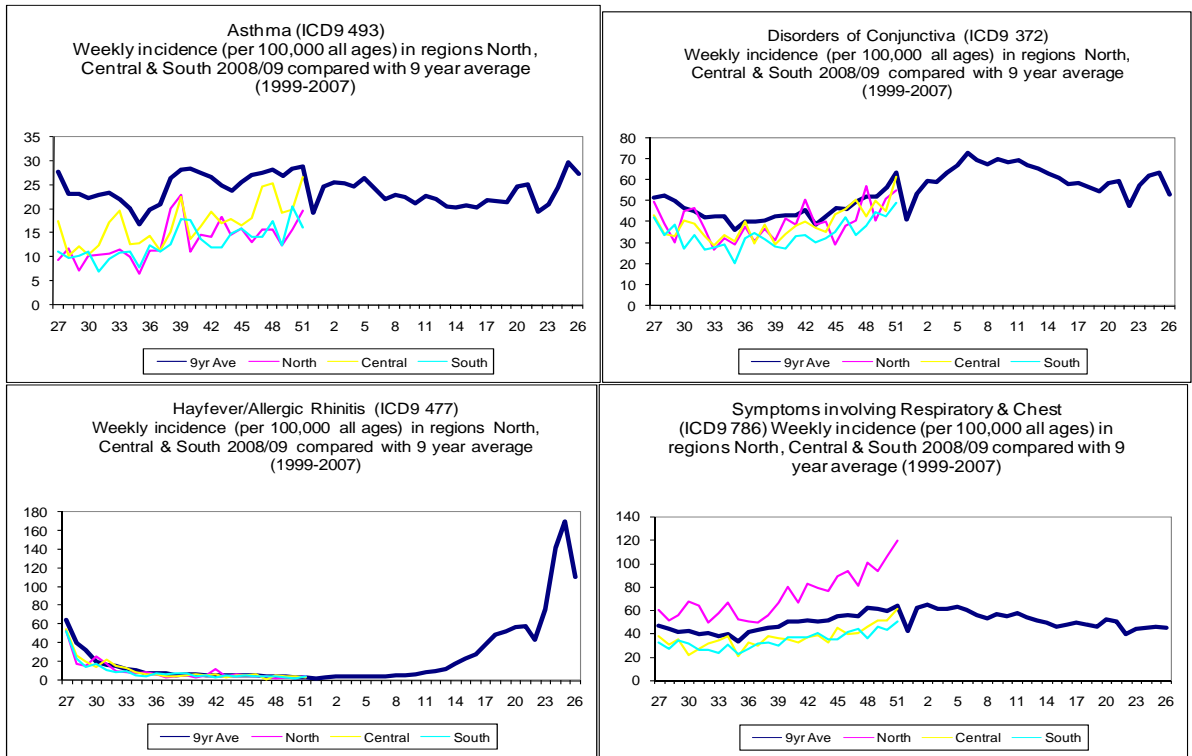


Weekly incidence data collected in the WRS (Weekly Returns Service) are presented for each disease set against the background National weekly average over the previous 9 years (1999-2007). Data are available for 3 supra-regional groupings; North, Central and South. All presentations are for males and females in all age groups unless otherwise stated.

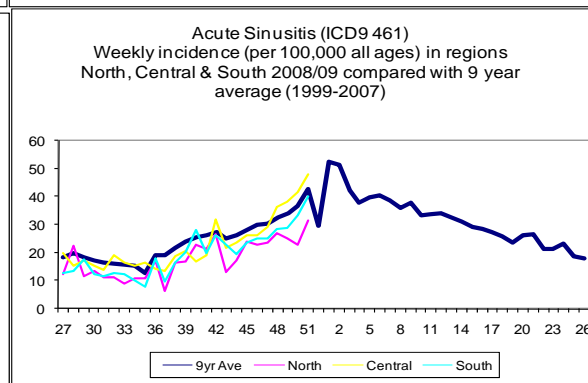
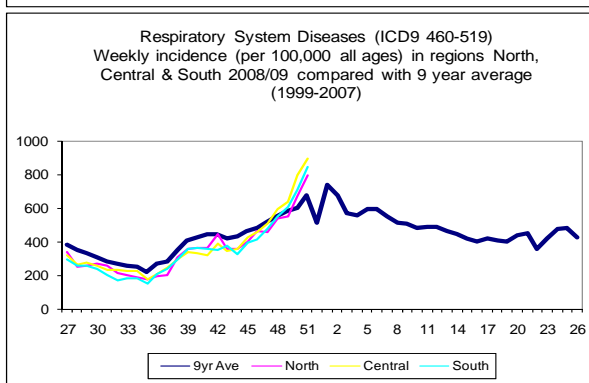
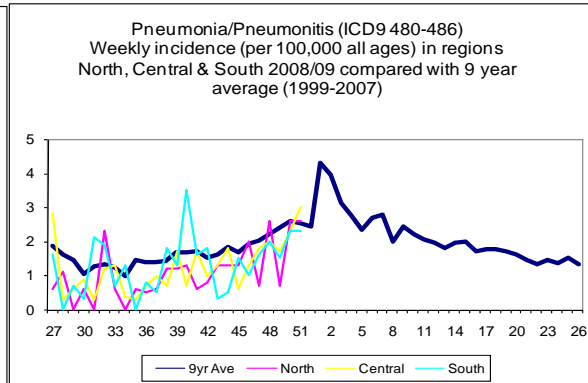
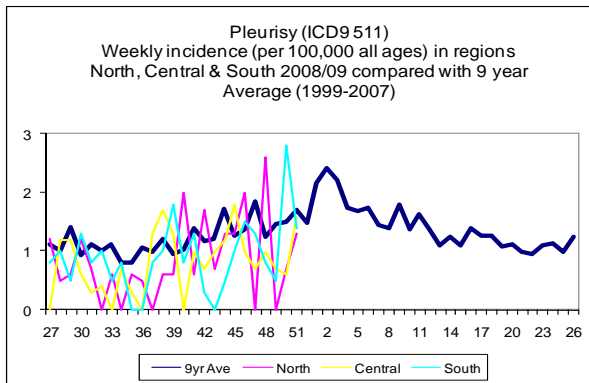
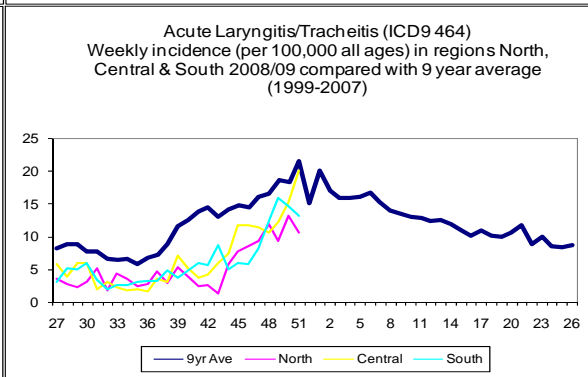
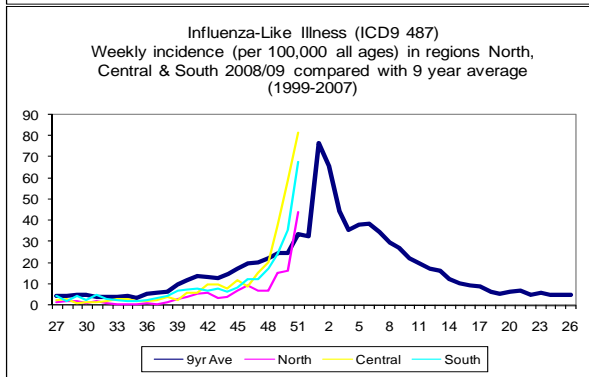
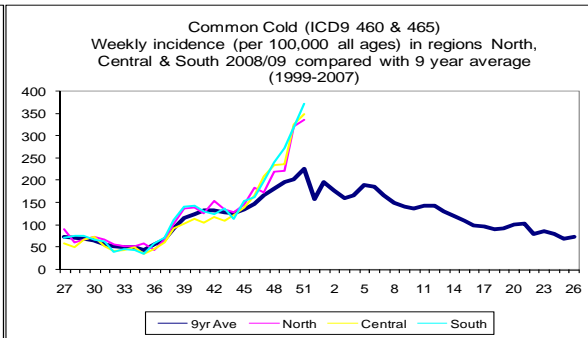
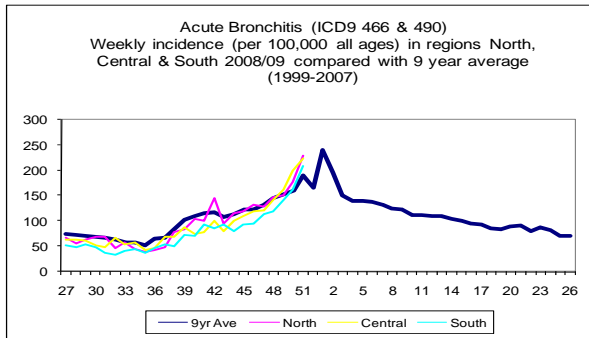
**1. Water & Food Borne Disorders:**



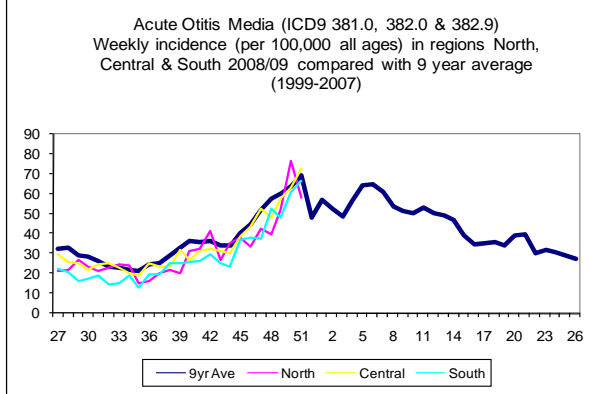
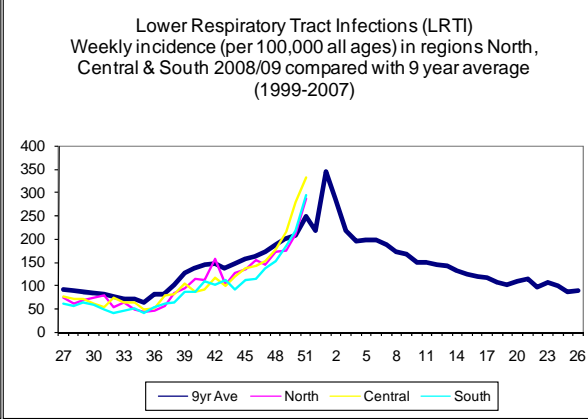
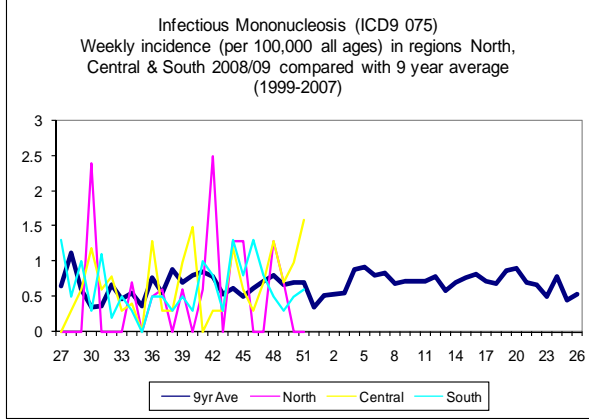
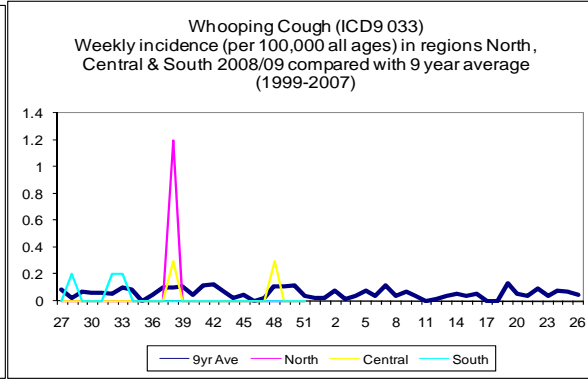
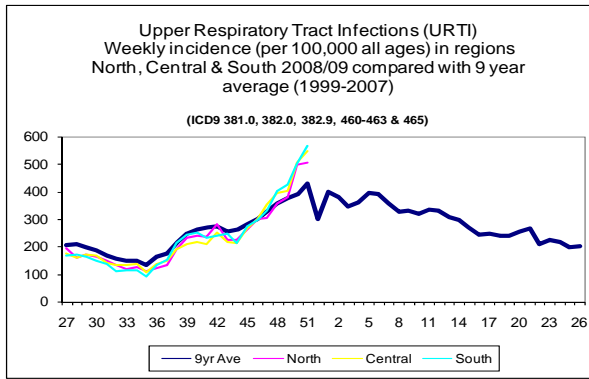
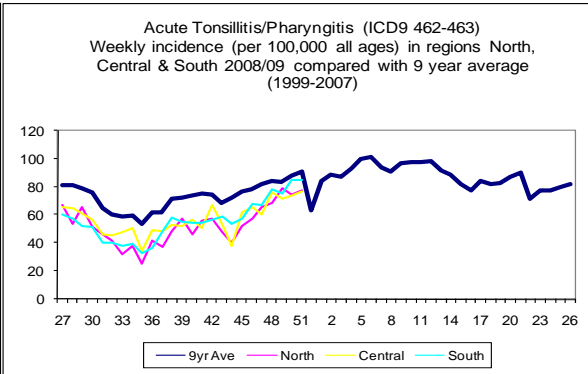
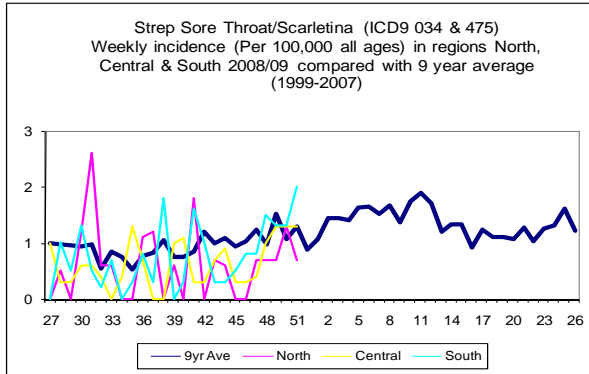
**2. Environmentally Sensitive Disorders:**



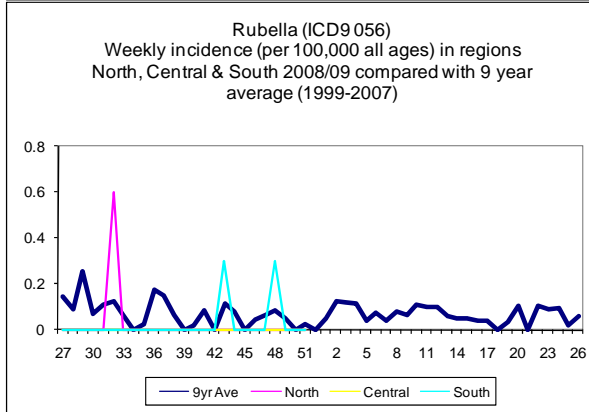
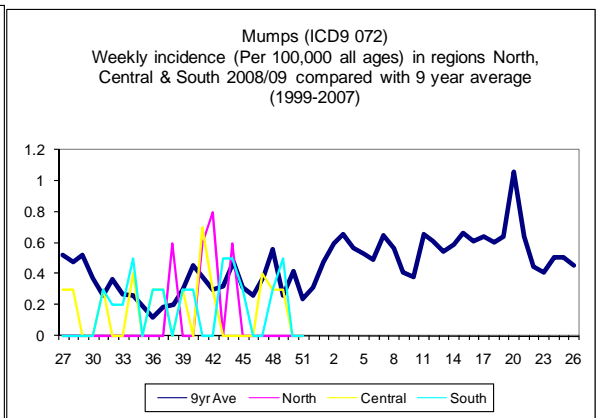
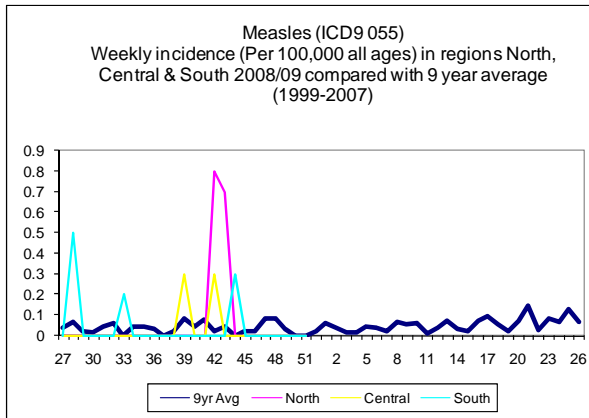
**3. Respiratory Infections:**



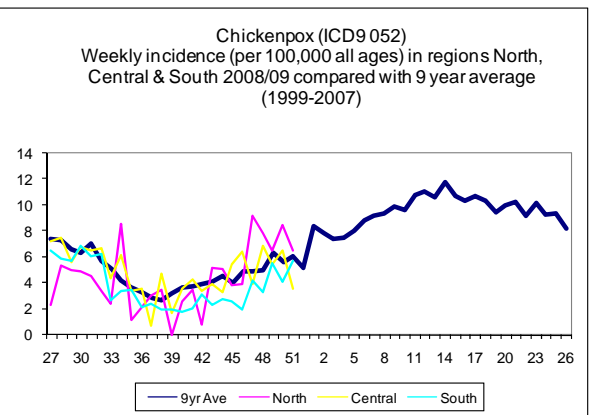
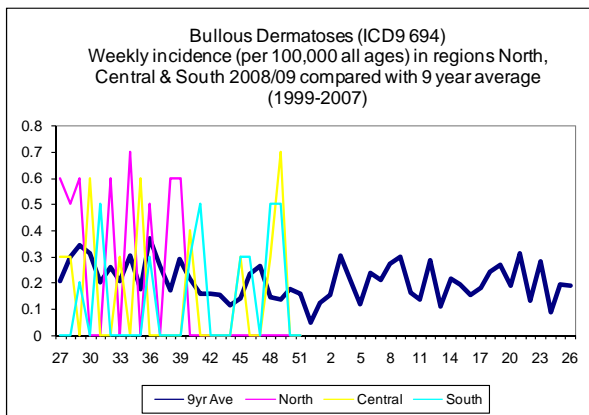
**Respiratory Infections (continued):**



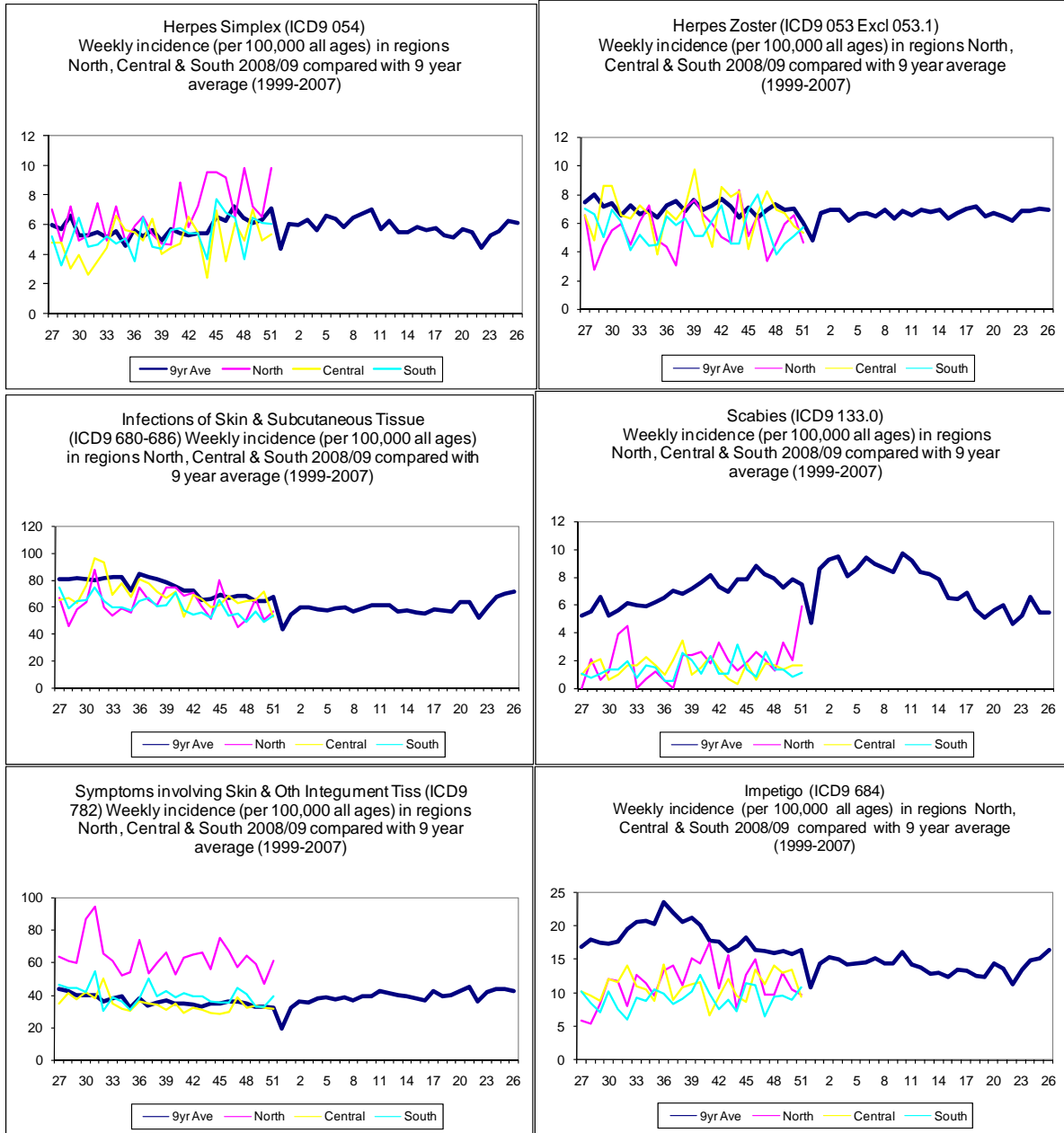
**4. Vaccine Sensitive Disorders:**



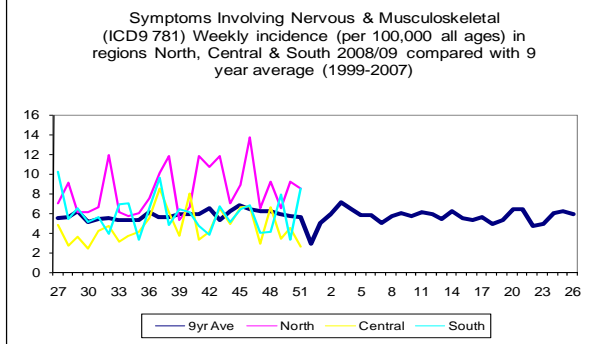
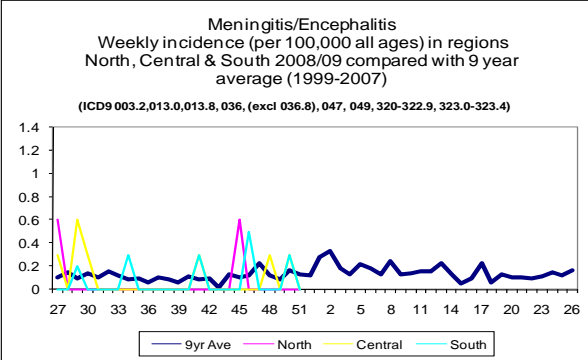
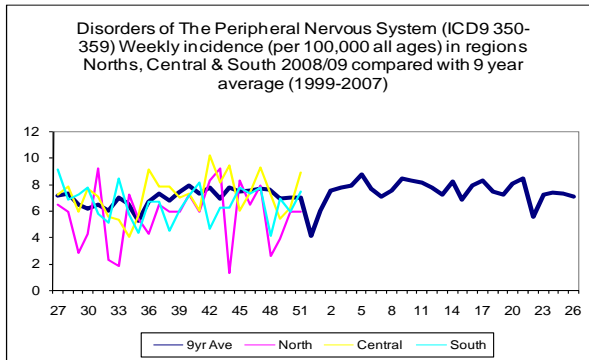
**5. Skin Contagions:**



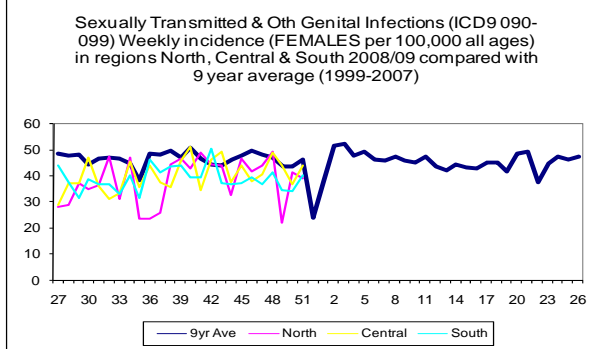
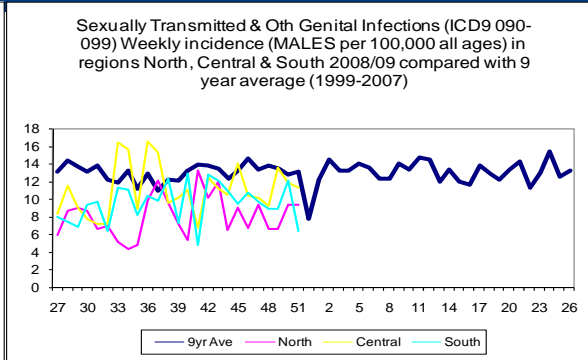
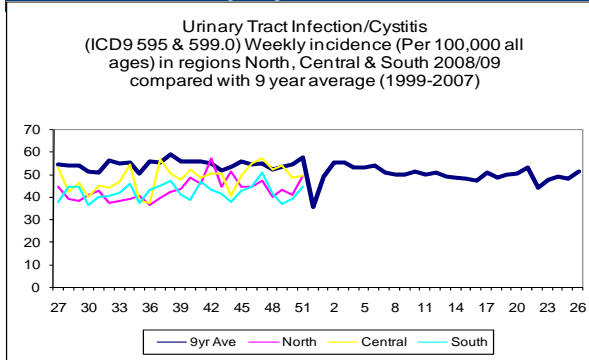
**Skin Contagions (continued):**



**6. Disorders Affecting the Nervous System:**



**7. Genitourinary System Disorders:**



**Birmingham Research Unit of the Royal College of General Practitioners  
Weekly Returns Service**

**8. Tabular Summary by Disease:**

| Week Beginning<br>Ending                           | 15/12/08 -<br>21/12/08<br>(provisional) |      | 08/12/08 -<br>14/12/08 |      | 01/12/08 -<br>07/12/08 |      | 24/11/08 -<br>30/11/08 |      |
|--|---|------|------------------------|------|------------------------|------|------------------------|------|
|  | Rate:                                   | Eps: | Rate:                  | Eps: | Rate:                  | Eps: | Rate:                  | Eps: |
| Allergic Rhinitis (477)                            | 4.0                                     | 32   | 3.4                    | 29   | 3.4                    | 29   | 4.4                    | 37   |
| Asthma (493)                                       | 20.8                                    | 168  | 19.4                   | 165  | 14.9                   | 125  | 19.9                   | 169  |
| Bronchitis (466 & 490)                             | 218.7                                   | 1768 | 178.8                  | 1523 | 151.0                  | 1270 | 132.7                  | 1125 |
| Bullous Dermatoses (694)                           | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.5                    | 4    | 0.4                    | 3    |
| Chickenpox (052)                                   | 5.1                                     | 41   | 5.8                    | 49   | 5.7                    | 48   | 5.4                    | 46   |
| Common Cold & URTI NOS (460 & 465)                 | 357.2                                   | 2888 | 323.0                  | 2751 | 250.7                  | 2109 | 236.0                  | 2001 |
| Conjunctiva Disorders (372)                        | 54.8                                    | 443  | 45.0                   | 383  | 45.9                   | 386  | 43.0                   | 365  |
| Herpes Simplex (054)                               | 6.4                                     | 52   | 5.8                    | 49   | 6.8                    | 57   | 5.2                    | 44   |
| Herpes Zoster (053 Excl 053.1)                     | 5.3                                     | 43   | 5.6                    | 48   | 5.6                    | 47   | 5.1                    | 43   |
| Impetigo (684)                                     | 10.1                                    | 82   | 10.9                   | 93   | 11.5                   | 97   | 11.2                   | 95   |
| Infectious Mononucleosis (075)                     | 0.9                                     | 7    | 0.6                    | 5    | 0.5                    | 4    | 0.9                    | 8    |
| Influenza-Like Illness (487)                       | 68.5                                    | 554  | 40.6                   | 346  | 27.5                   | 231  | 16.5                   | 140  |
| Intestinal Infectious Diseases (001~009)           | 18.4                                    | 149  | 20.3                   | 173  | 19.5                   | 164  | 21.3                   | 181  |
| Intestinal Infectious Diseases (001~009) 0-4 years | 76.6                                    | 36   | 86.4                   | 43   | 92.3                   | 45   | 89.6                   | 44   |
| Laryngitis & Tracheitis Acute (464)                | 15.2                                    | 123  | 14.6                   | 124  | 13.3                   | 112  | 11.6                   | 98   |
| Lower Respiratory Tract Infection (LRTI)           | 306.2                                   | 2476 | 237.8                  | 2026 | 193.8                  | 1630 | 164.2                  | 1392 |
| Measles (055)                                      | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    |
| Meningitis & Encephalitis                          | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.2                    | 2    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.1                    | 1    |
| Mumps (072)  | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.4                    | 3    | 0.2                    | 2    |
| NonInfective Enteritis & Colitis (555~558)         | 8.2                                     | 66   | 7.4                    | 63   | 9.3                    | 78   | 8.3                    | 70   |
| Otitis Media Acute (381.0,382.0 & 382.9)           | 67.4                                    | 545  | 64.8                   | 552  | 52.2                   | 439  | 48.5                   | 411  |
| Peripheral Nervous System Dis (350~359)            | 7.7                                     | 62   | 6.0                    | 51   | 5.8                    | 49   | 5.0                    | 42   |
| Pleurisy (511)                                     | 1.5                                     | 12   | 1.6                    | 14   | 0.5                    | 4    | 1.2                    | 10   |
| Pneumonia and Pneumonitis (480~486)                | 2.6                                     | 21   | 2.3                    | 20   | 1.4                    | 12   | 2.1                    | 18   |
| Respiratory System Diseases (460~519)              | 853.6                                   | 6902 | 732.7                  | 6241 | 607.7                  | 5111 | 564.2                  | 4784 |
| Rubella (056)                                      | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.1                    | 1    |
| Scabies (133.0)                                    | 2.2                                     | 18   | 1.3                    | 11   | 1.7                    | 14   | 1.4                    | 12   |
| Sinusitis Acute (461)                              | 41.4                                    | 335  | 34.5                   | 294  | 31.5                   | 265  | 31.0                   | 263  |
| Skin & Subcutaneous Tiss Infections (680~686)      | 54.0                                    | 437  | 57.4                   | 489  | 61.7                   | 519  | 54.8                   | 465  |
| Strep Sore Throat & Scarl Periton Absc (034 & 475) | 1.5                                     | 12   | 1.3                    | 11   | 1.2                    | 10   | 1.2                    | 10   |
| Symptoms Involving Nervous Musculoskeletal (781)   | 6.3                                     | 51   | 4.8                    | 41   | 6.1                    | 51   | 5.9                    | 50   |
| Symptoms Involving Respiratory & Chest (786)       | 67.4                                    | 545  | 57.3                   | 488  | 56.1                   | 472  | 51.3                   | 435  |
| Symptoms Involving Skin & Integument Tissue (782)  | 40.2                                    | 325  | 34.9                   | 297  | 37.7                   | 317  | 41.6                   | 353  |
| Tonsillitis & Acute Pharyngitis (462~463)          | 80.4                                    | 650  | 79.0                   | 673  | 74.5                   | 627  | 75.6                   | 641  |
| Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTI)          | 546.4                                   | 4418 | 501.3                  | 4270 | 409.0                  | 3440 | 391.1                  | 3316 |
| Urinary Tract Infection Cystitis (595 & 599.0)     | 47.5                                    | 384  | 42.8                   | 365  | 44.1                   | 371  | 45.1                   | 382  |
| Viral Hepatitis (070)                              | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.2                    | 2    | 0.4                    | 3    | 0.0                    | 0    |
| Whooping Cough (033)                               | 0.0                                     | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.0                    | 0    | 0.1                    | 1    |
| <b>Population at Risk:</b>                         | 808567                                  |      | 851820                 |      | 841080                 |      | 847880                 |      |
| <b>Number of Practices:</b>                        | 82                                      |      | 86                     |      | 85                     |      | 86                     |      |

### Further Information:

The Weekly Returns Service (WRS) was established in 1964 at the Birmingham Research Unit of the Royal College of General Practitioners. The WRS monitors the number of patients consulting with new episodes of illness classified by diagnosis in England and Wales and provides weekly incidence rates per 100,000 population for these new episodes of illness. The WRS has archived all data since 1967 providing an unrivalled opportunity to look at long term trends of disease. The Unit, directed by Dr Douglas Fleming, is internationally renowned for its expertise on respiratory illnesses, particularly influenza and influenza-like illnesses.

This bulletin can be found at [www.rcgp.org.uk/bru](http://www.rcgp.org.uk/bru) together with further information about the Birmingham Research Unit and a selection of publications and morbidity reports.

The bulletin can also be found at:

[http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics\\_az/primary\\_care\\_surveillance/default.htm](http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/primary_care_surveillance/default.htm)

For further information about the work of the Unit or if you would like to be included on our email notification list please contact:

Joanne Miles  
Unit Manager  
Birmingham Research Unit of the Royal College of General Practitioners  
Lordswood House  
54 Lordswood Road  
Harborne  
Birmingham B17 9DB

Tel: +44 (0)121 426 1125

Fax: +44 (0)121 428 2084

Email: [jmiles@rcgpbhamresunit.nhs.uk](mailto:jmiles@rcgpbhamresunit.nhs.uk)