

RSC Communicable and Respiratory Disease Report for England

Week Number / Year

18 / 2026

Population

19,226,914

Dates

27/04/2026 - 03/05/2026

No. Practices

1,814

Notes

All rates in this report are given per 100,000 population presenting in the week of the report. A rolling 5-year average rate is also provided as a historical comparison. Rates are provided for four regions (North, South, Midlands and East, and London). For acute respiratory infections, a breakdown by age group is also provided.

Rates are presented on a weekly basis, using ISO week numbers.

Please see page 20 for further explanatory notes on the data.

Comments

Overall rates of influenza-like illness (ILI) have decreased this week and are just below the seasonal average for this time of year. Swab positivity rates have remained low, pages 3 and 4.

The overall rates of acute respiratory infections (ARI) have been stable this week and rates nationally are below the seasonal average for this time of year. There has been an increase in rates for the 1-4yrs and 5-14yrs age groups, but this has been offset by a decrease in the rates for the older age groups, page 7.

Rates of COVID-19 remain low, page 6.

Other comments:

- Rates of hayfever/ allergic rhinitis have increased and are above the seasonal average for this time of year, page 14.
- Tonsillitis and pharyngitis, otitis media, sinusitis, infected insect bites, impetigo, herpes zoster and urinary tract infection (UTI) consultation rates are currently above the five-year average. We believe this reflects identification of additional cases through the Pharmacy First scheme, and we are monitoring these changes.

Seasonal Focus

In the "Change since last week" column, a change in rate of 5% to 10% is marked with a single arrow (↗ or ↘), while a change of more than 10% is marked with a double arrow (↗↗ or ↘↘). A flat line (—) indicates the rate was stable, changing less than 5%.

Region Breakdown

	Acute respiratory infections (ARI)			Influenza-like illness (ILI)			Exacerbations of chronic lung disease (ECLD)		
	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week
London	171.1	173.0	— -1.9	2.3	3.4	↘ -1.1	7.8	8.5	↘ -0.7
Midlands And East	245.1	238.6	— 6.6	1.4	1.6	↘ -0.2	15.0	15.3	— -0.3
North	268.8	267.8	— 1.0	1.9	2.3	↘ -0.4	20.9	20.3	— 0.6
South	192.3	197.6	— -5.3	1.9	2.1	↘ -0.2	13.3	12.8	— 0.5
National	220.4	220.8	— -0.4	1.9	2.3	↘ -0.4	14.6	14.5	— 0.1

	Lower respiratory tract infections (LRTI)			Upper respiratory tract infections (URTI)			COVID-19		
	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week
London	33.0	38.0	↘ -5.1	135.3	132.0	— 3.4	0.1	0.1	↗ 0.1
Midlands And East	65.5	67.9	— -2.3	175.3	167.0	— 8.3	0.3	0.4	↘ -0.1
North	83.4	87.1	— -3.7	177.8	173.6	— 4.1	0.0	0.2	↘ -0.2
South	59.3	63.7	↘ -4.4	129.1	131.9	— -2.7	0.2	0.3	↘ -0.1
National	61.9	65.8	↘ -3.9	153.8	151.1	— 2.7	0.2	0.2	↘ -0.1

Age Group Breakdown

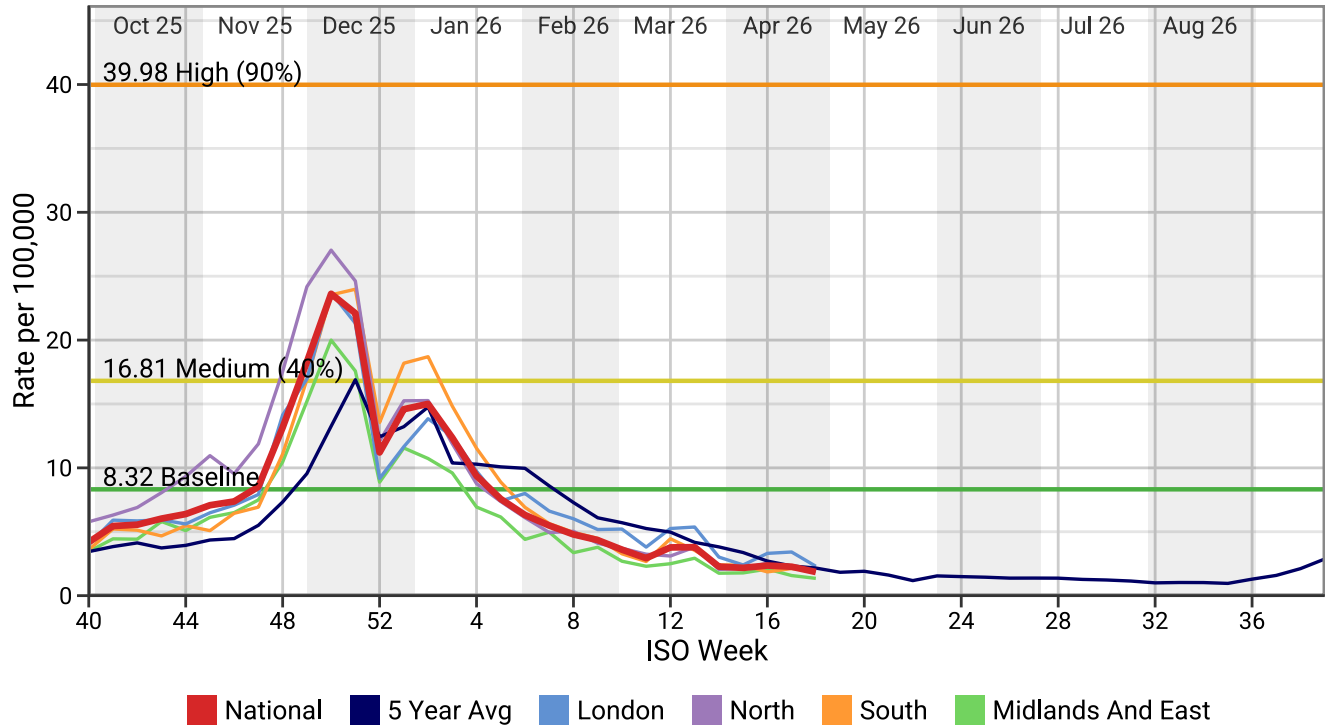
	Acute respiratory infections (ARI)			Influenza-like illness (ILI)			Exacerbations of chronic lung disease (ECLD)		
	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week
<1yr	950.6	912.6	— 38.0	1.2	1.8	↘ -0.6	0.0	0.0	— 0.0
1-4yrs	830.0	734.0	↗ 95.9	1.7	1.5	↗ 0.3	2.0	1.9	↗ 0.2
5-14yrs	270.6	233.4	↗ 37.3	1.1	1.2	↘ -0.1	5.3	3.5	↗ 1.9
15-64yrs	158.9	168.7	↘ -9.8	2.1	2.7	↘ -0.5	9.8	10.0	— -0.2
65+yrs	245.5	258.8	↘ -13.3	1.3	1.7	↘ -0.3	41.4	41.1	— 0.4
All ages	220.4	220.8	— -0.4	1.9	2.3	↘ -0.4	14.6	14.5	— 0.1

	Lower respiratory tract infections (LRTI)			Upper respiratory tract infections (URTI)			COVID-19		
	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week	This week	Last week	Change since last week
<1yr	197.3	183.7	↗ 13.6	829.5	803.5	— 26.0	0.6	0.0	↗ 0.6
1-4yrs	115.8	103.7	↗ 12.1	761.5	690.1	↗ 71.4	0.1	0.4	↘ -0.3
5-14yrs	23.9	21.2	↗ 2.7	248.0	216.5	↗ 31.5	0.0	0.1	↘ 0.0
15-64yrs	40.8	45.3	↘ -4.5	114.5	119.9	— -5.4	0.1	0.2	↘ 0.0
65+yrs	144.1	154.3	↘ -10.3	74.0	76.7	— -2.7	0.4	0.5	↘ -0.2
All ages	61.9	65.8	↘ -3.9	153.8	151.1	— 2.7	0.2	0.2	↘ -0.1

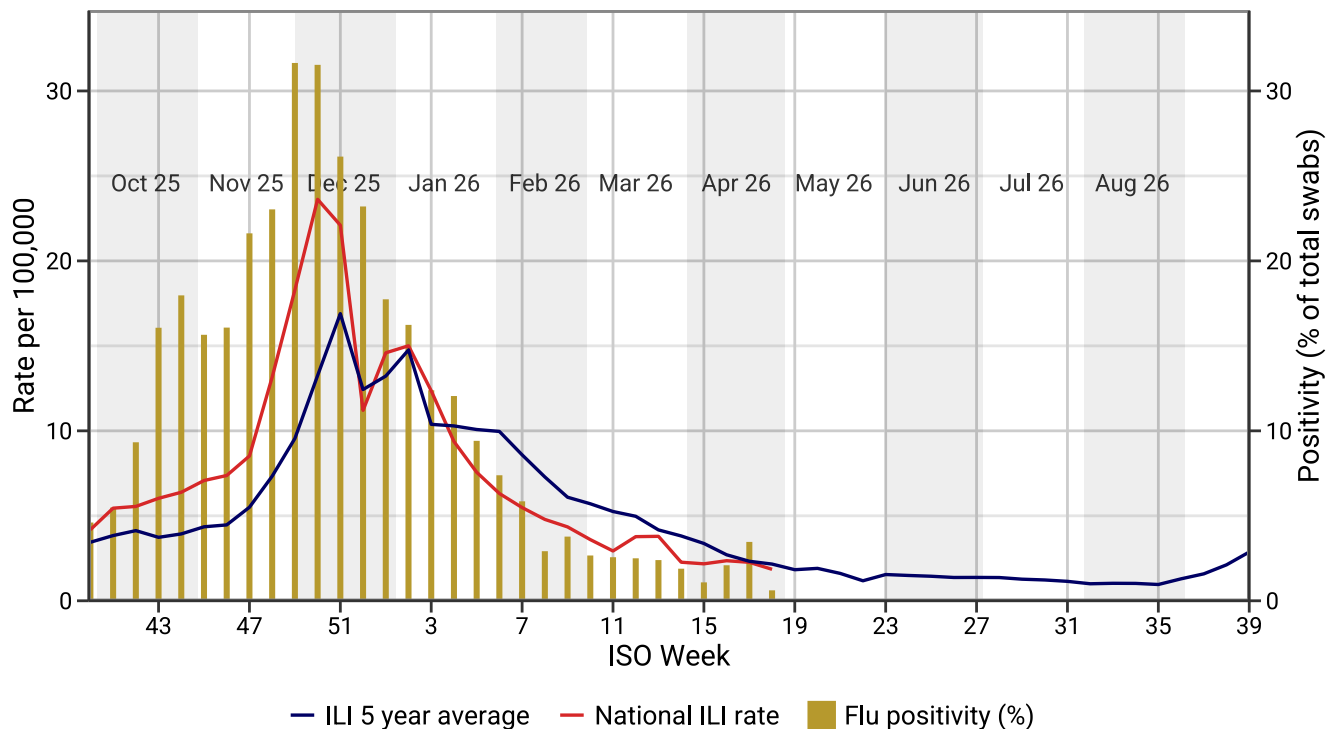
2025/26 Focus

(A) Influenza-like Illness: national incidence rate by region

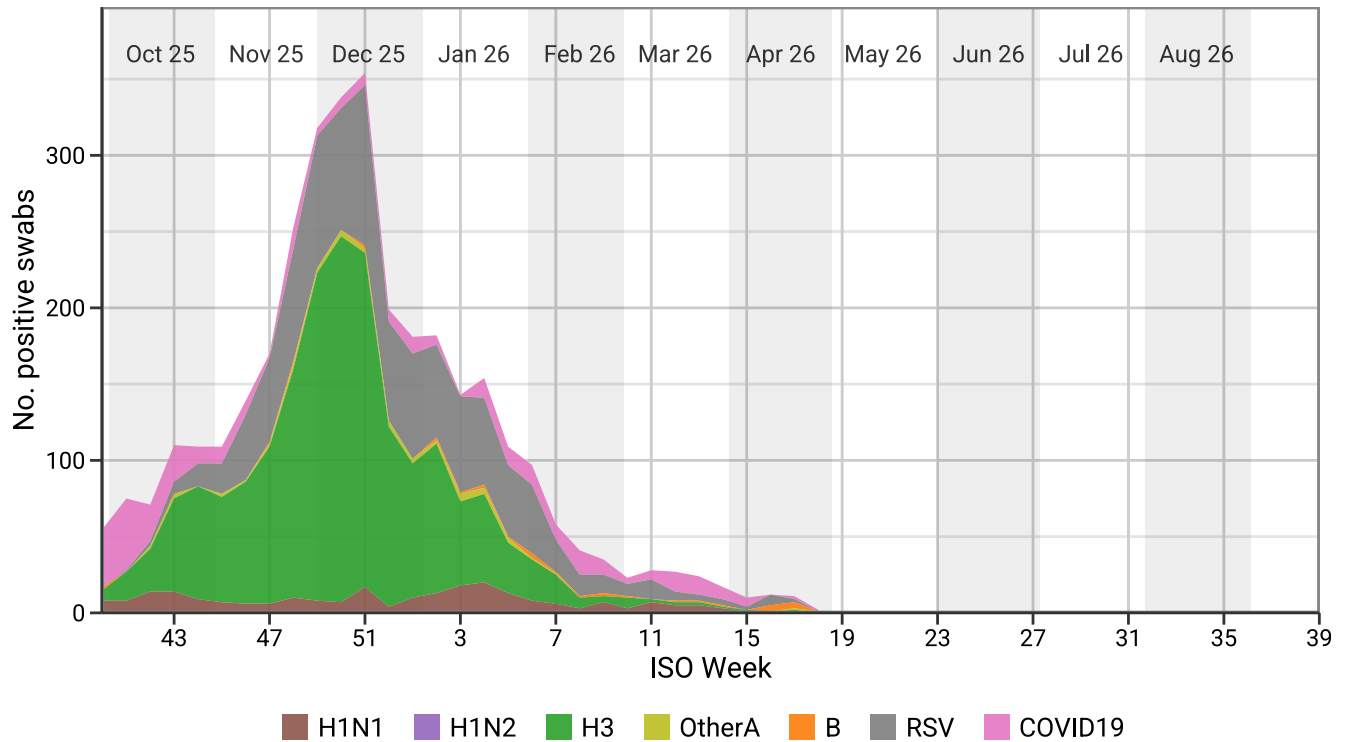
The horizontal lines in the following graph are thresholds derived from the Moving Epidemic Method (MEM) model. See p20 for more information.



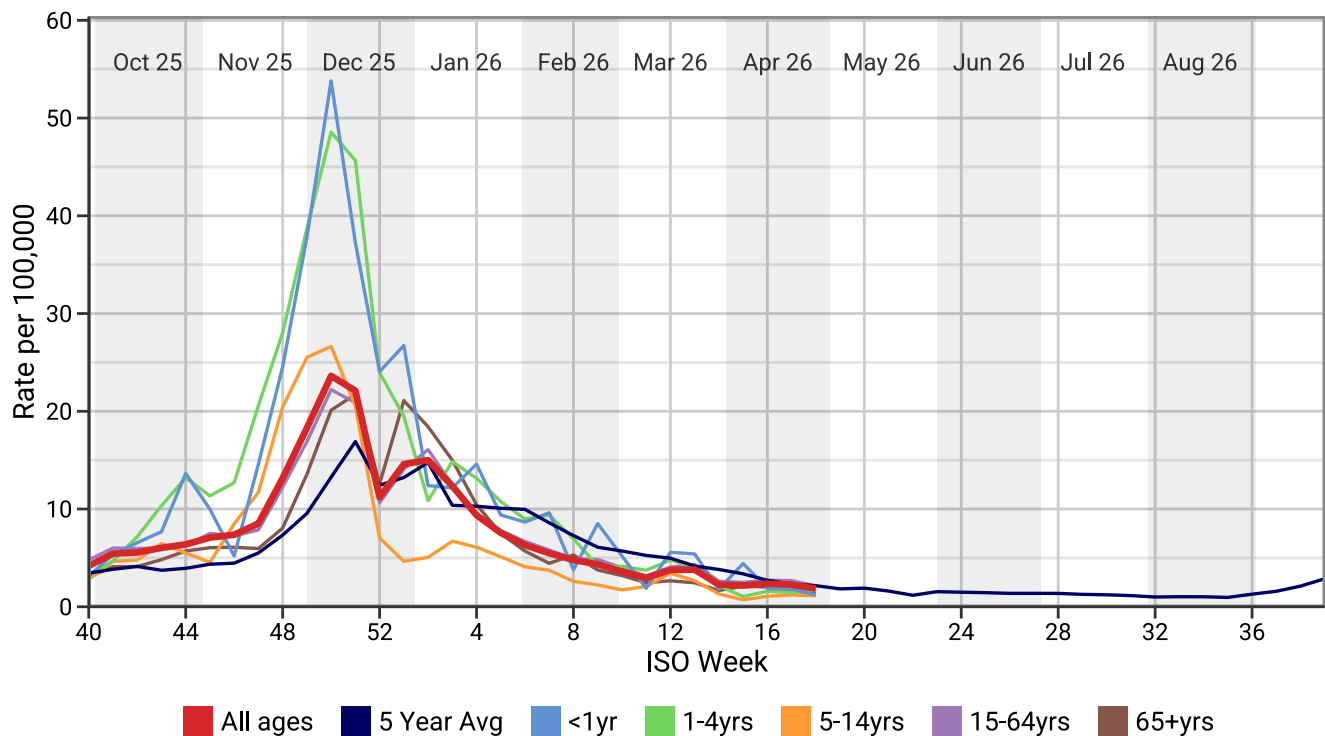
(B) RCGP/UKHSA influenza virology swab surveillance



(C) RCGP/UKHSA RSV, influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virology swab surveillance (by strain)



(D) Influenza-like Illness: national incidence rate by age band



(E) Influenza-like Illness: national incidence rate by age band

This table shows the level of intensity of ILI by age band. MEM thresholds have been calculated separately for each age band - thresholds are shown in the second table. Refer to page 19 for more information.

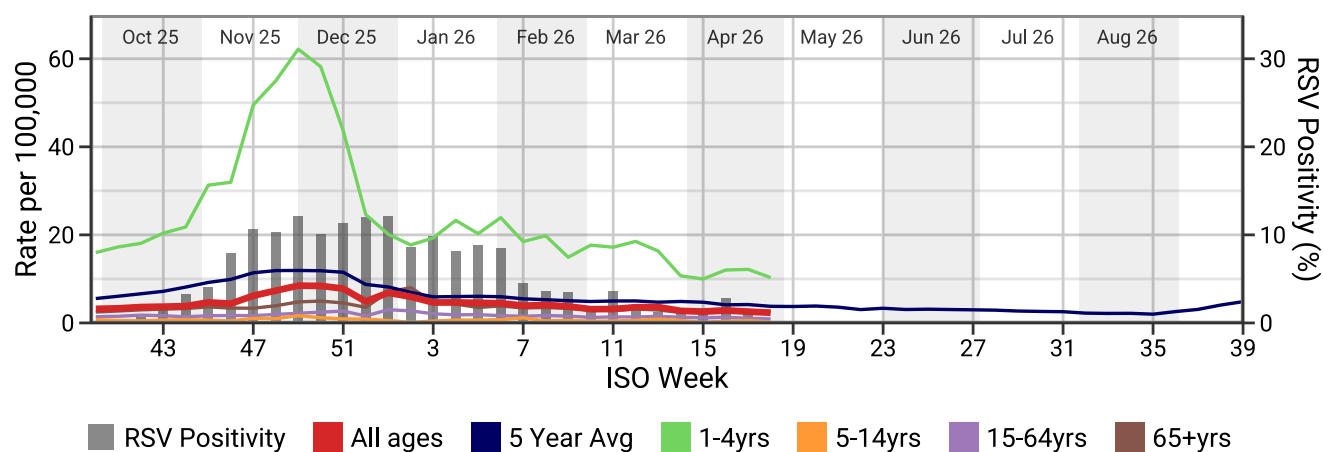
	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
1-4yrs	0.7	0.7	0.7	2.8	2.5	3.2	4.7	7.2	10.3	13.2	11.3	12.7	20.6	28.0	38.7	48.6	45.7	23.9
5-14yrs	0.2	0.7	0.8	1.7	2.2	2.8	4.6	4.8	6.5	5.5	4.5	8.5	11.7	20.4	25.5	26.6	20.5	7.0
15-64yrs	1.2	1.9	2.0	2.2	3.7	4.8	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.2	7.5	7.2	7.9	12.3	16.9	22.2	20.9	10.6
65+yrs	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.6	2.7	3.1	4.1	4.1	4.8	5.7	6.0	6.1	5.9	8.1	13.5	20.1	21.7	12.6
All ages	1.0	1.6	1.7	2.0	3.3	4.2	5.4	5.6	6.0	6.4	7.1	7.4	8.5	13.2	18.3	23.6	22.1	11.2

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1-4yrs	19.5	10.9	14.9	13.1	10.8	9.0	9.4	7.0	4.2	4.1	3.7	4.8	4.0	2.1	1.1	1.6	1.5	1.7
5-14yrs	4.7	5.1	6.7	6.1	5.1	4.1	3.7	2.6	2.2	1.7	2.1	3.4	2.7	1.3	0.7	1.1	1.2	1.1
15-64yrs	14.1	16.1	12.5	9.4	7.8	6.7	5.8	4.9	4.8	4.0	3.2	4.1	4.3	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.1
65+yrs	21.1	18.4	15.0	10.4	7.5	5.7	4.4	5.3	3.8	3.2	2.5	2.7	2.5	1.7	2.1	2.0	1.7	1.3
All ages	14.6	15.0	12.4	9.4	7.6	6.3	5.5	4.8	4.3	3.6	2.9	3.8	3.8	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.3	1.9

	Below Threshold	Threshold to medium	Medium to high	High to very high	Above very high
1-4yrs	<7.86	7.86 to 16.38	16.38 to 30.29	30.29 to 39.75	39.75+
5-14yrs	<5.17	5.17 to 11.83	11.83 to 29.13	29.13 to 43.38	43.38+
15-64yrs	<9.81	9.81 to 18.31	18.31 to 44.31	44.31 to 65.49	65.49+
65+yrs	<8.10	8.10 to 14.49	14.49 to 37.90	37.90 to 57.96	57.96+
All Ages	<8.32	8.32 to 16.81	16.81 to 39.98	39.98 to 58.62	58.62+

(F) Acute Bronchitis and Bronchiolitis: national incidence rate by age band

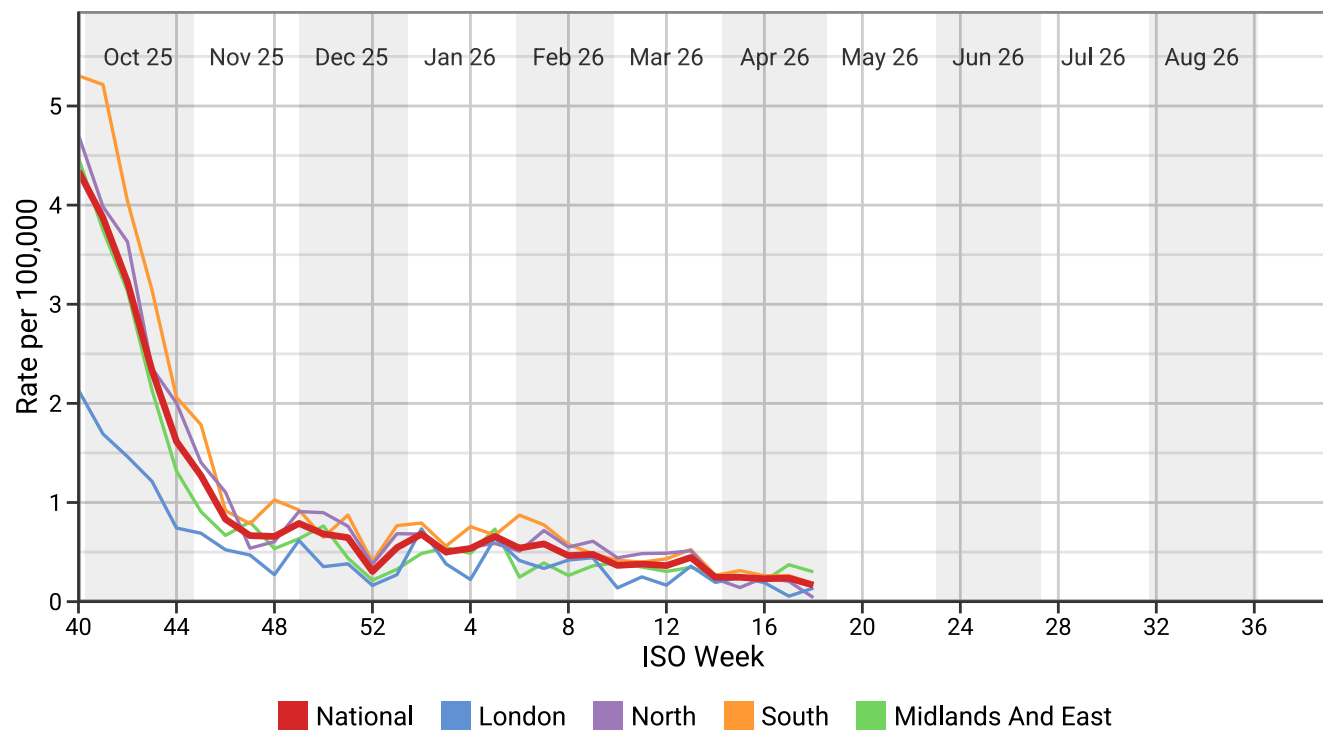
Children under 1 year old are omitted from the following graph.

**Weekly incidence rates of influenza-like illness, and acute bronchitis and bronchiolitis (per 100,000)**

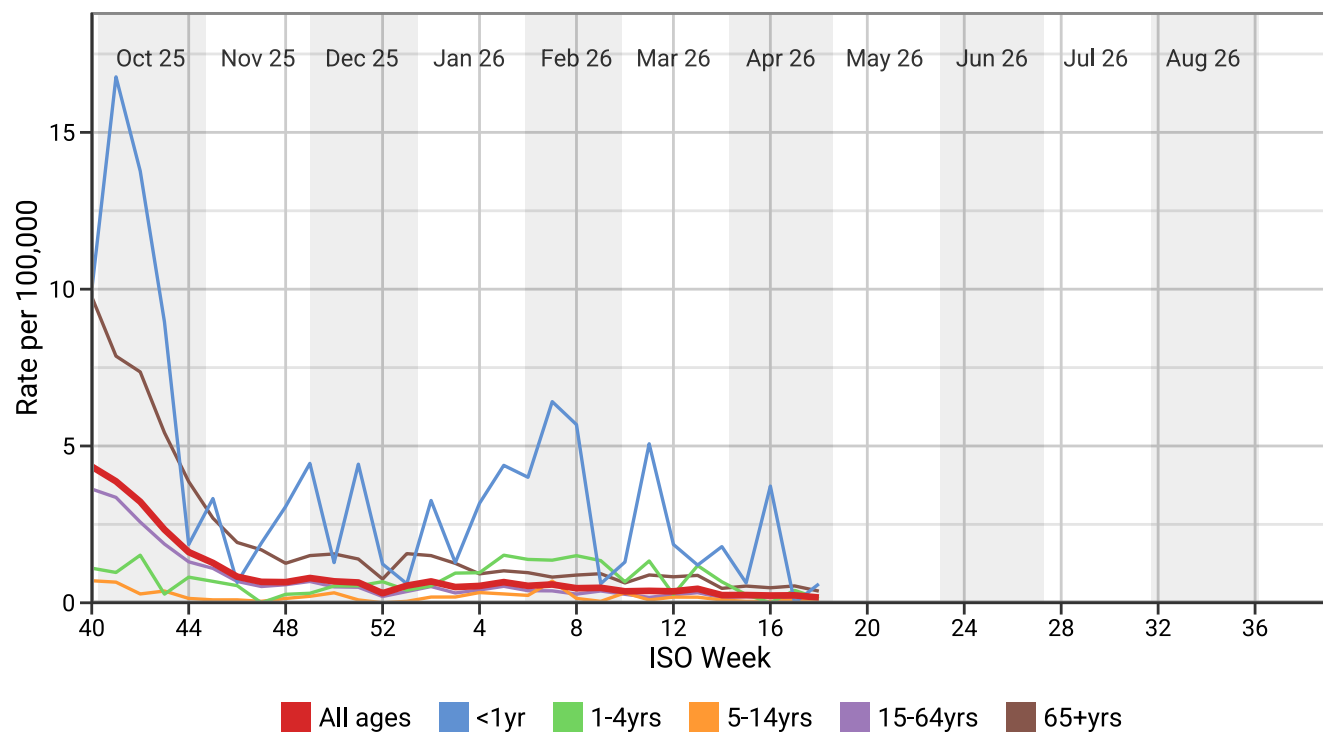
	Influenza-like illness (ILI)	ARI-Bronchitis and Bronchiolitis
<1yr	1.2	93.0
1-4yrs	1.7	10.3
5-14yrs	1.1	0.2
15-24yrs	2.0	0.5
25-44yrs	2.4	0.7
45-64yrs	1.9	1.3
65-74yrs	1.4	2.1
75-84yrs	1.5	3.1
85+yrs	0.4	3.4
All ages	1.9	2.3

	Influenza-like illness (ILI)	ARI-Bronchitis and Bronchiolitis
London	2.3	1.6
Midlands And East	1.4	2.1
North	1.9	2.9
South	1.9	2.4
National	1.9	2.3

(G) COVID-19: national incidence rate by region

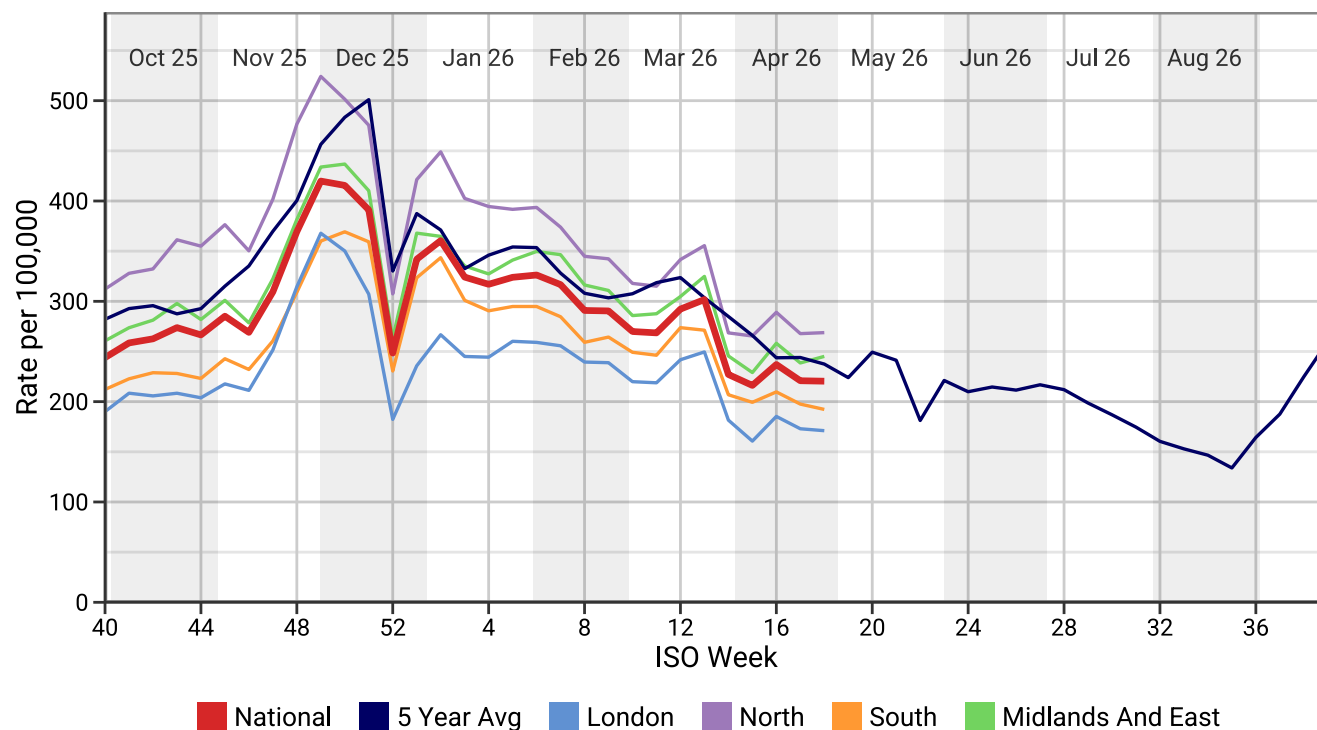


(H) COVID-19: national incidence rate by age band

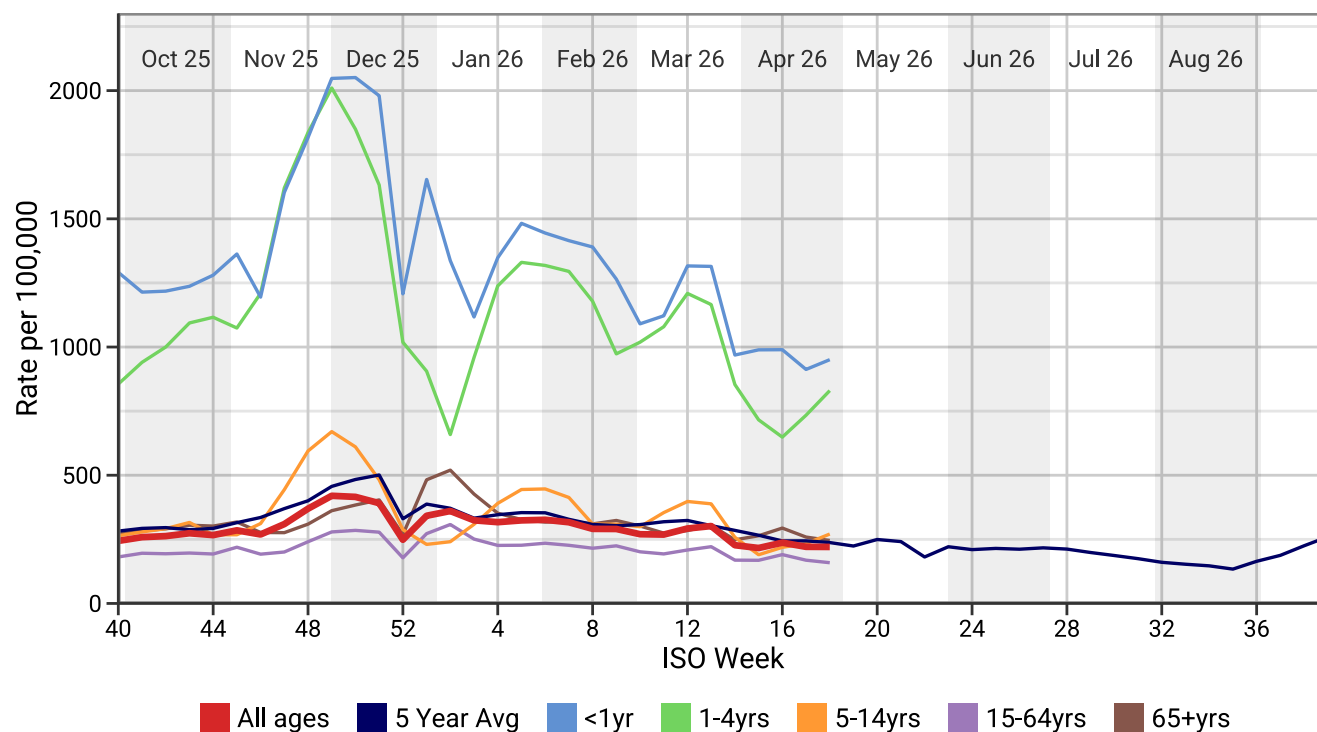


1. Respiratory Infections

(I) Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI): national incidence rate by region



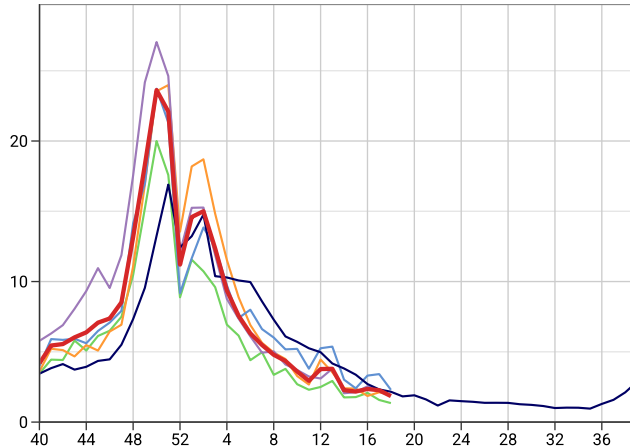
(J) Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI): national incidence rate by age band



Respiratory Infections - by region

■ National ■ London ■ South
■ 5 Year Avg ■ North ■ Midlands And East

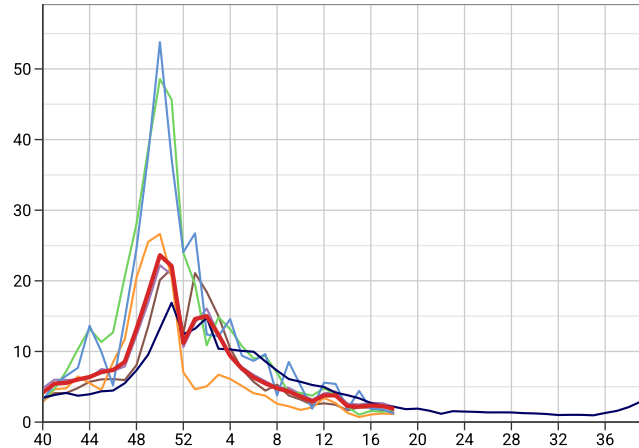
Influenza-like illness (ILI)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



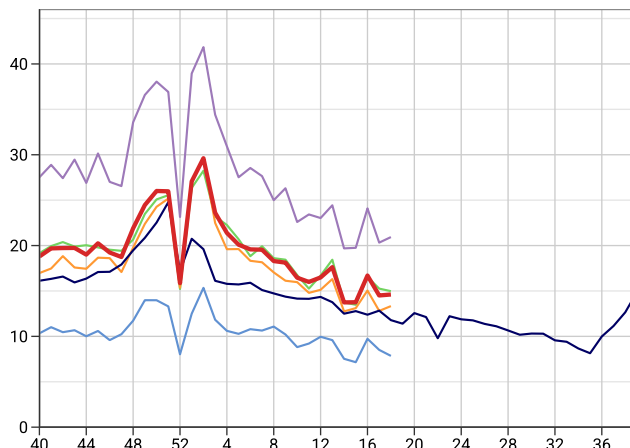
Respiratory Infections - by age band

■ All ages ■ <1yr ■ 5-14yrs ■ 65+yrs
■ 5 Year Avg ■ 1-4yrs ■ 15-64yrs

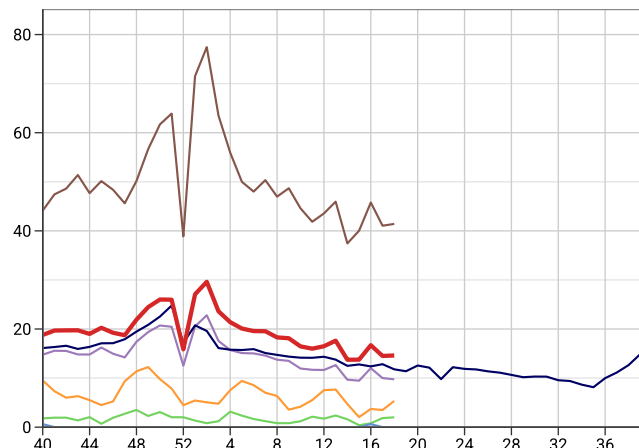
Influenza-like illness (ILI)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



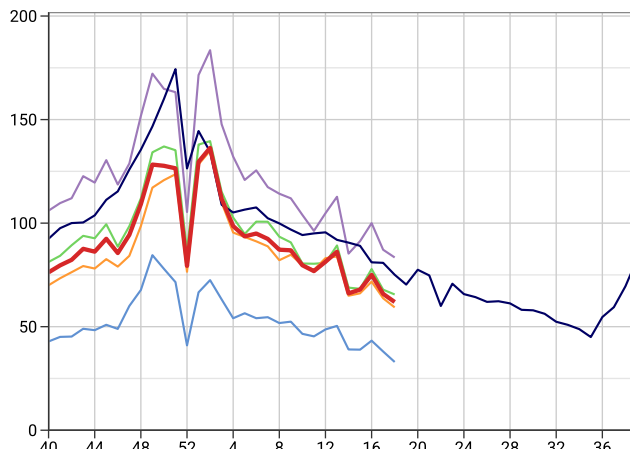
Exacerbations of Chronic Lung Disease (ECLD)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



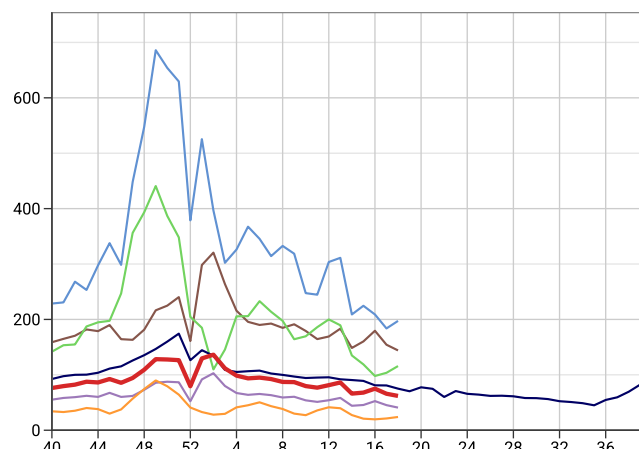
Exacerbations of Chronic Lung Disease (ECLD)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Lower Respiratory Tract Infections (LRTI)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



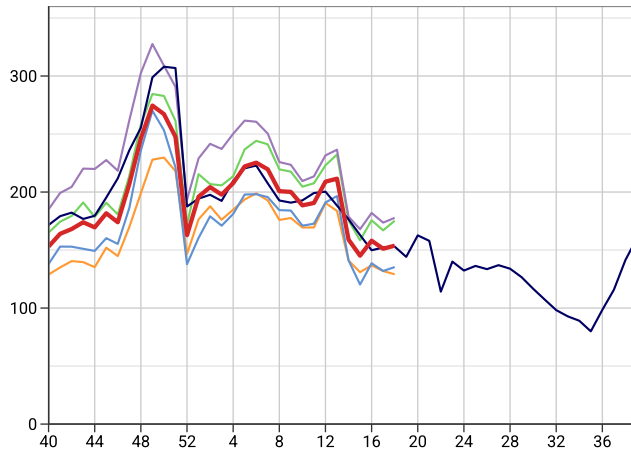
Lower Respiratory Tract Infections (LRTI)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Respiratory Infections - by region

■ National ■ London ■ South
■ 5 Year Avg ■ North ■ Midlands And East

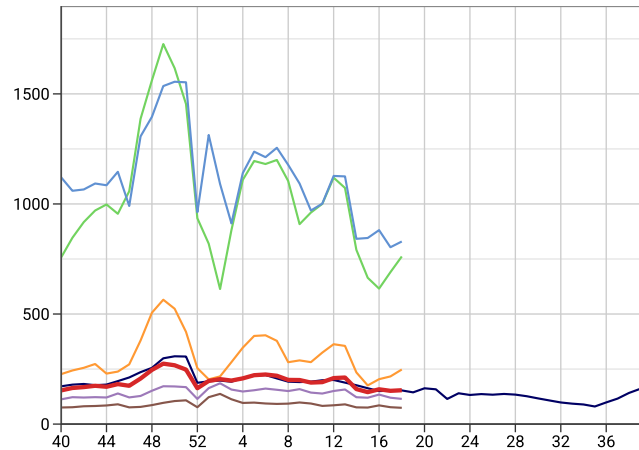
Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTI)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



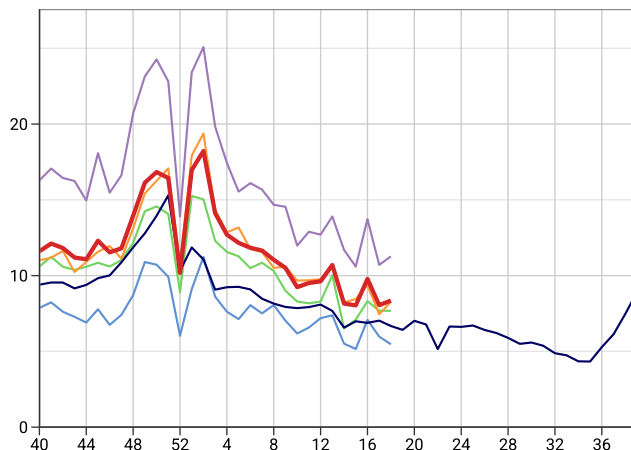
Respiratory Infections - by age band

■ All ages ■ <1yr ■ 5-14yrs ■ 65+yrs
■ 5 Year Avg ■ 1-4yrs ■ 15-64yrs

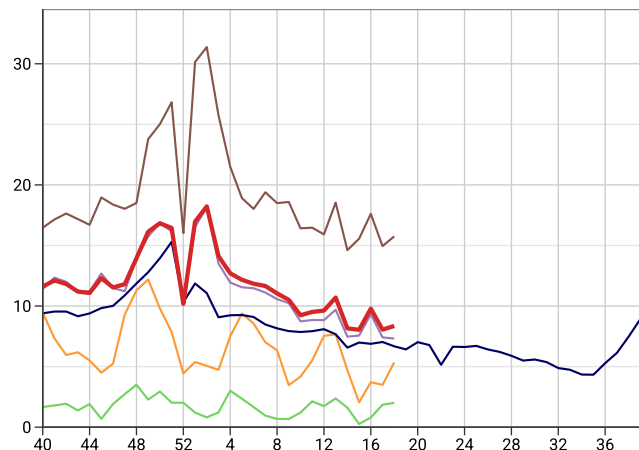
Upper Respiratory Tract Infections (URTI)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



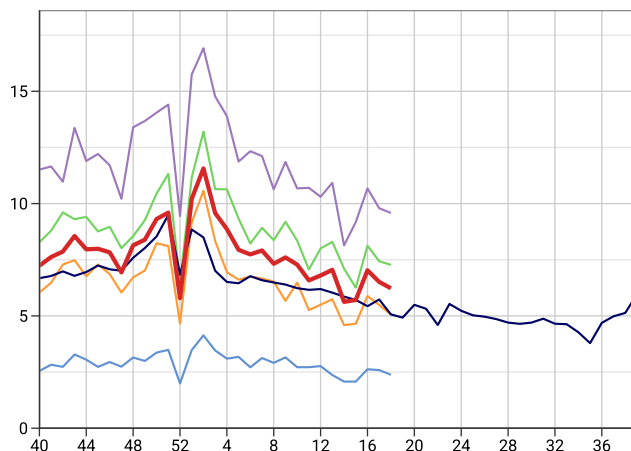
ECLD - Asthma Exacerbations
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



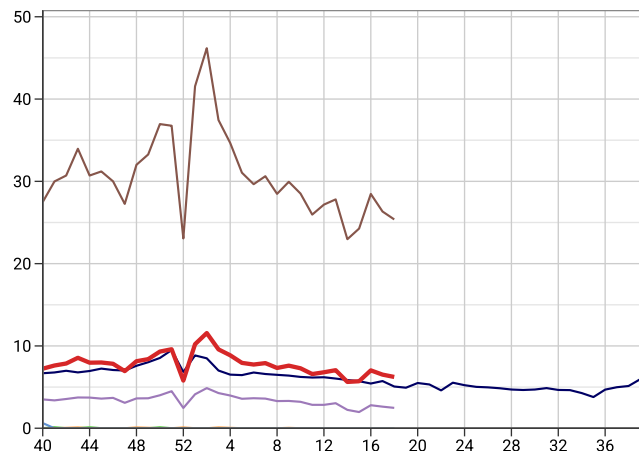
ECLD - Asthma Exacerbations
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



ECLD - COPD Exacerbations
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



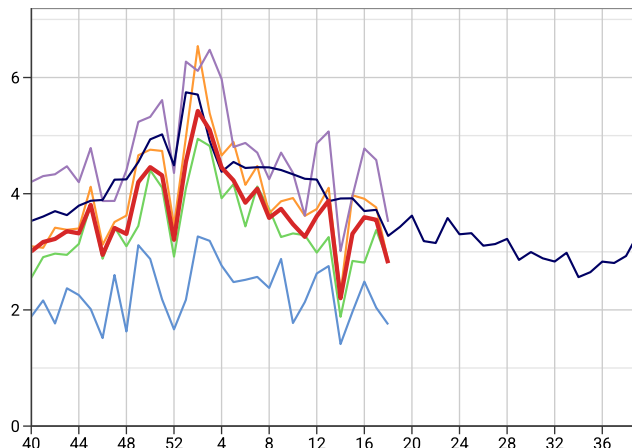
ECLD - COPD Exacerbations
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



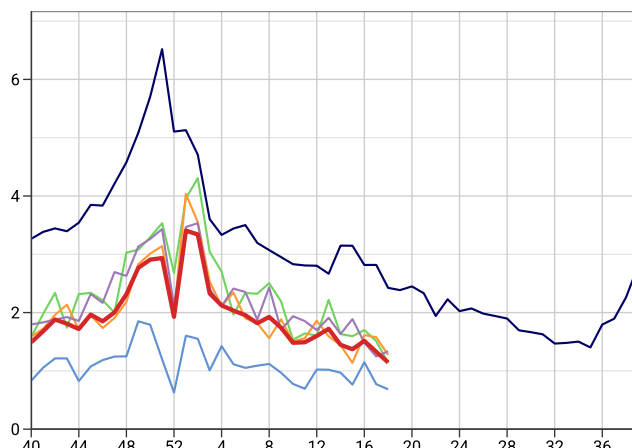
Respiratory Infections - by region

■ National ■ London ■ South
■ 5 Year Avg ■ North ■ Midlands And East

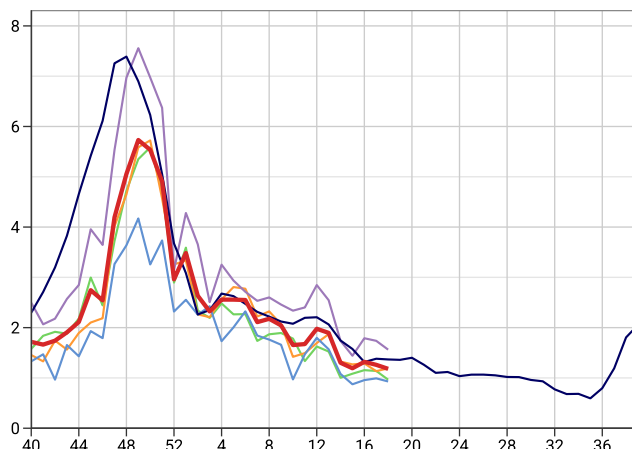
LRTI - Pneumonia
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



LRTI - Acute Bronchitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



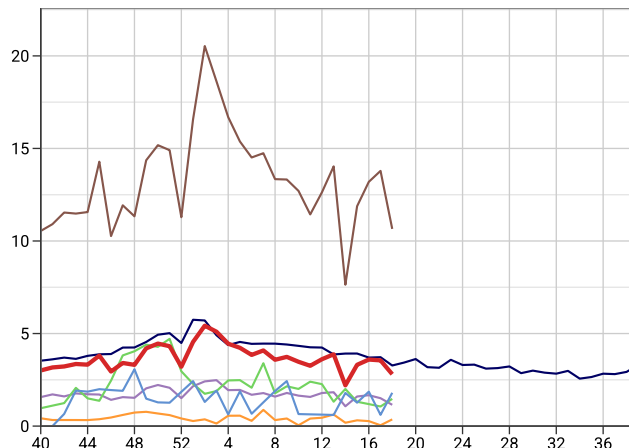
LRTI - Bronchiolitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



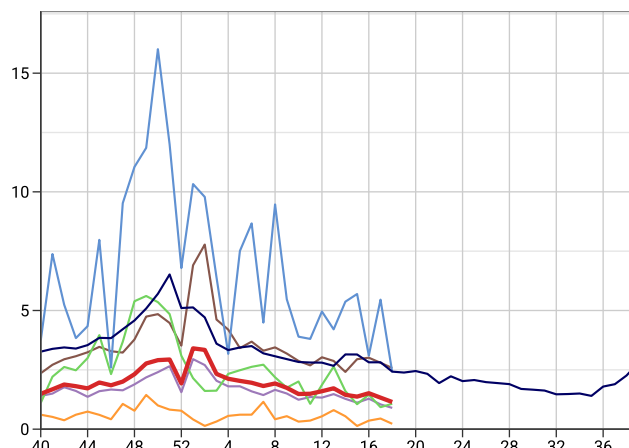
Respiratory Infections - by age band

■ All ages ■ <1yr ■ 5-14yrs ■ 65+yrs
■ 5 Year Avg ■ 1-4yrs ■ 15-64yrs

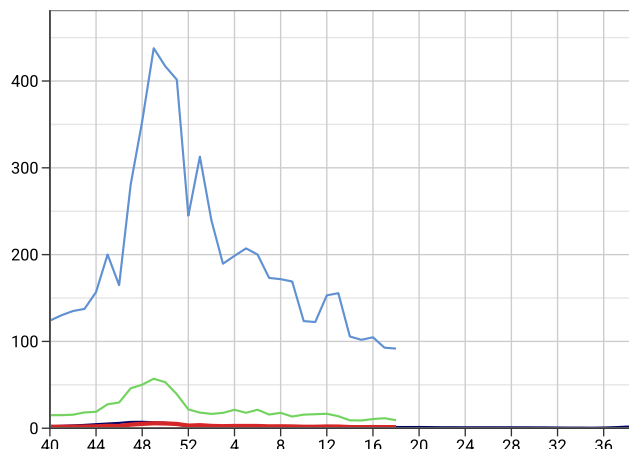
LRTI - Pneumonia
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



LRTI - Acute Bronchitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



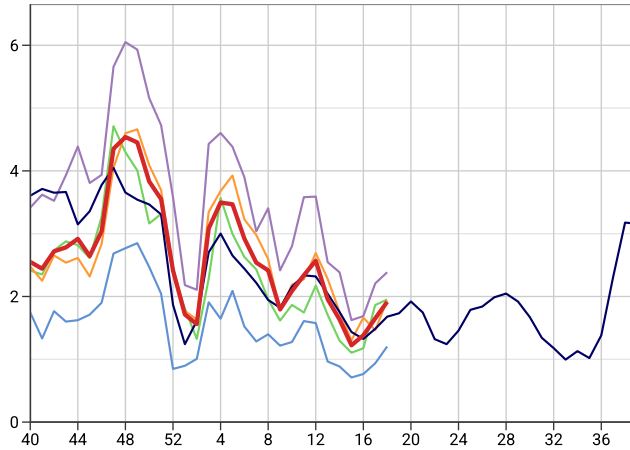
LRTI - Bronchiolitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Respiratory Infections - by region

■ National ■ London ■ South
■ 5 Year Avg ■ North ■ Midlands And East

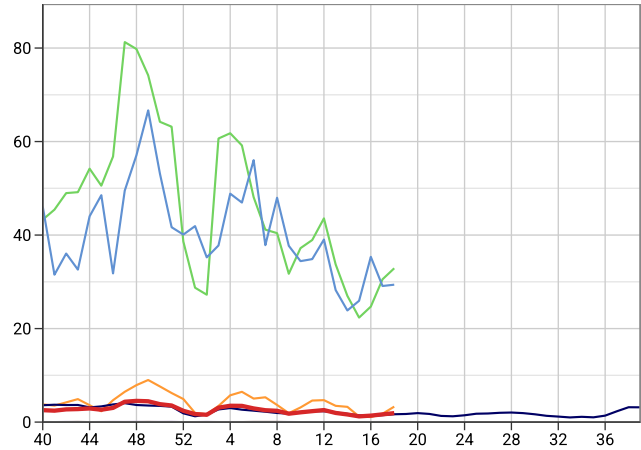
URTI - Croup
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



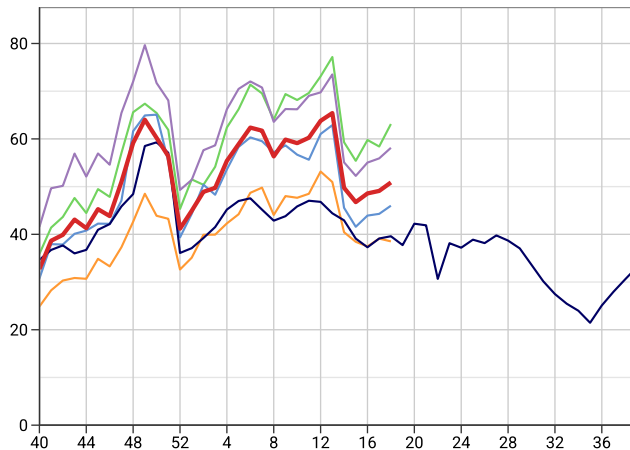
Respiratory Infections - by age band

■ All ages ■ <1yr ■ 5-14yrs ■ 65+yrs
■ 5 Year Avg ■ 1-4yrs ■ 15-64yrs

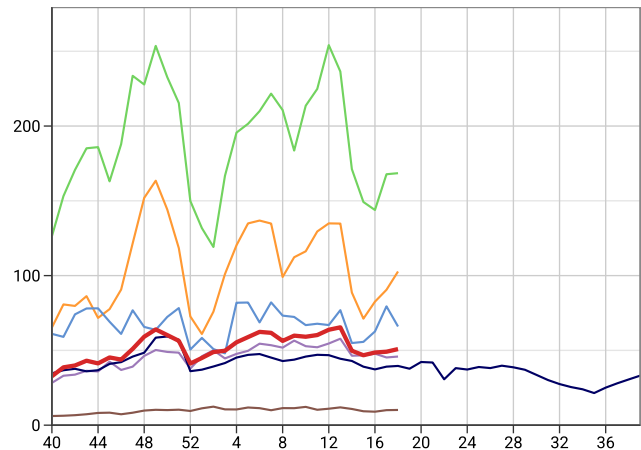
URTI - Croup
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



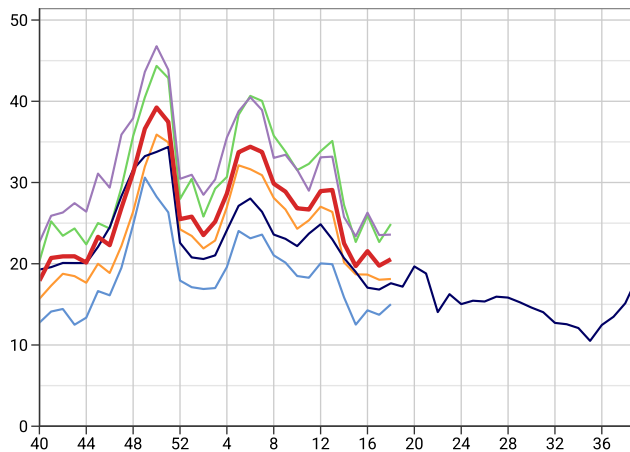
URTI - Tonsillitis/Pharyngitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



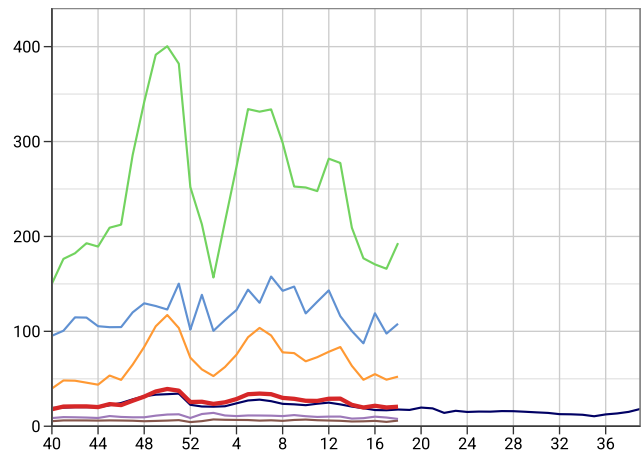
URTI - Tonsillitis/Pharyngitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



URTI - Otitis Media
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



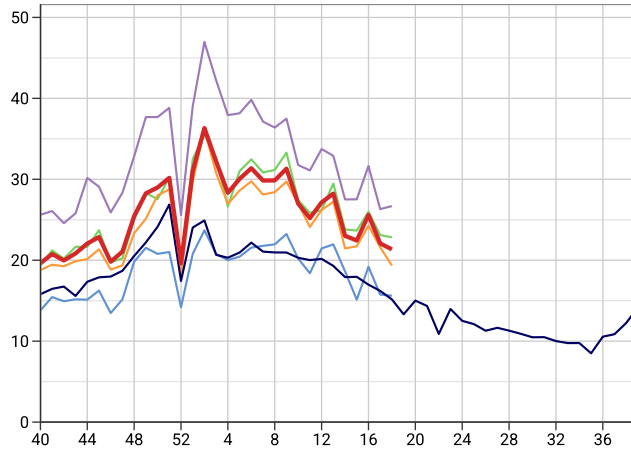
URTI - Otitis Media
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Respiratory Infections - by region

■ National ■ London ■ South
■ 5 Year Avg ■ North ■ Midlands And East

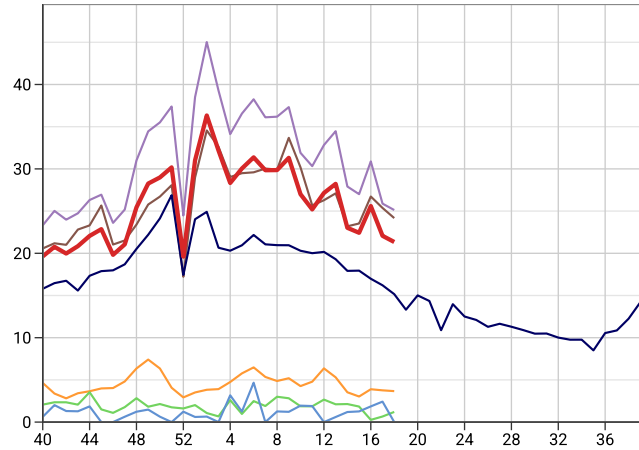
URTI - Sinusitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



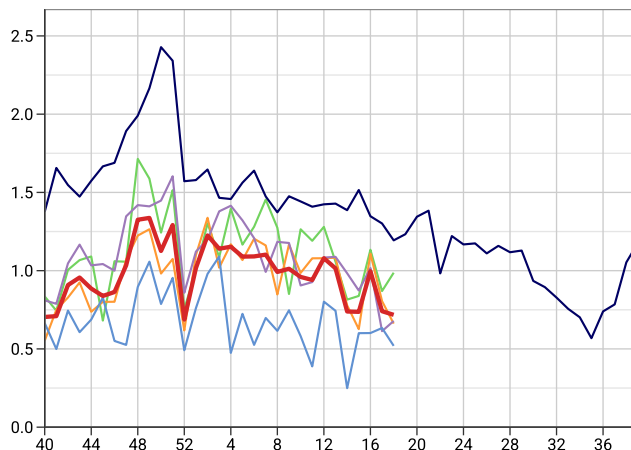
Respiratory Infections - by age band

■ All ages ■ <1yr ■ 5-14yrs ■ 65+yrs
■ 5 Year Avg ■ 1-4yrs ■ 15-64yrs

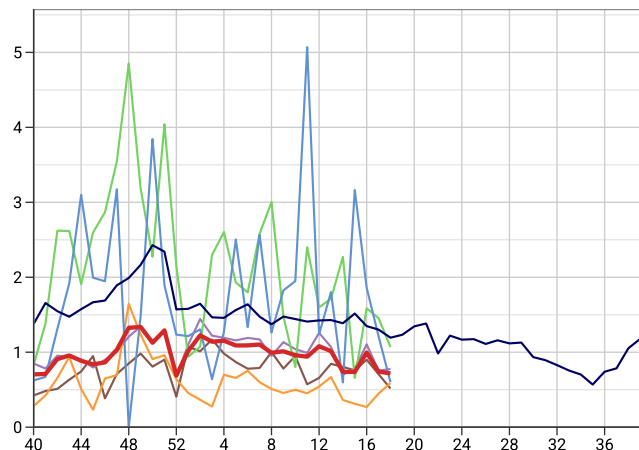
URTI - Sinusitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



URTI - Laryngitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



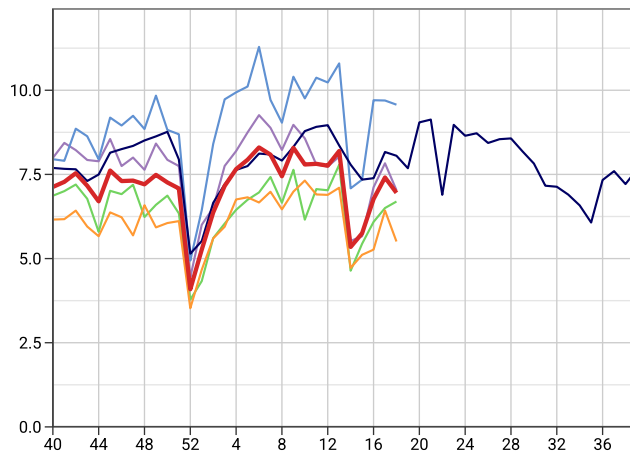
URTI - Laryngitis
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by age band for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



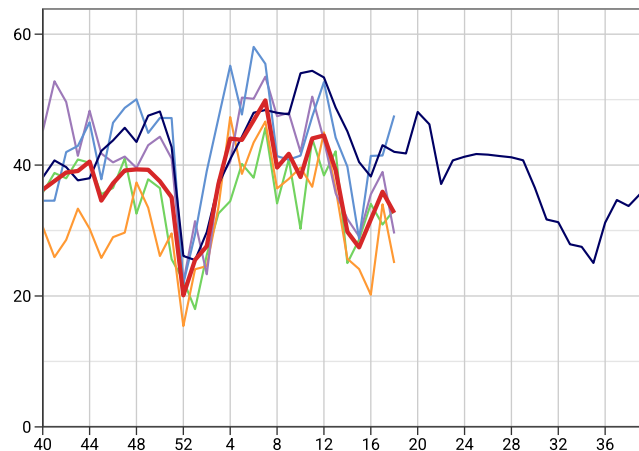
2. Water and Food Borne Disorders

■ National
 ■ 5 Year Avg
 ■ London
 ■ North
 ■ South
 ■ Midlands And East

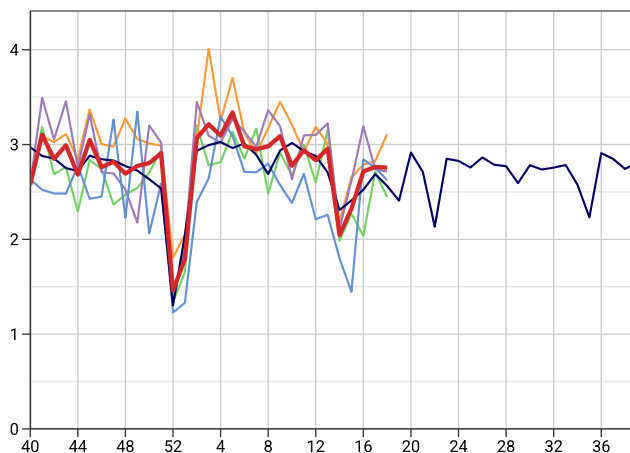
Infectious Intestinal Disease (ICD10: A00-A09)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



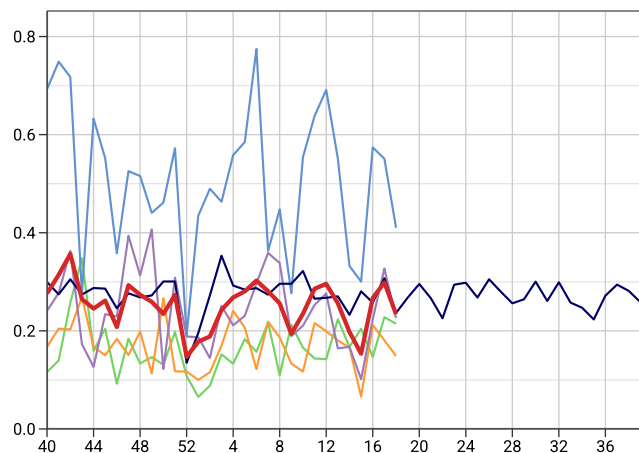
Infectious Intestinal Disease (ICD10: A00-A09)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 0-4 years) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Non-Infective Enteritis and Colitis (ICD10: K50-K52)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



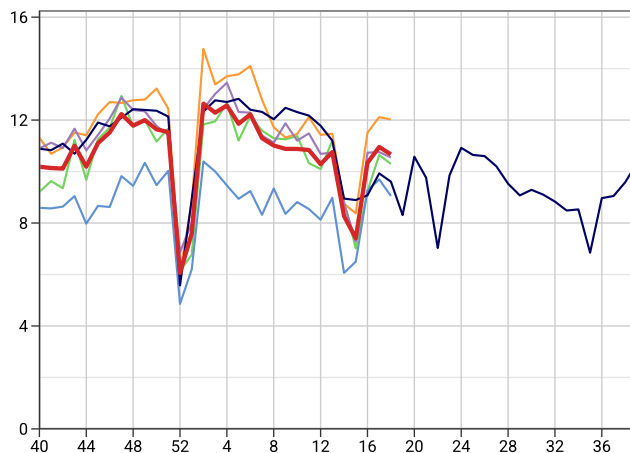
Viral Hepatitis (ICD10: B15-B19)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



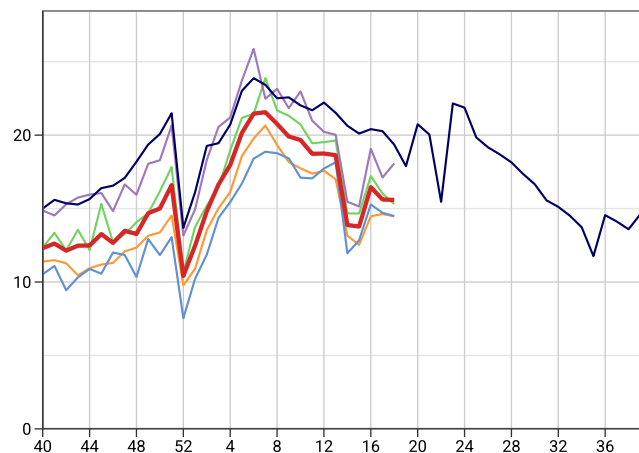
3. Environmentally Sensitive Disorders

■ National
 ■ 5 Year Avg
 ■ London
 ■ North
 ■ South
 ■ Midlands And East

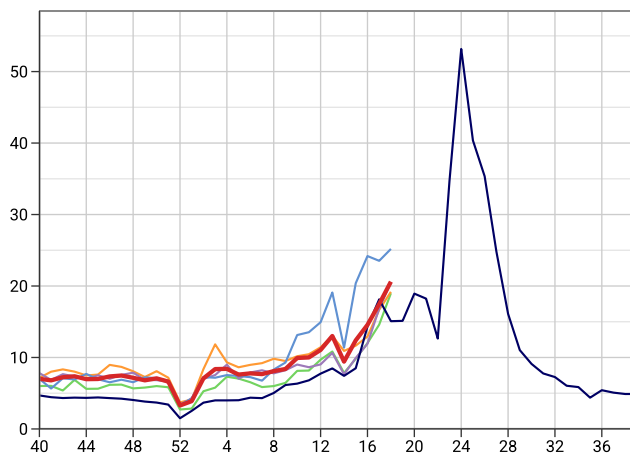
Asthma (ICD10: J45-J46)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



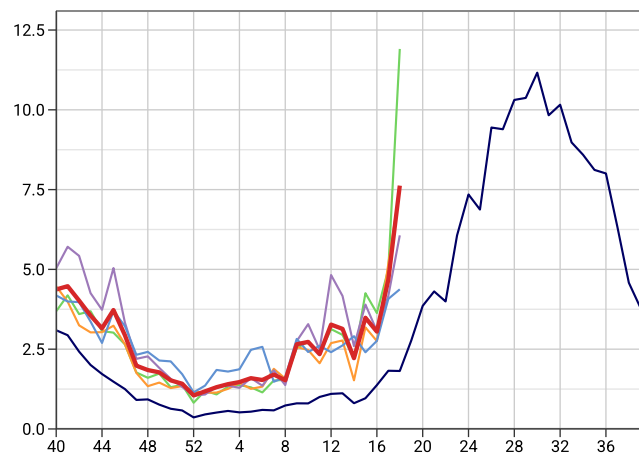
Disorders of Conjunctiva (ICD10: H10-H13)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Hayfever / Allergic Rhinitis (ICD10: J30)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



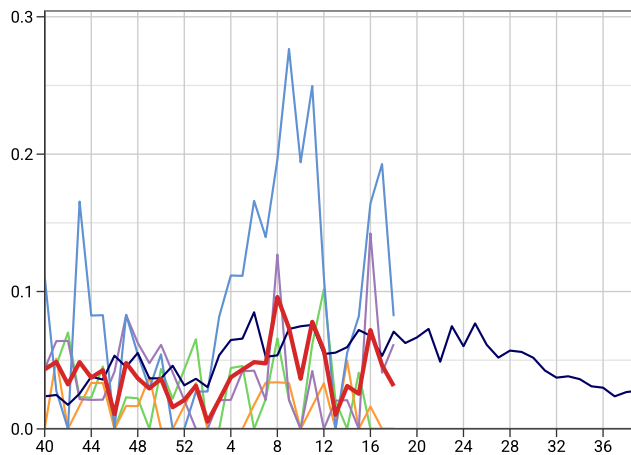
Infected Insect Bites
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



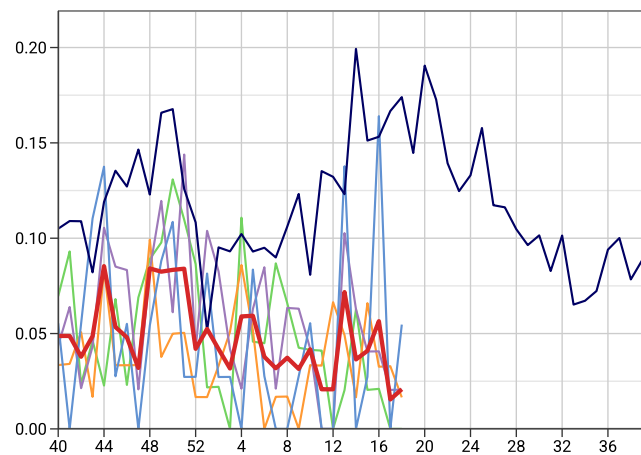
4. Vaccine Sensitive Disorders

■ National
 ■ 5 Year Avg
 ■ London
 ■ North
 ■ South
 ■ Midlands And East

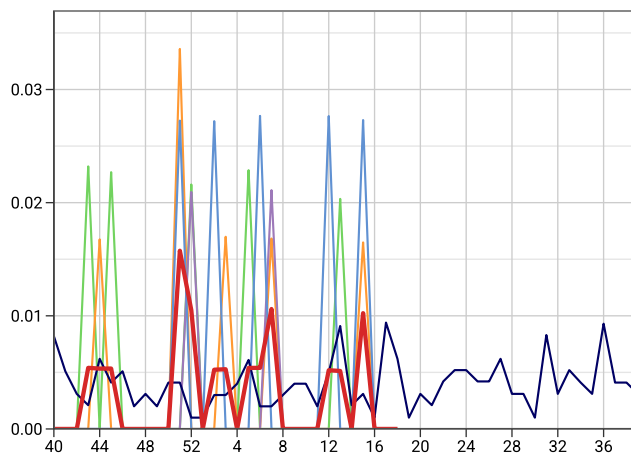
Measles (ICD10: B05)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



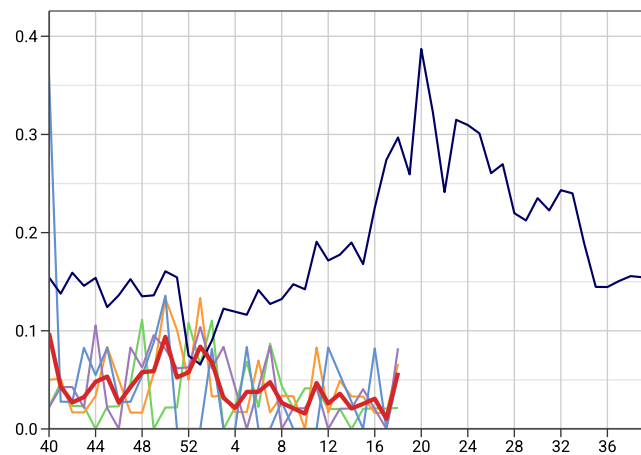
Mumps (ICD10: B26)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Rubella (ICD10: B06)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



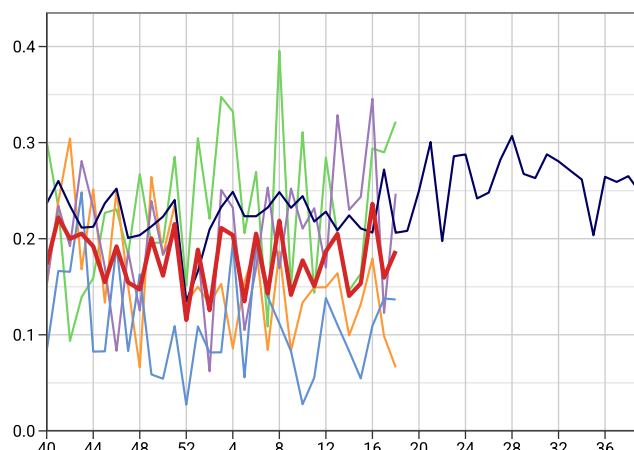
Whooping Cough (ICD10: A37)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



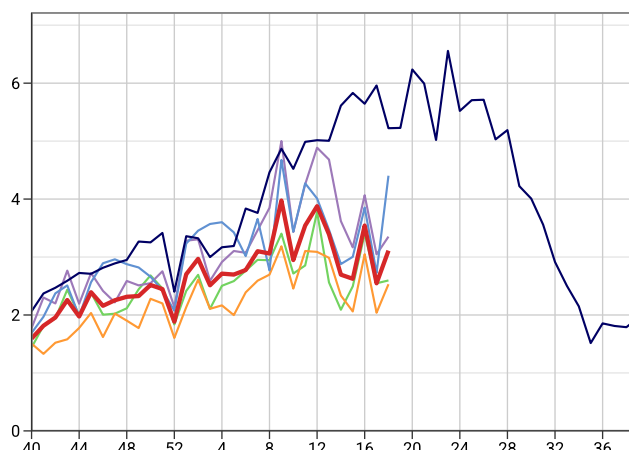
5. Skin Contagions

■ National
 ■ 5 Year Avg
 ■ London
 ■ North
 ■ South
 ■ Midlands And East

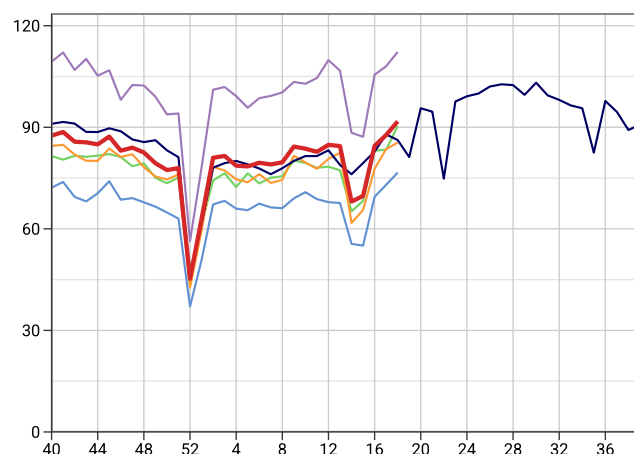
Bullous Dermatoses (ICD10: L10-L14)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



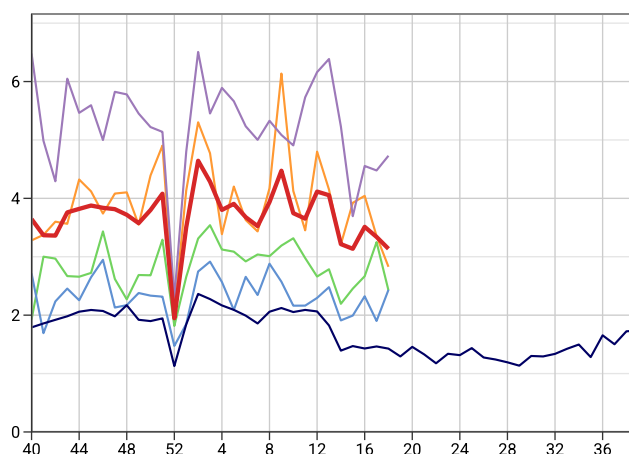
Chickenpox (ICD10: B01)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



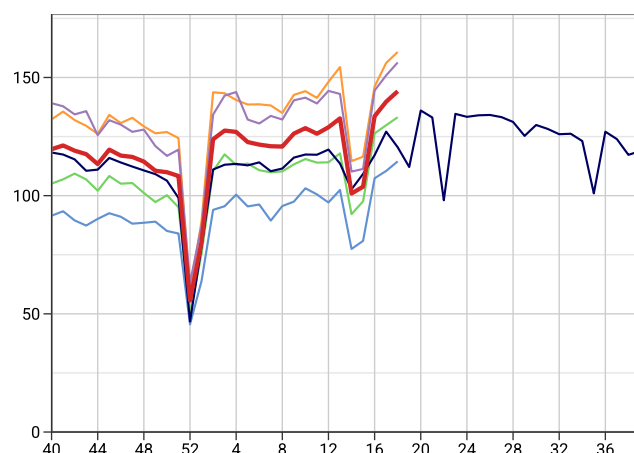
Infections of Skin & Subcutaneous Tissue (ICD10: L00-L08)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



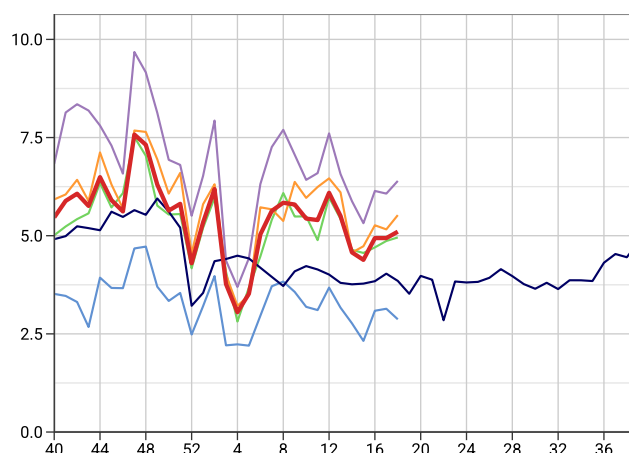
Scabies (ICD10: B86)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Symptoms of Skin & Integument Tissue (ICD10: R20-R23),
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average

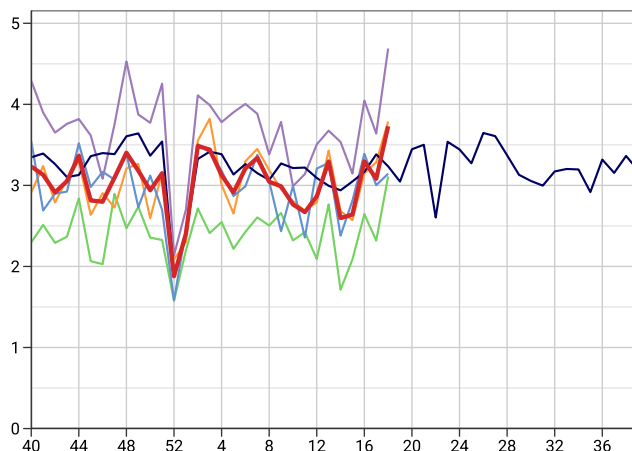


Impetigo (ICD10: L01)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average

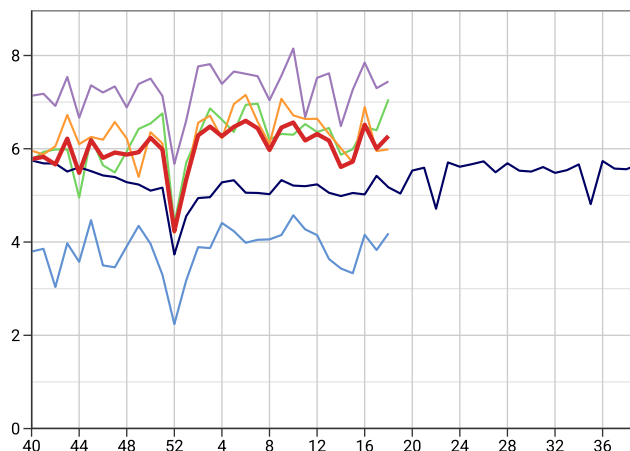


■ National
 ■ 5 Year Avg
 ■ London
 ■ North
 ■ South
 ■ Midlands And East

Herpes Simplex (ICD10: B00)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average

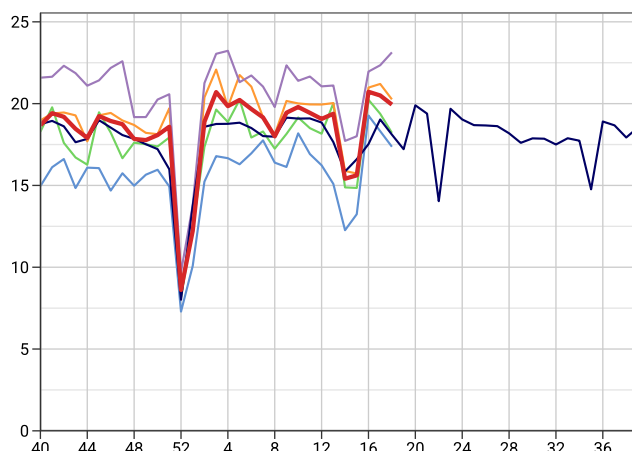


Herpes Zoster (ICD10: B02)
Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average

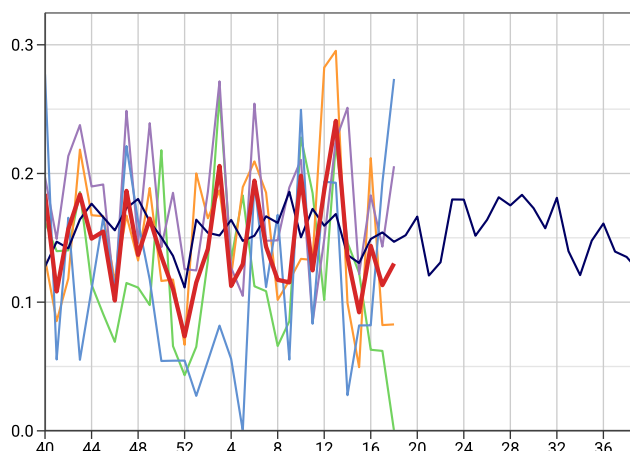


6. Disorders Affecting the Nervous System

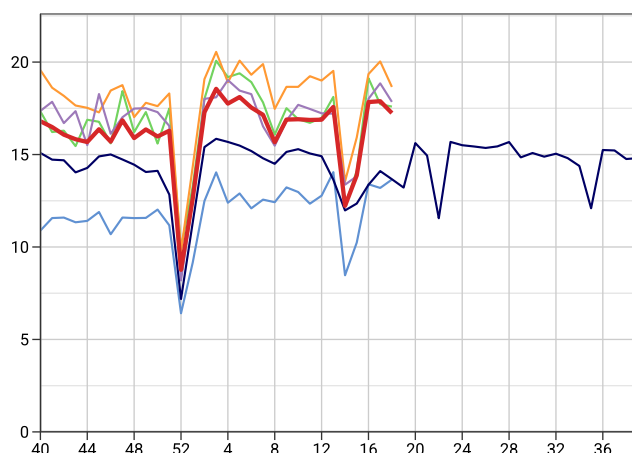
Disorders of Peripheral Nervous System (ICD10: G50-G64,G70-G72), Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Meningitis/Encephalitis (ICD10: A170-A171,A390,A38-A85,A87,G00-G05), Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



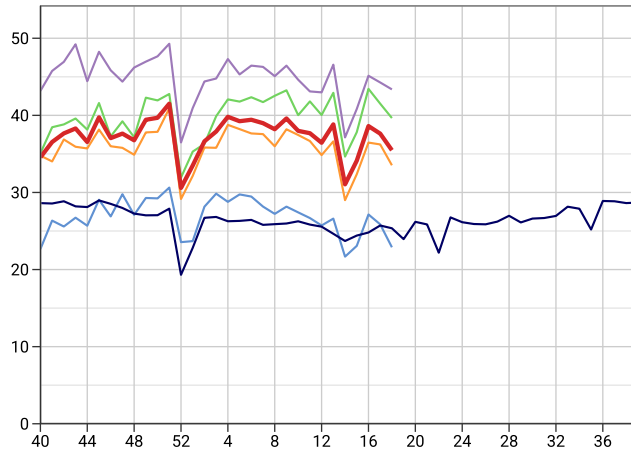
Symptoms of Nervous & Musculoskeletal Systems (ICD10: R25-R29), Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



7. Genitourinary System Disorders

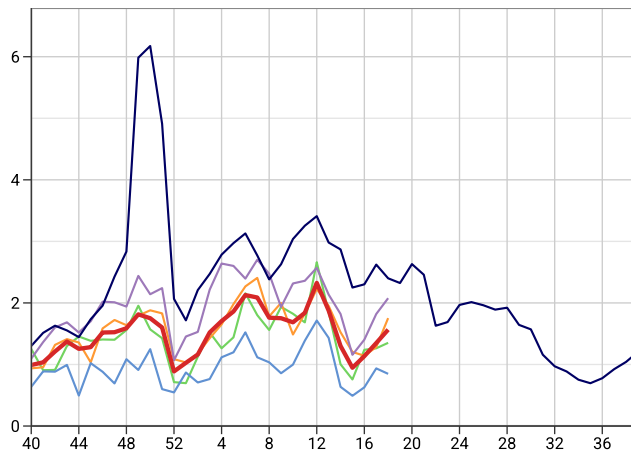
■ National
 ■ 5 Year Avg
 ■ London
 ■ North
 ■ South
 ■ Midlands And East

Urinary Tract Infection/Cystitis (ICD10: N30,N390)
 Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26
 compared with 5 year average

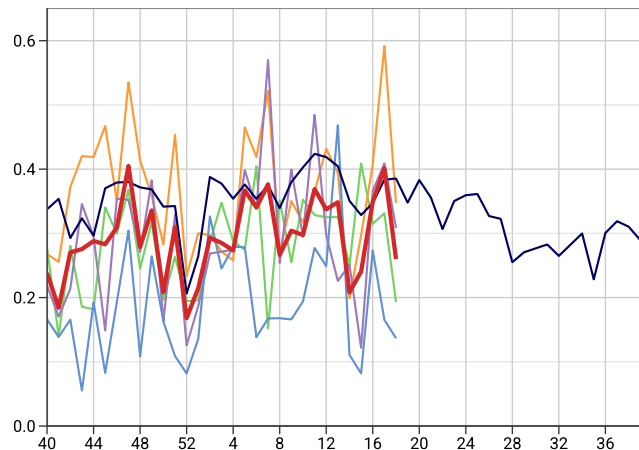


8. Other Disorders

Strep Sore Throat, Scarletina and Peritonsillar Abscess (ICD10:
 A38,J020,J36), Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by
 region for 2025/26 compared with 5 year average



Infectious Mononucleosis (ICD10: B27)
 Weekly incidence (per 100,000 all ages) by region for 2025/26
 compared with 5 year average



9. Tabular Summary by Disease

	Week 15	Week 16	Week 17	Week 18
Dates	06/04/2026 - 12/04/2026	13/04/2026 - 19/04/2026	20/04/2026 - 26/04/2026	27/04/2026 - 03/05/2026
Population	19,544,399	19,474,342	19,435,160	19,226,914
Practice Count	1,835	1,837	1,830	1,814

Disease	Week 15		Week 16		Week 17		Week 18	
	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count	Rate	Count
Acute Bronchitis	1.4	268	1.5	295	1.3	258	1.1	220
Acute Respiratory Infections (ARI)	216.2	42,251	237.0	46,157	220.8	42,920	220.4	42,376
Allergic Rhinitis	12.4	2,423	14.6	2,836	17.5	3,397	20.6	3,962
Asthma	7.4	1,448	10.3	2,013	11.0	2,129	10.7	2,051
Bronchiolitis	1.2	233	1.3	257	1.3	245	1.2	227
Bullous Dermatoses	0.2	30	0.2	46	0.2	31	0.2	36
COVID-19	0.2	48	0.2	45	0.2	46	0.2	32
Chickenpox	2.6	513	3.5	690	2.5	495	3.1	598
Conjunctival Disorders	13.8	2,693	16.5	3,205	15.6	3,035	15.6	2,997
Croup	1.2	239	1.4	269	1.7	321	1.9	368
ECLD - COPD exacerbations	5.7	1,116	7.0	1,369	6.5	1,266	6.2	1,198
ECLD - asthma exacerbations	8.0	1,571	9.8	1,905	8.1	1,565	8.4	1,606
Exacerbations of chronic lung disease (ECLD)	13.8	2,689	16.7	3,252	14.5	2,819	14.6	2,809
Herpes Simplex	2.6	516	3.3	642	3.1	599	3.7	717
Herpes Zoster	5.7	1,119	6.5	1,269	6.0	1,167	6.3	1,206
Impetigo	4.4	857	4.9	962	4.9	960	5.1	981
Infected Insect Bites	3.5	681	3.1	594	4.7	909	7.6	1,466
Infectious Intestinal Diseases	5.8	1,124	6.8	1,318	7.4	1,440	7.0	1,337
Infectious Mononucleosis	0.2	47	0.3	68	0.4	78	0.3	50
Influenza-like Illness (ILI)	2.2	425	2.4	459	2.3	440	1.9	356
Laryngitis	0.7	144	1.0	194	0.7	144	0.7	138
Lower respiratory tract infections (LRTI)	67.9	13,272	75.0	14,608	65.8	12,795	61.9	11,903
Measles	0.0	5	0.1	14	0.0	9	0.0	6
Meningitis and Encephalitis	0.1	18	0.1	28	0.1	22	0.1	25
Mumps	0.0	8	0.1	11	0.0	3	0.0	4
Non-infective Enteritis and Colitis	2.3	454	2.7	529	2.8	537	2.8	530
Peripheral Nervous Disease	15.6	3,052	20.7	4,036	20.5	3,984	19.9	3,834
Pneumonia	3.3	647	3.6	700	3.6	690	2.8	539
Rubella	0.0	2	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Scabies	3.1	613	3.5	684	3.3	649	3.1	603
Sinusitis	22.4	4,384	25.6	4,985	22.1	4,289	21.3	4,103
Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue Infections	69.7	13,625	84.5	16,456	87.7	17,046	91.7	17,638
Strep Throat and Peritonsillar Abscess	0.9	185	1.1	221	1.3	262	1.6	301
Symptoms involving Skin and Integument Tissues	103.8	20,284	133.6	26,020	139.7	27,157	144.2	27,718
Symptoms involving musculoskeletal	13.9	2,712	17.8	3,474	17.9	3,476	17.2	3,315
Tonsillitis and Pharyngitis	46.7	9,137	48.6	9,459	49.1	9,543	50.9	9,780
Upper respiratory tract infections (URTI)	145.1	28,368	158.1	30,783	151.1	29,371	153.8	29,571
Urinary Tract Infections	34.1	6,668	38.6	7,519	37.6	7,313	35.5	6,821
Viral Hepatitis	0.2	30	0.3	52	0.3	58	0.2	45
Whooping Cough	0.0	5	0.0	6	0.0	2	0.1	11

Further Information

Focus on winter respiratory infections and infections with epidemic or pandemic infection

A key role of the RSC is to monitor conditions that cause winter pressures on the NHS, as well as provide early warnings of outbreaks, epidemics, and pandemics. The RSC has been collecting data on infections since 1957, conducting sentinel surveillance since 1967 (with virology added in 1993), and serosurveillance from 2000.

Pages 2-6 of this report focus on influenza-like illness (ILI), virology data, and acute respiratory infections (ARI). ILI is the name given to clinically identified flu cases, around half of which will be due to the influenza virus (the other half will be due to other viruses).

Measuring the level of circulating influenza

The level of influenza-like illness (ILI) is reported using intensity thresholds (Graph A, page 2 and Table E, page 4). These are calculated using the Moving Epidemic Method (MEM). MEM works by identifying seasonal epidemic peaks and then calculating a baseline threshold and intensity levels based on pre- and post-epidemic rates. This provides a better measure of severity of ILI than simply comparing it to the five-year average rate.

The MEM intensity levels for ILI are defined as follows:

Threshold to Medium	Below 40% percentile
Medium to High	From 40% to below 90% percentile
High to Very High	From 90% to below 97.5% percentile
Above Very High	At or above 97.5% percentile

The MEM methodology is used by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to standardise reporting of influenza activity.

More information about MEM can be found at:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22897919/>

Rate of monitored conditions

Our monitored conditions are reported as the number of new cases each week per 100,000 population. We refer to this as the 'weekly incidence'. All conditions are shown with males and females combined.

The report's population, also called the denominator, is the registered population of RSC practices who share anonymised data for this report. The denominator varies weekly as patients register and deregister; additionally, a practice's data may not be included if there is an issue with data extraction.

Five-year averages

In addition to weekly incidence rates, we plot a five-year average for most conditions. Previously a ten-year average was used, but this window was shortened to reflect faster changes in seasonal variations and therefore enable a more meaningful comparison to relevant historic trends. COVID-19 pandemic years are excluded from this calculation for some conditions.

Regional rates of monitored conditions

In addition to a national rate, we present regional rates for all monitored conditions for four regions of England. The four RSC regions are aggregated NHS regions:

North	NHS North East and Yorkshire, and North West regions
Midlands and East	NHS East of England and Midlands regions
South	NHS South East and South West regions
London	NHS London region

Reporting of acute respiratory infections (ARI) by age band

In addition to regional rates, we report rates by age band for ARI. We display five age bands: those aged under 1 year, 1-4 years, 5-14 years, 15-64 years, and those aged 65 years and over. We subdivide ARI into four categories:

- influenza-like illness (ILI);
- exacerbations of chronic lung disease (ECLD), mainly asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD);
- lower respiratory tract infections (LRTI), including bronchitis and pneumonia;
- upper respiratory tract infections (URTI), including tonsillitis and sinusitis.

More information about our classification of ARI can be found at:

<https://www.eurosurveillance.org/content/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2024.29.35.2300682>

About the RCGP Research and Surveillance Centre (RSC)

What we do

Established in 1957, the Oxford-Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) Research and Surveillance Centre (RSC) is an internationally renowned source of information, analysis and interpretation concerning the onset, patterns, prevalence and trends over time of morbidity in primary care. The RSC provides weekly reports about health and disease: the Weekly Returns Service (WRS). The WRS has been produced since 1967, in collaboration with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and its predecessor bodies. The University of Oxford currently provides the WRS on behalf of RCGP and UKHSA.

The RSC is active in research and surveillance. In addition to the WRS, the RSC contributes data to UKHSA's Syndromic Surveillance system, and supports vaccine effectiveness studies. The role of general practice members of the RSC is set out in an annual commissioning letter.

Further information about the RSC can be found on our website:

www.rcgp.org.uk/representing-you/research-at-rcgp/research-surveillance-centre

Our data extraction process and governance

Data are extracted on behalf of the RSC from practice computerised medical record systems, twice a week by Magentus Data Management, or daily by Optum.

Data are pseudonymised as close to source as possible. Data are held on secure servers at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences (NDPCHS) at the University of Oxford. Our systems meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Further information about the NHS England approval of the RSC's data security can be found at:

<https://www.dsptoolkit.nhs.uk/OrganisationSearch/EE133863-MSD-NDPCHS>

What the data is used for

The WRS monitors the number of patients consulting with new episodes of illness classified by diagnosis in England and provides weekly incidence rates per 100,000 population for these new episodes of illness. It is the key primary care element of the national disease monitoring systems run by the UK Health Security Agency.

In addition to the WRS, the data are used for other research studies. Any other uses of the data for research follow ethical approval or agreement from NIHR proportionate review, and where relevant Health Research Authority Confidential Advisory Group advice that further approval is not needed.

Get in touch

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

Director: Professor Simon de Lusignan (Simon.DeLusignanPA@phc.ox.ac.uk)

RCGP Research and Surveillance Centre
Policy, Research and Campaigns
Royal College of General Practitioners
30 Euston Square
London, NW1 2FB
Tel: 020 3188 7400

Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences
Gibson Building
Radcliffe Observatory Quarter
Woodstock Road
Oxford, OX2 6GG
Tel: 01865 617855

