PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

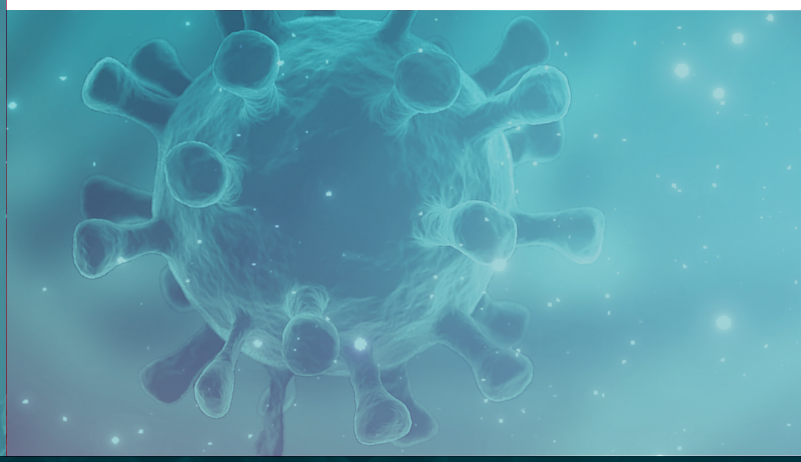
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

SOUTH AFRICA | WEEK 32 2020

CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS: WEEK 32

- The increase in total numbers of respiratory hospitalisations observed in previous weeks is has gradually declined in the past three weeks, although the numbers are still slightly higher that pre-lock down period.
- The proportion of respiratory hospitalisations in all ages remains at the very high level, though there has been a decrease in the past two weeks in all provinces evaluated. The decline was especially noted among individuals in 20-49 and ≥50 year age groups.
- Percentage of casualty visits coded as respiratory remains in very high levels in individuals aged 20-49 years and ≥50 years.
- Differences by province and age group should be interpreted with caution due to low numbers in some groups.



PROGRAMME DESCRIPTIONS

Inpatient data from a large national private hospital group and outpatient data from a general practitioner network linked to the same hospital group were received for the last week. Data were obtained from eight provinces (**Eastern Cape**, Free State, **Gauteng**, Limpopo, **KwaZulu-Natal,** Mpumalanga, North West, **Western Cape**). Sufficient numbers for province-level reporting were available for four of these (bold). Consultations and admissions were coded based on discharge diagnosis using the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th revision (ICD-10). Data were analysed using the indicator: All respiratory and confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07.1 & U07.2)/Total consultations. Data on the indicator Pneumonia and Influenza (J10-J18)/Total consultations are available on request but were not included in this report.

Data were categorised in the following age groups: All ages, <5 years, 5-19 years, 20-49 years, ≥50 years

Epidemic Threshold

Thresholds were calculated using the Moving Epidemic Method (MEM), a sequential analysis using the R Language, available from: http://CRAN.R-project.org/web/package=mem, designed to calculate the duration, start and end of the annual influenza epidemic. MEM uses the 40th, 90th and 97.5th percentiles established from historical data (2015-2019 for inpatients, 2016-2019 for outpatients) to calculate thresholds of activity, defined as follows:

- Epidemic threshold: Median of weekly values for all baseline years
- Low activity: Between epidemic threshold including 40th percentile
- Moderate activity: Between 40th and 90th percentile
- High activity: Between 90th and 97.5th percentile
- Very high activity: 97.5th percentile and above

Hospitalization data for recent weeks are adjusted for delayed reporting (diagnosis codes assigned on discharge delayed for prolonged hospitalisations). Adjustment accounts for the probability of being admitted, but not yet discharged at the time of data drawdown using the age- and syndrome-specific probability distribution of duration of admission obtained from all hospitalizations that occurred during 2015-2019 and applied to the most recent weeks in 2020.

Data are provisional as reported to date (Data for this report drawn on 11/08/2020). Number of consultations analysed by date of consultation/admission to hospital. Data are analysed by epidemiological week Monday to Sunday.

INTERPRETATION OF DATA PRESENTED

Total admissions reduced from week 13 when lockdown was implemented and have remained below pre-lockdown levels.

Total respiratory admissions reduced from week 13 when lockdown was implemented and slowly increased exceeding pre-lockdown levels in week 26 and continued to increase up to week 29 reaching approximately double the level before the lockdown. From week 30, the numbers started to decrease. The proportion of admissions coded as confirmed COVID-19 (out of suspected) increased from week 15, exceeding 60% from week 26, peaked at ~ 75% in week 30 and started to come down.

Total respiratory outpatient (general practitioner) consultations reduced from week 13. Respiratory consultations recovered to levels slightly lower than those preceding the lockdown from week 26 and 28, with a gradual decrease since week 29. The proportion of general practitioner consultations coded as confirmed COVID-19 (out of suspected) increased from week 15, with a sharp increase from week 29 onwards.

Total and respiratory outpatient (casualty) consultations reduced from week 13 and started to increase from week 18 but have remained below pre-lock down levels. Respiratory consultations recovered to levels similar to those preceding the lockdown from week 26. The proportion of casualty consultations coded as confirmed COVID-19 (out of suspected) increased from week 15, exceeding 50% from week 25.

Proportion of admissions respiratory or suspected COVID-19 overall overall remained below threshold until week 21, following which it increased rapidly reaching the very high threshold in week 25 onwards with a decrease from week 29 but remains above the very high threshold to date.
By age group, percent admissions respiratory or suspected COVID for 0-4 years, has increased in recent weeks, remaining below the seasonal threshold. Among individuals aged 5-19 years, continuously increased since week 18, reaching low levels of activity in week 26.
Among individuals 20-49 years and ≥50 years, percent respiratory admissions has continuously increased since week 13, reaching very high level from week 21.

Proportion of outpatient (general practitioner) consultations respiratory or suspected COVID-19 overall increased from week 11, peaking in week 13 then dropping well below the threshold, increased again crossing the seasonal threshold in week 25, peaked in week 30 and now below threshold.
By age group, percent outpatient visits (general practitioner) showed similar trends for all age groups, and has breached the seasonal threshold among individuals aged 5-19 in week 27 and dropped again to below seasonal threshold from week 29 onwards. Among individuals aged 20-49 years and ≥50 years percent outpatient visits (general practitioner) breached seasonal threshold in week 25, peaked in week 28 at moderate levels for individuals aged 20-49 years and at low levels for individuals aged ≥50 years.

Proportion of outpatient (casualty) consultations respiratory or suspected COVID-19 overall dropped from week 13 during the lockdown but then increased from week 23 reaching very high levels in week 28, now decreasing reaching low levels in week 32.

By age group, percent outpatient visits (casualty) showed similar trends, breaching the seasonal threshold in age group 5-19 years and reaching very high levels in individuals aged 20-49 years and ≥50 years.

Trends in proportion of admissions and outpatient consultations respiratory or COVID varied by province with proportion inpatients respiratory reaching very high levels in all provinces evaluated. However, all four provinces evaluated experienced a downward trend, from week 28 in Eastern Cape and from week 30 in Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape Provinces.

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Limitations

Thresholds are established based on the proportion of consultations which are respiratory. If numbers of non-respiratory consultations drop substantially because of changes in health-seeking behaviour, this could lead to elevated respiratory proportions. Delays in coding of consultations may lead to changes in data from previous weeks.

Assessment

The increase in total numbers of respiratory hospitalisations observed in previous weeks has been decreasing in the past three weeks although the numbers are still slightly higher that pre-lock down period. The proportion of respiratory hospitalisations among 20-49 and ≥50 years, remains at high levels, with a downward trend the past two weeks, this may suggest a decrease in respiratory cases including COVID-19 cases. Changes in health-seeking behaviours and/or effects of lockdown-related reductions may also have contributed.

The percentage of casualty visits coded as respiratory has decreased this week, with individuals aged 20-49 years and ≥50 years still in the very high threshold. Proportion outpatient visits to general practitioners are also showing a decline.

Differences by province and age group should be interpreted with caution due to low numbers in some groups.

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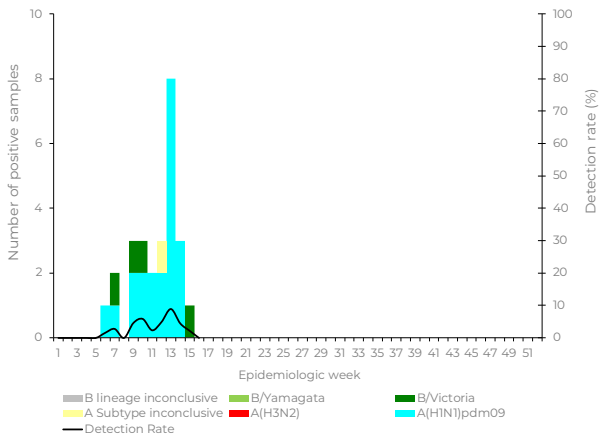
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

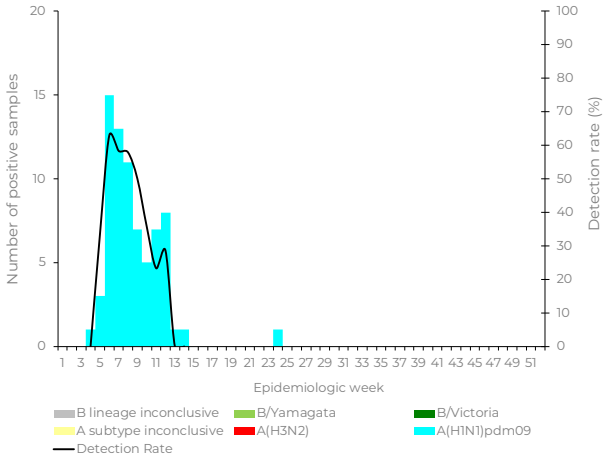
DATA FROM VIROLOGIC SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMMES TO AID IN INTERPRETATION OF CONSULTATION TRENDS

NUMBER OF INFLUENZA POSITIVE SAMPLES BY SUBTYPE/LINEAGE AND DETECTION RATE BY WEEK

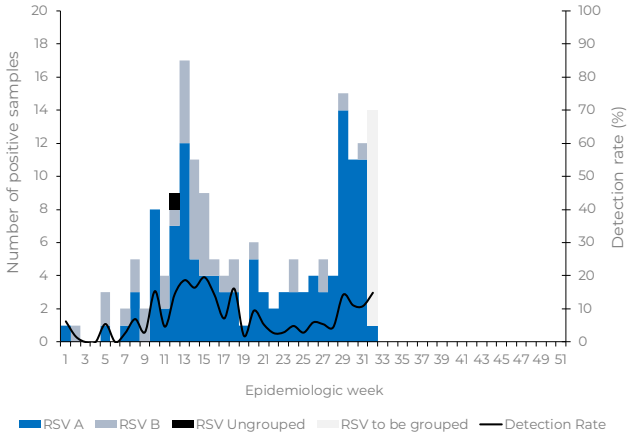
Inpatients



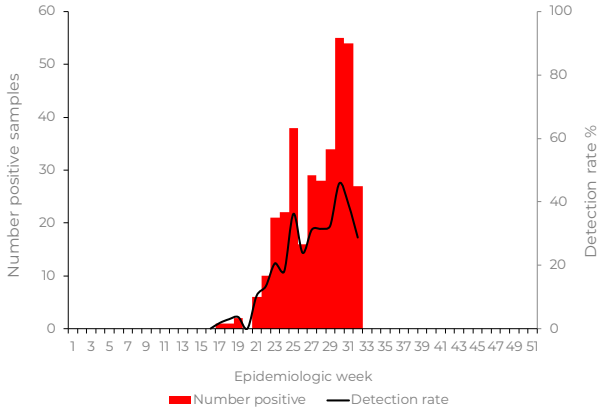
Outpatients



Number of respiratory syncytial virus positive by groups and subgroups per week (Inpatients)



Number of samples tested and results for SARS-COV-2 per week (Inpatients)



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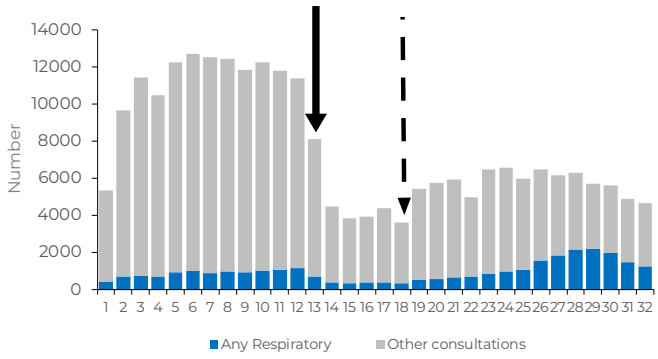
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

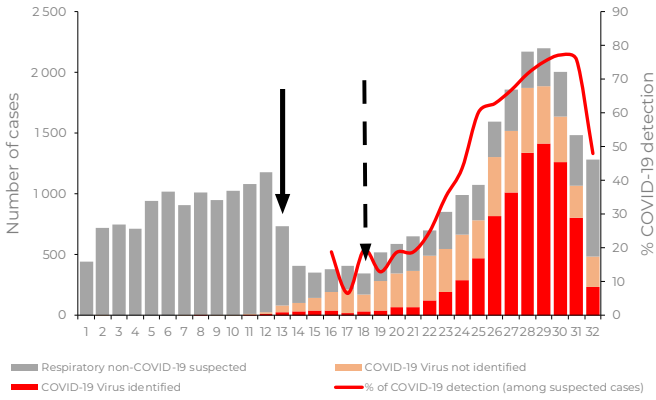
WEEK **32** 2020

NUMBER OF CONSULTATIONS - ALL RESPIRATORY INCLUDING CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED COVID-19 AND OTHER CONSULTATIONS BY WEEK

(SOLID ARROW INDICATES FIRST WEEK OF LOCKDOWN, DASHED ARROW FIRST WEEK OF LEVEL 4)

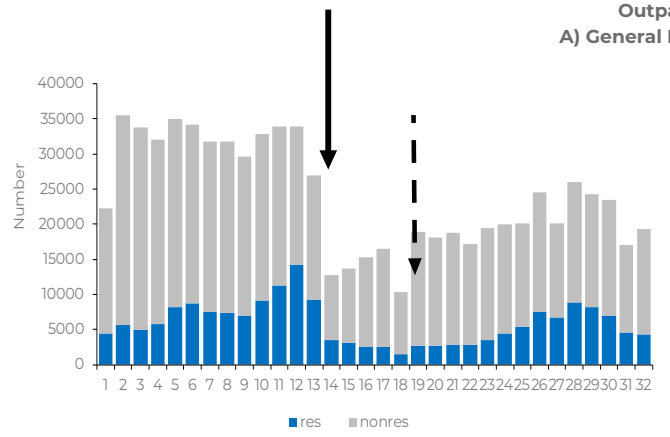
Inpatients

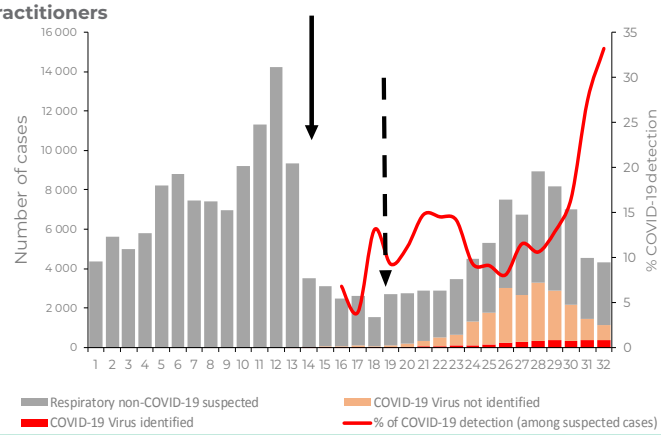




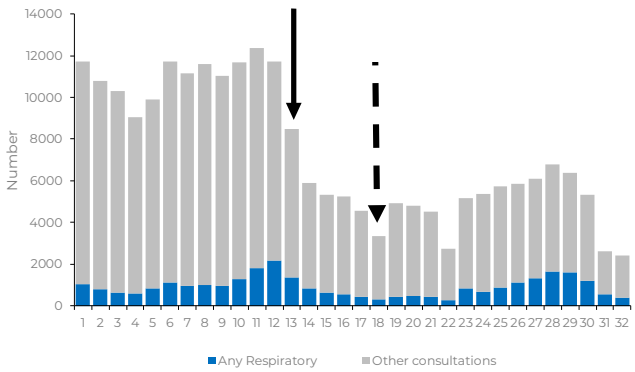
Outpatients

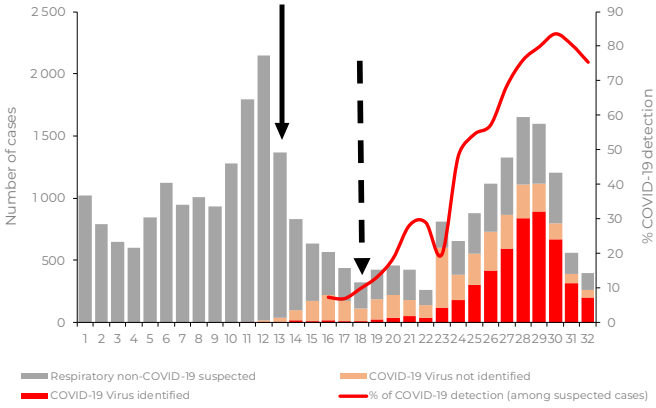
A) General Practitioners





B) Casualty





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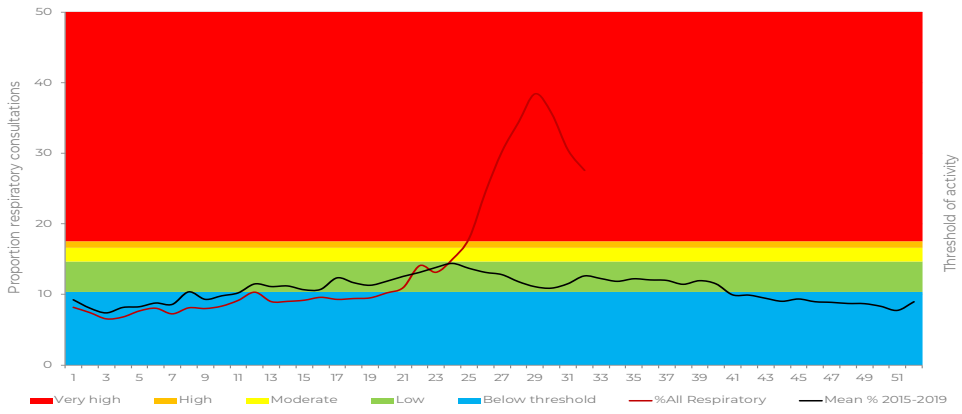
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

ALL AGES

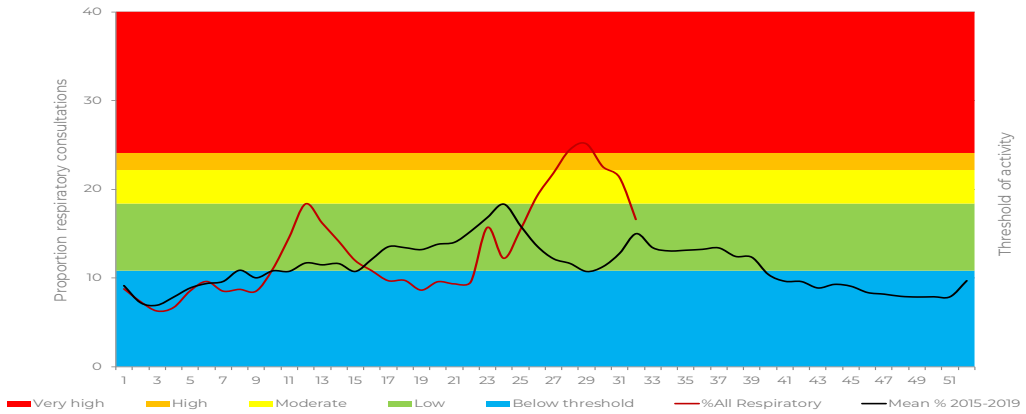
All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients



All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners

B) Casualty



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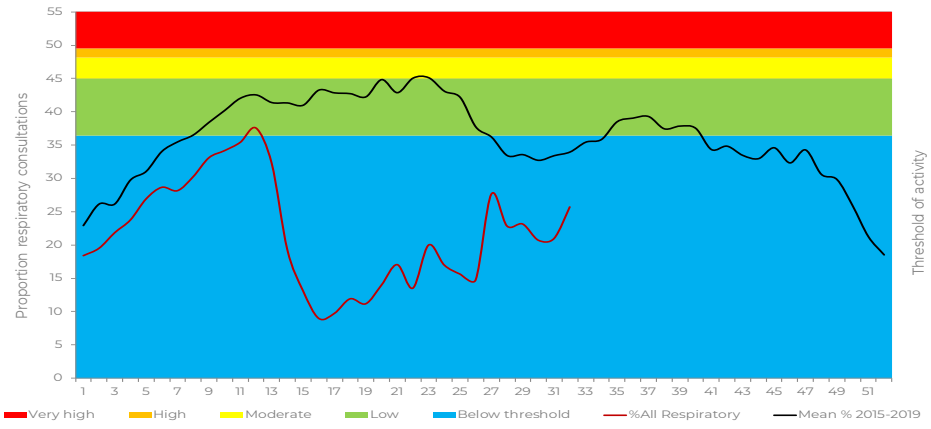
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

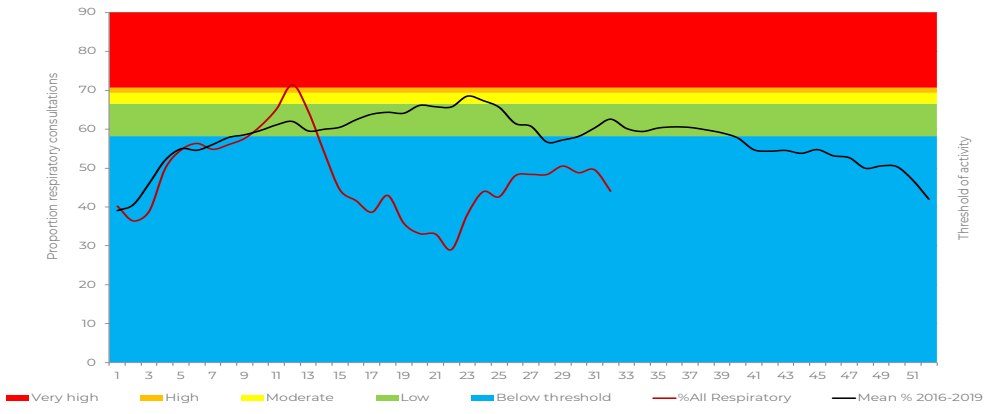
0-4 YEARS OF AGE

All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients



All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners



B) Casualty

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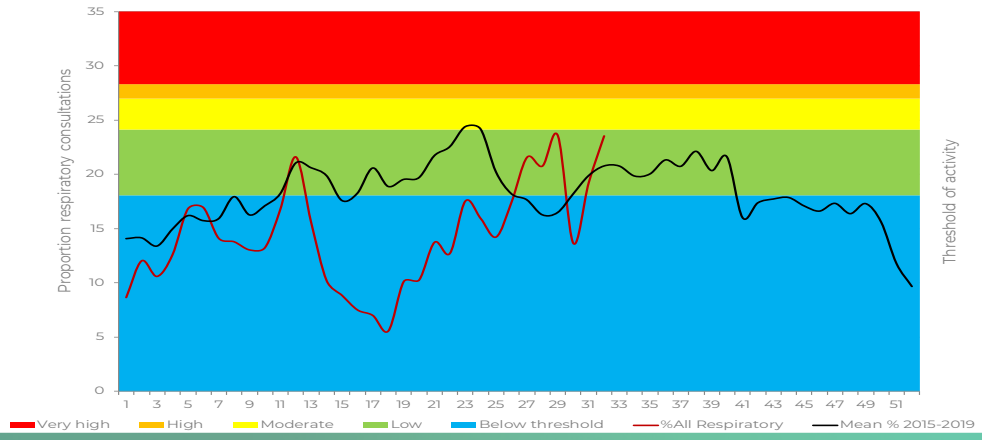
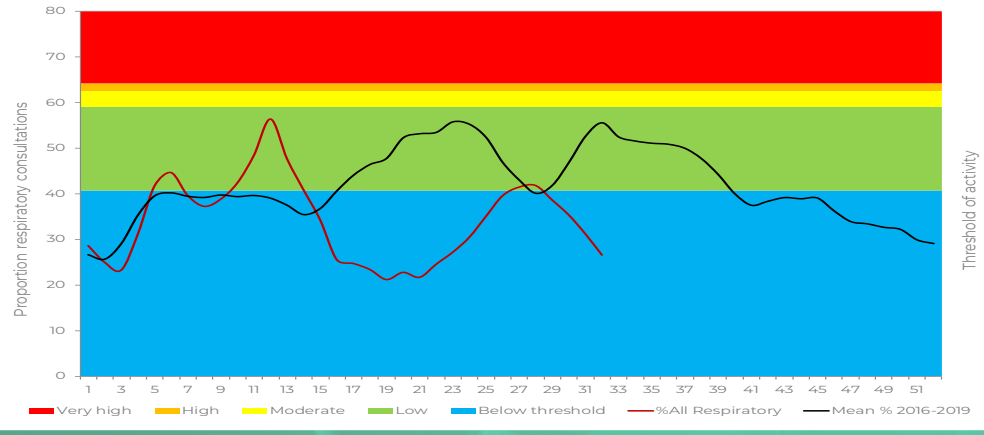
5-19 YEARS OF AGE

All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients

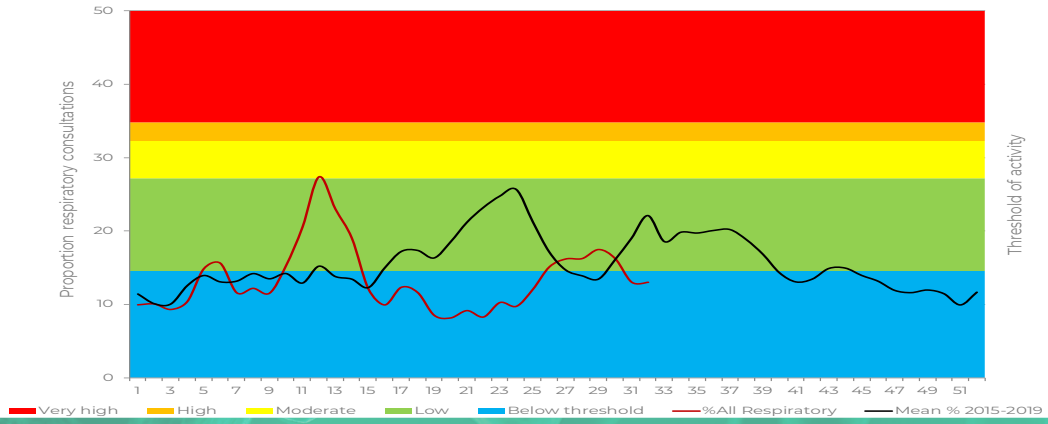


All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners



B) Casualty



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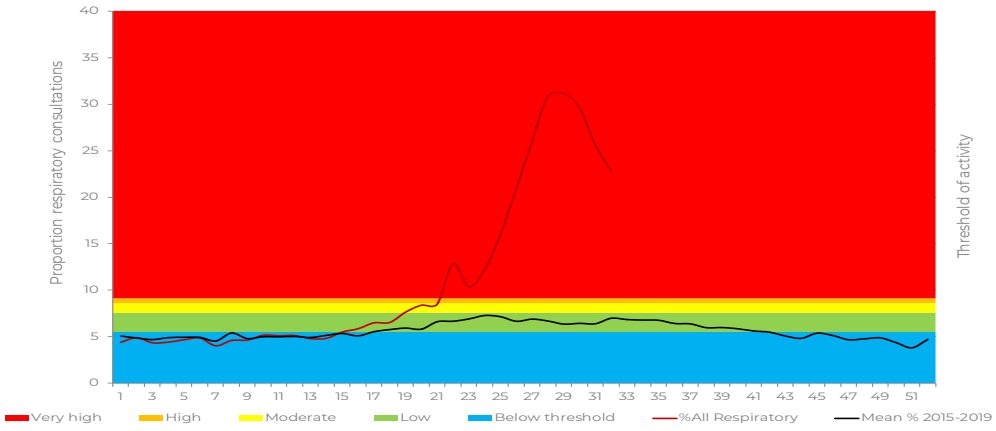
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

20-49 YEARS OF AGE

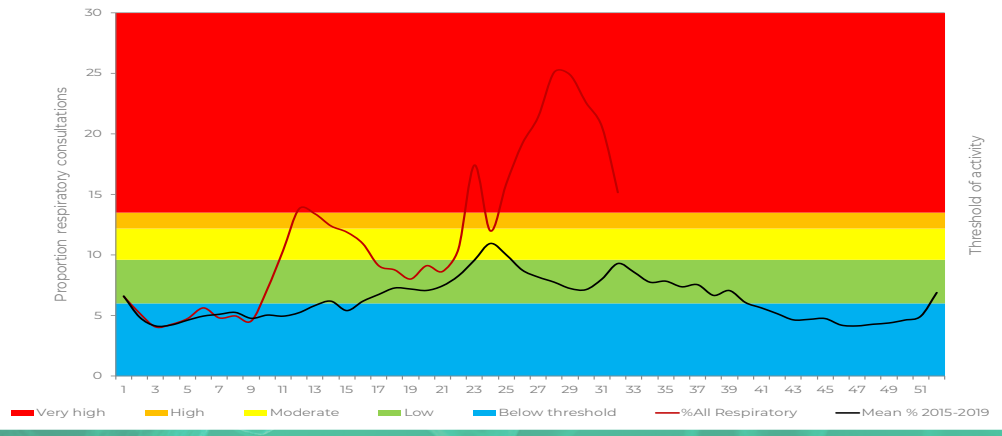
All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients



All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners

B) Casualty



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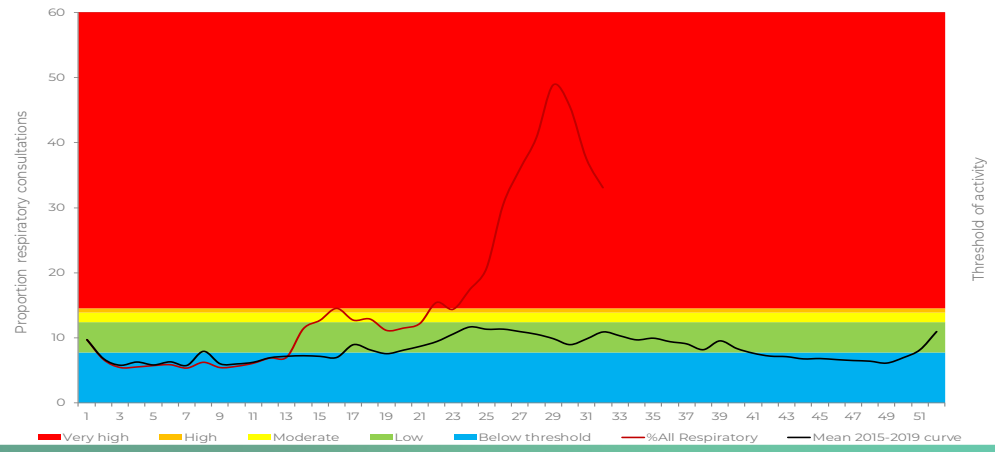
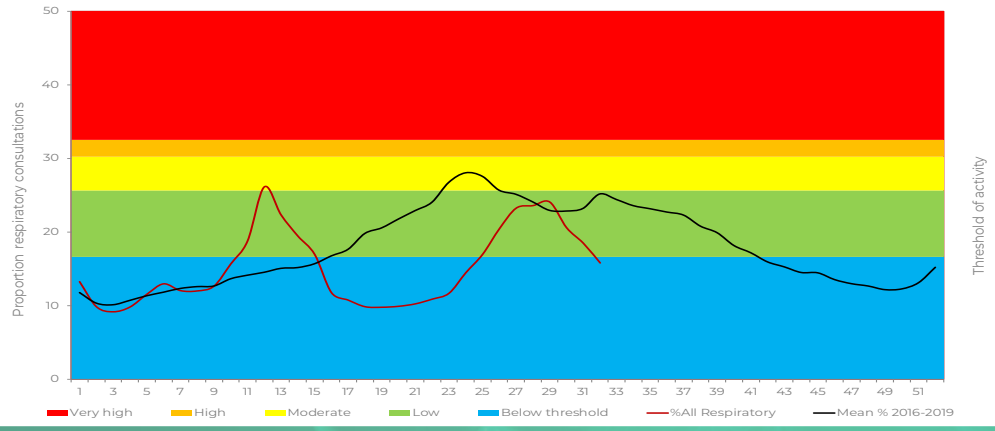
≥50 YEARS OF AGE

All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients

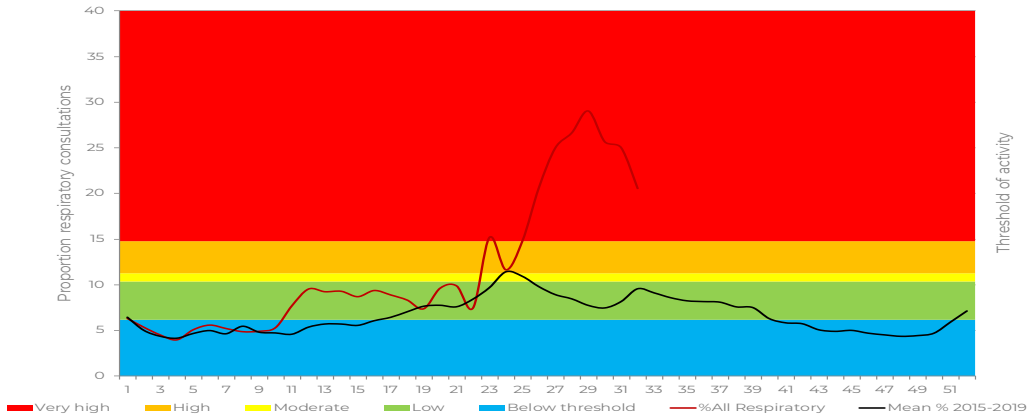


All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners



B) Casualty



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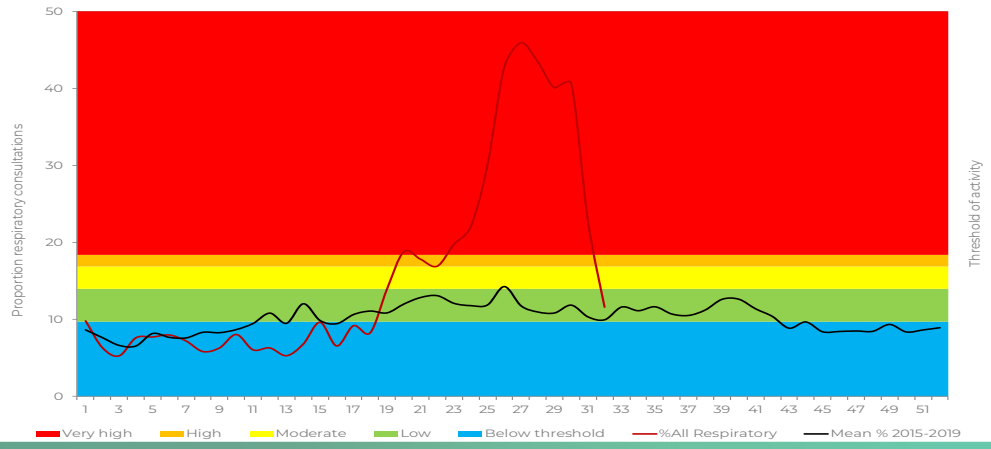
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

EASTERN CAPE PROVICE

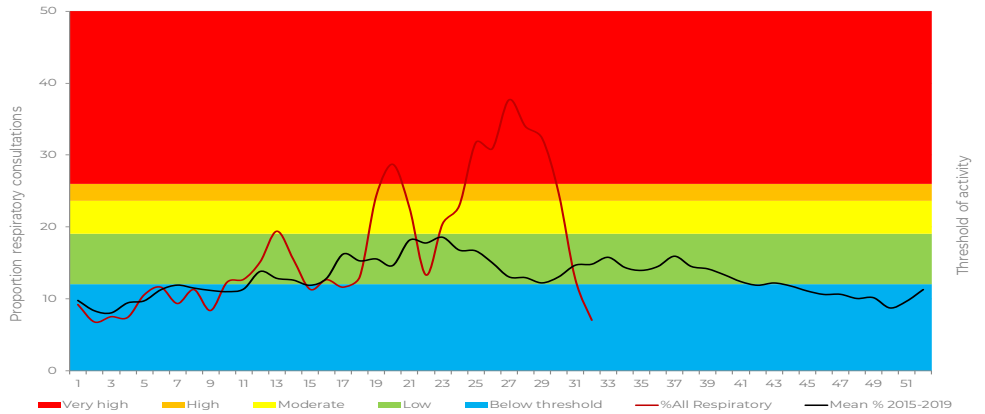
All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients



All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners

B) Casualty



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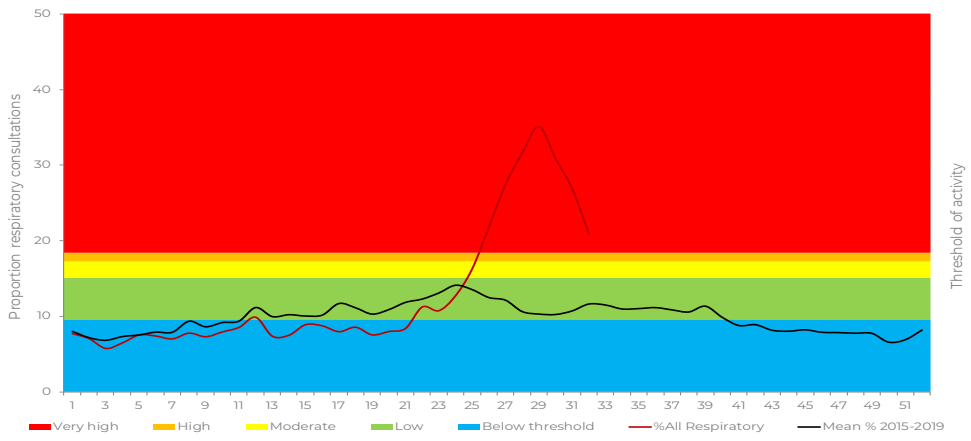
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

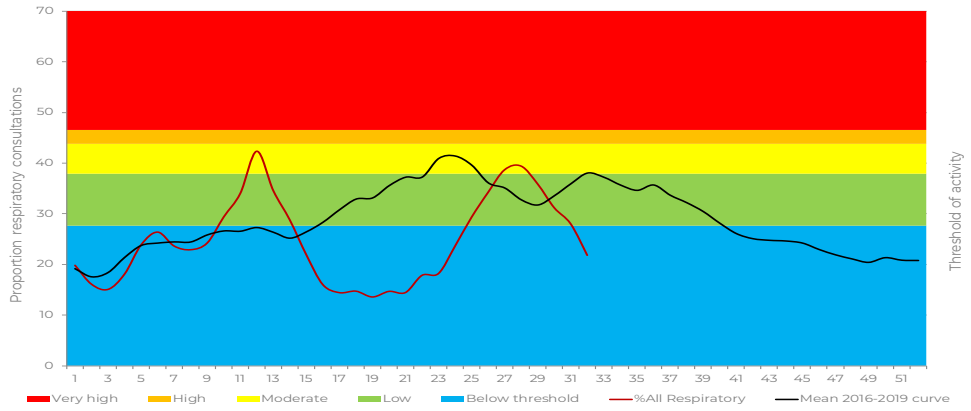
GAUTENG

All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients

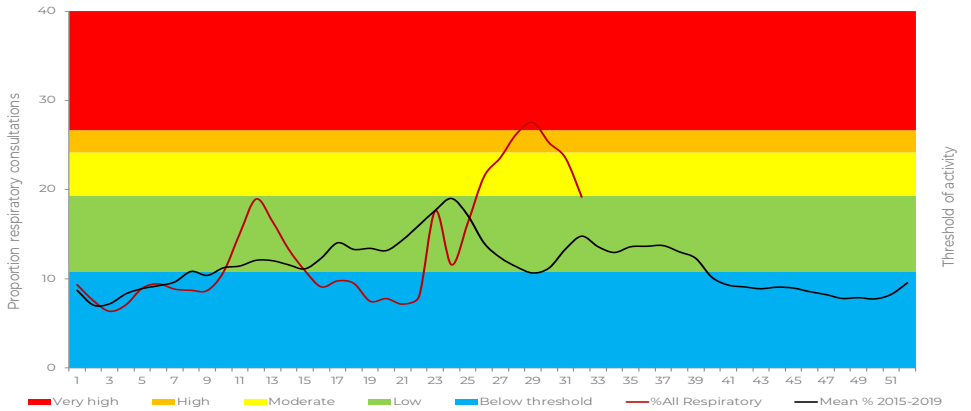


All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners



B) Casualty



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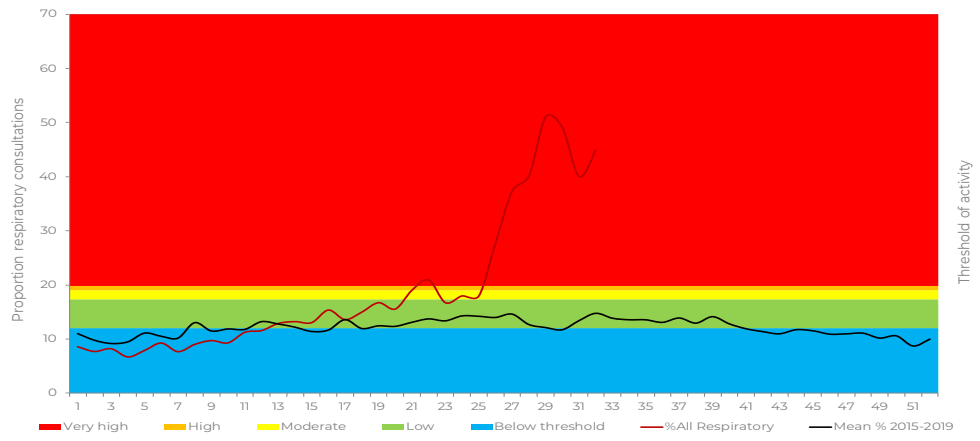
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

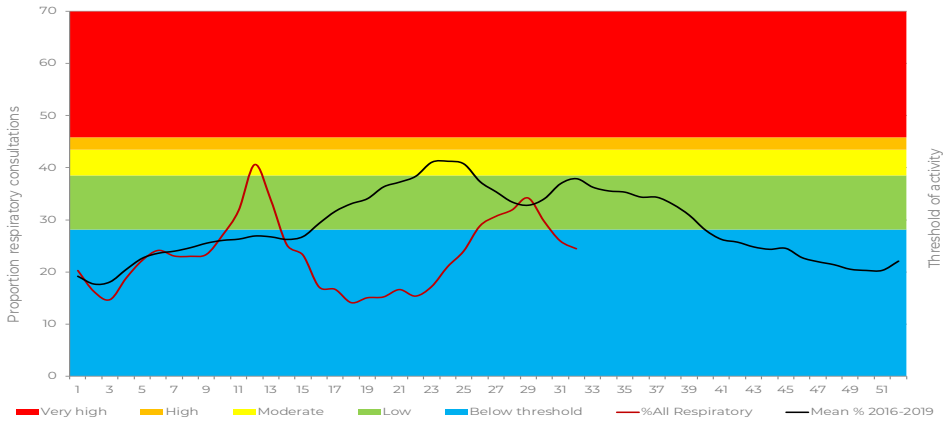
KWA ZULU NATAL

All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients

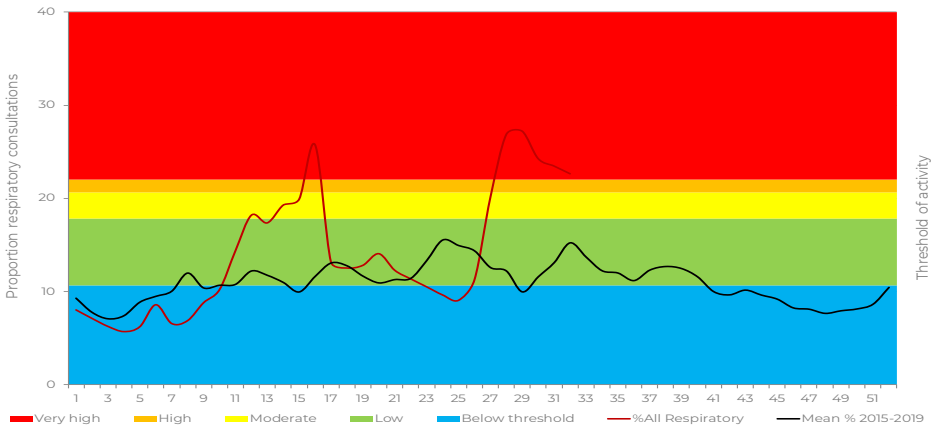


All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners



B) Casualty



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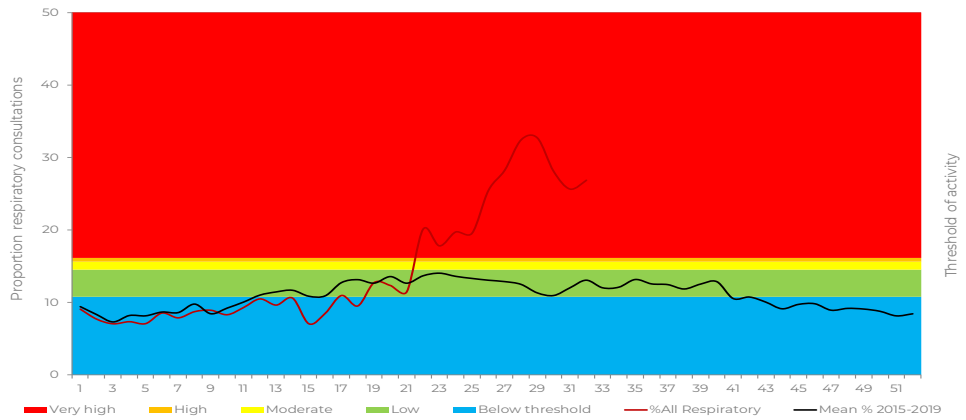
PRIVATE CONSULTATIONS SURVEILLANCE REPORT

WEEK **32** 2020

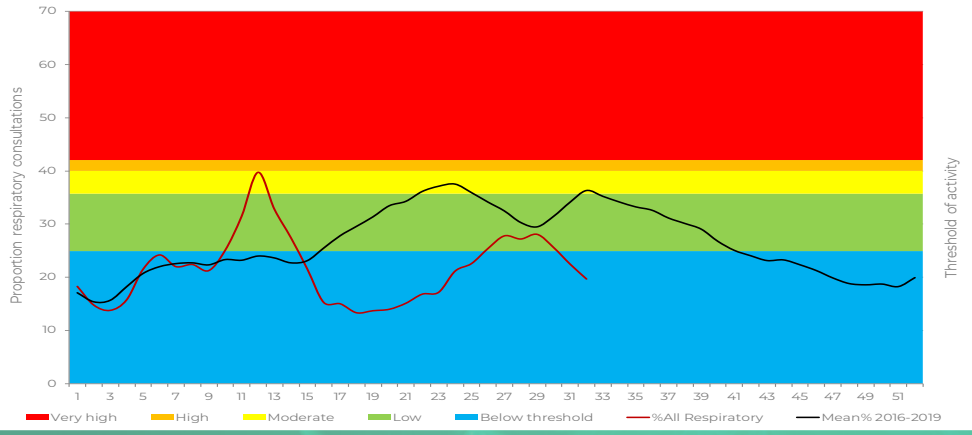
WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Inpatients



All Respiratory including confirmed or suspected COVID-19 (J00-J99 & U07) indicators – Outpatients

A) General Practitioners



B) Casualty

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