Public Health England

# Remote Health Advice

Syndromic Surveillance System: England

20 December 2017 | Year: 2017 | Week: 50

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## Key messages

**Data to: 17 December 2017**

During week 50 there was an increase in NHS 111 cold/flu calls, with increases particularly noted in the 45-64 years age group (figures 2, & 2a).

A Cold Watch System operates in England from 1 November to 31 March each year. As part of the Public Health England Cold Weather Plan for England the PHE Real-time Syndromic Surveillance Team will be monitoring the impact of cold weather on syndromic surveillance data during this period.
Cold weather alert level (current reporting week): **Level** 2 Alert & readiness / 3 Severe weather action
http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/coldweatheralert/

## Syndromic indicators at a glance:

| Indicator | Trend | Level * |
|---|---|---|
| Cold/flu | increasing | below baseline levels |
| Fever | decreasing | below baseline levels |
| Cough | no trend | below baseline levels |
| Difficulty breathing | decreasing | below baseline levels |
| Sore throat | increasing | similar to baseline levels |
| Diarrhoea | no trend | below baseline levels |
| Vomiting | no trend | below baseline levels |
| Eye problems | increasing | similar to baseline levels |

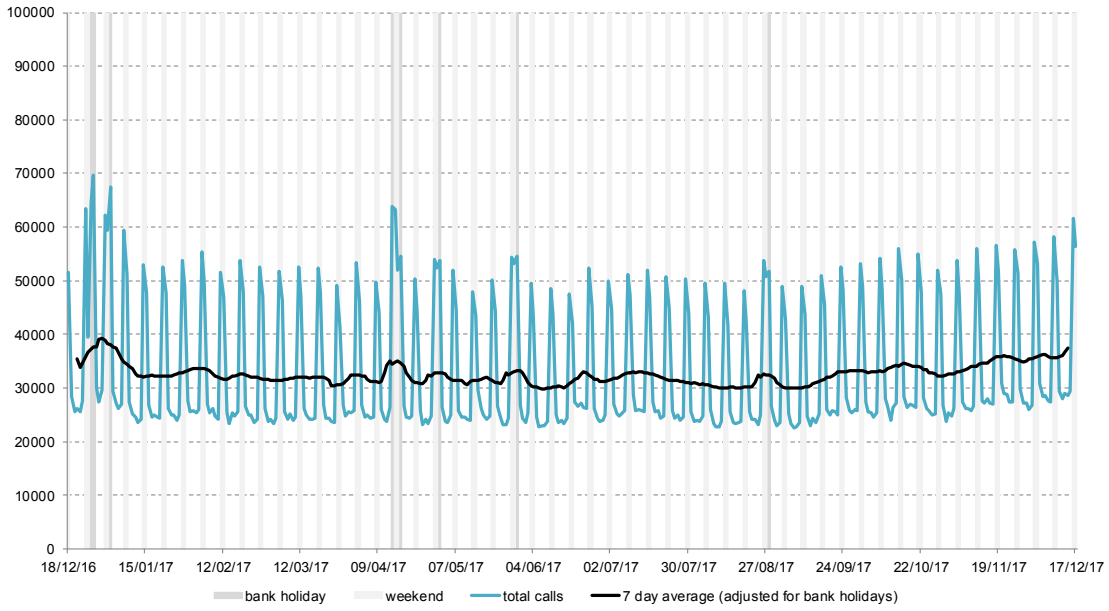
*Since week 47 2014 new baselines have been introduced for comparison with previous years. Baselines use historical data from the NHS Direct surveillance system to estimate seasonal trend but with levels adjusted to reflect changes since the switch to using NHS 111 data in September 2013.

## Data summary:

| Year | Week | Total calls |
|---|---|---|
| 2017 | 50 | 262,415 |

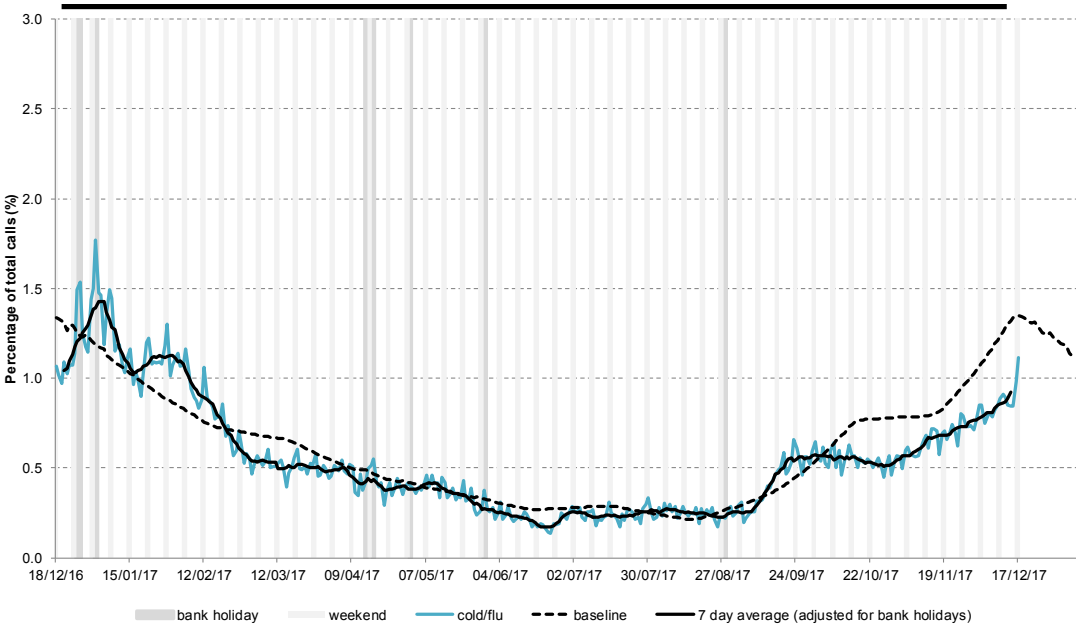
## 1: Total calls.

The total number of syndromic calls recorded each day by NHS 111.



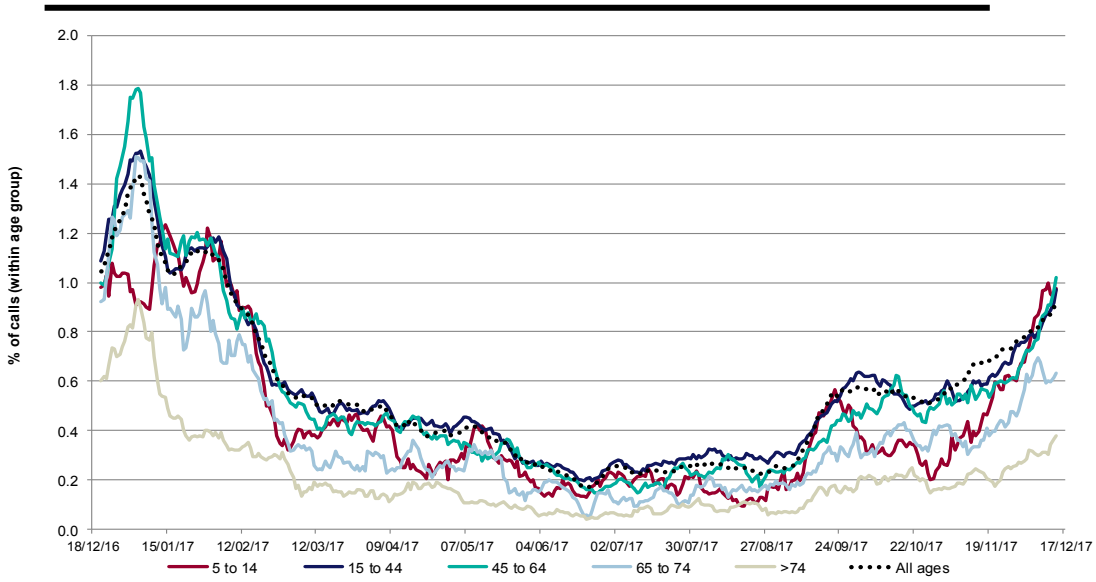

## 2: Cold/flu

Daily 'cold/flu' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.



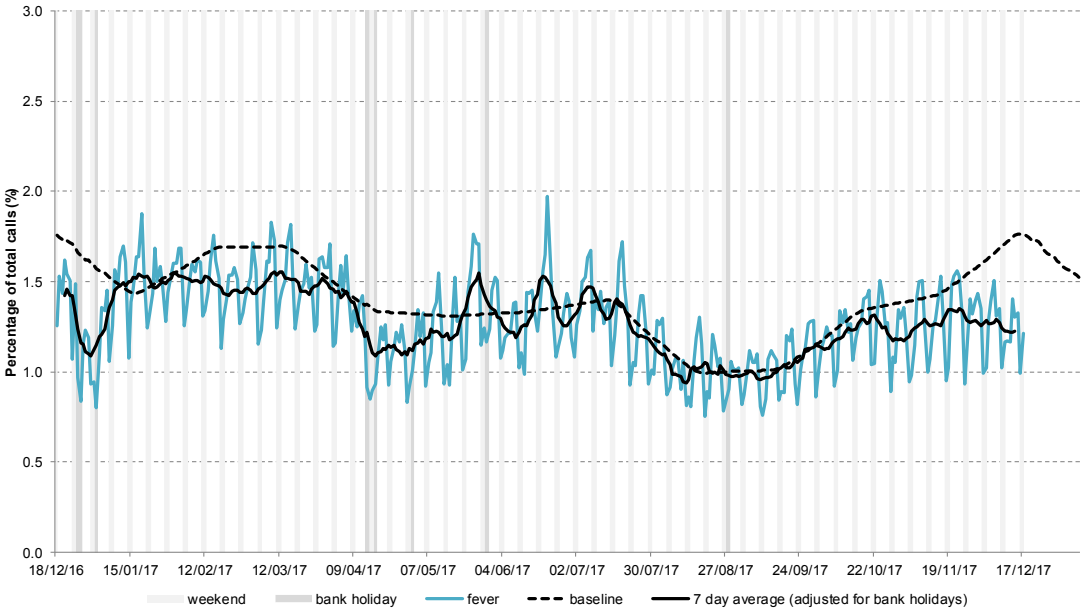

## 2a: Cold/flu calls by age group

Cold/flu calls as a percentage of total calls within each age group, shown as a 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays. Age groups below 5 years old, not shown.



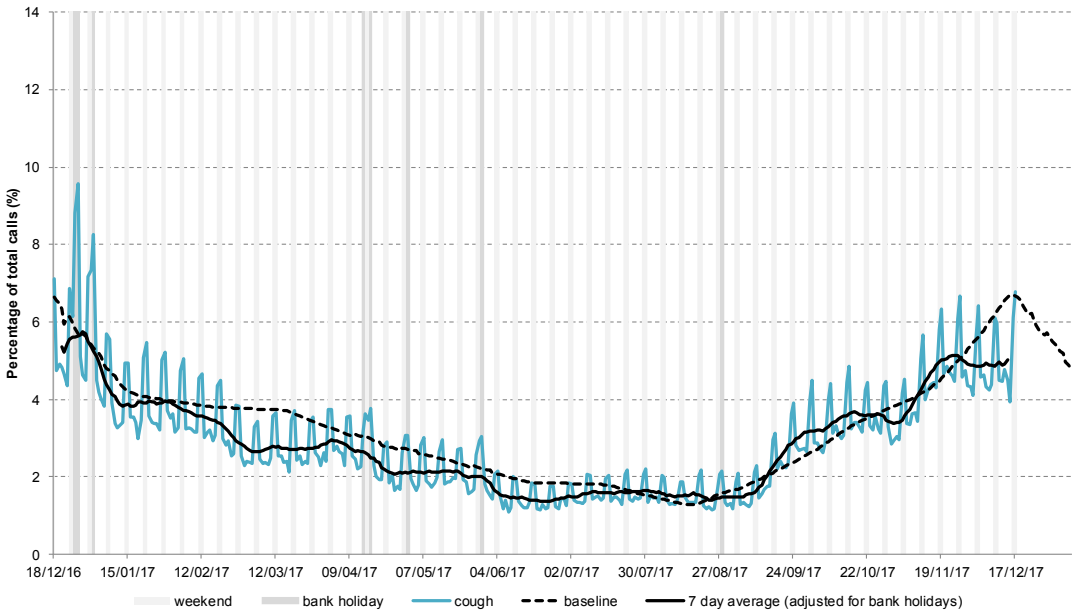
## 3: Fever

Daily 'fever' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.



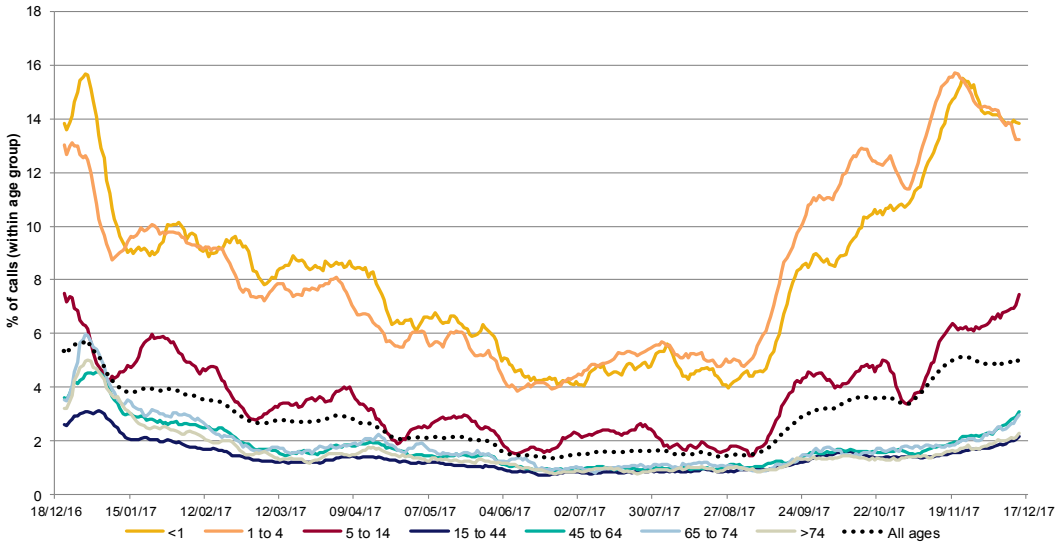

## 4: Cough

Daily 'cough' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.




## 4a: Cough calls by age group

Cough calls as a percentage of total calls within each age group, shown as a 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.



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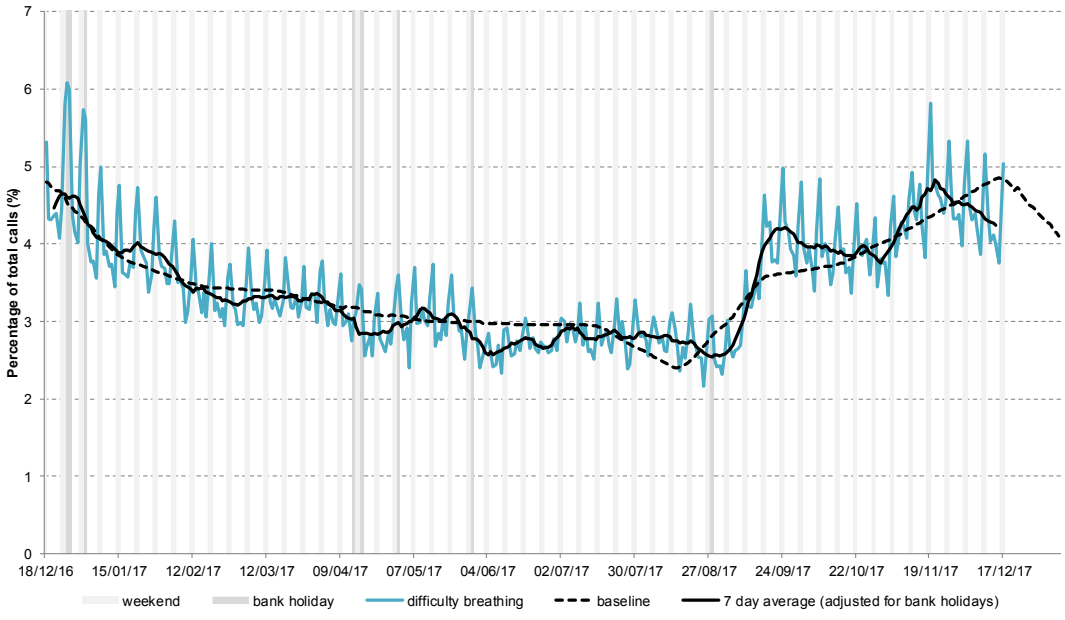
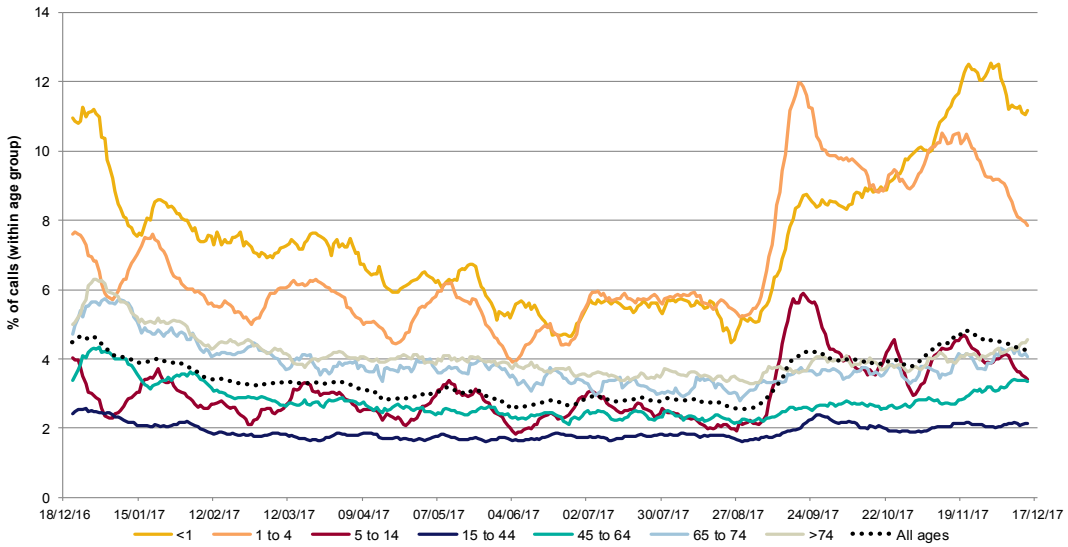
## 5: Difficulty breathing

Daily 'difficulty breathing' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.



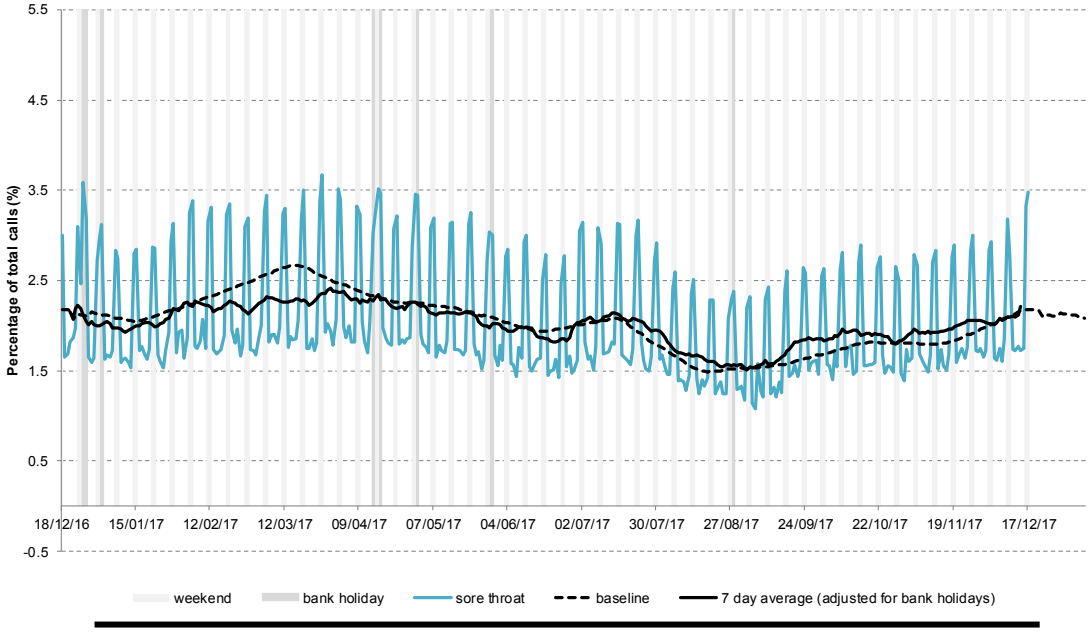

## 5a: Difficulty breathing calls by age group

Difficulty breathing calls as a percentage of total calls within each age group, shown as a 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.



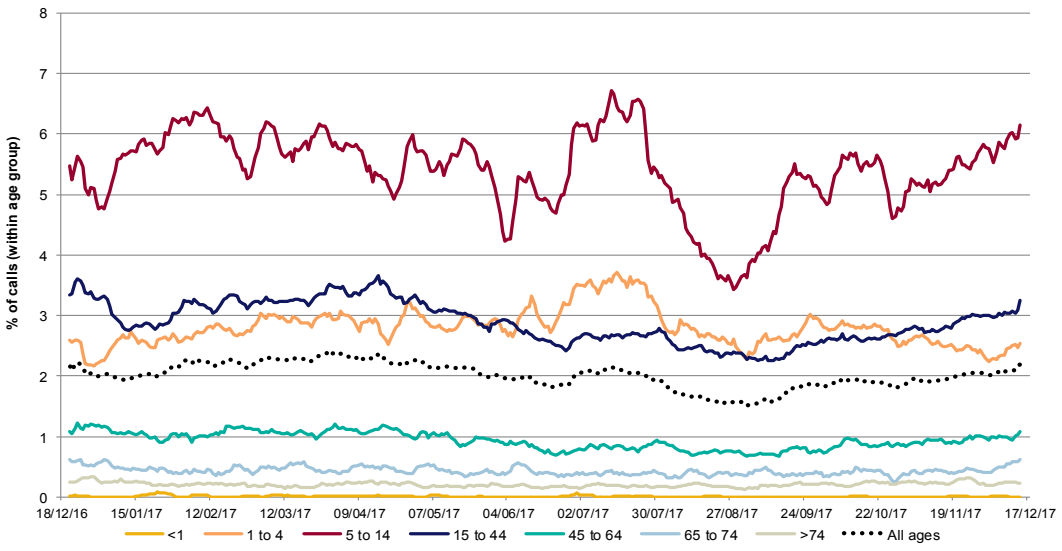
## 6: Sore throat

Daily 'sore throat' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.




## 6a: Sore throat calls by age group

Sore throat calls as a percentage of total calls within each age group, shown as a 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.

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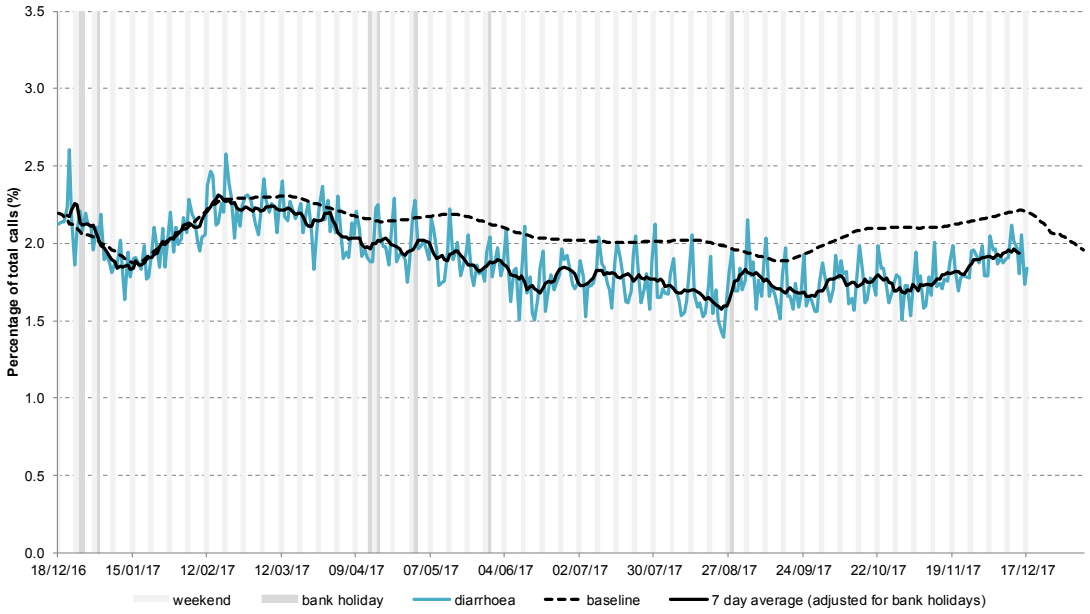
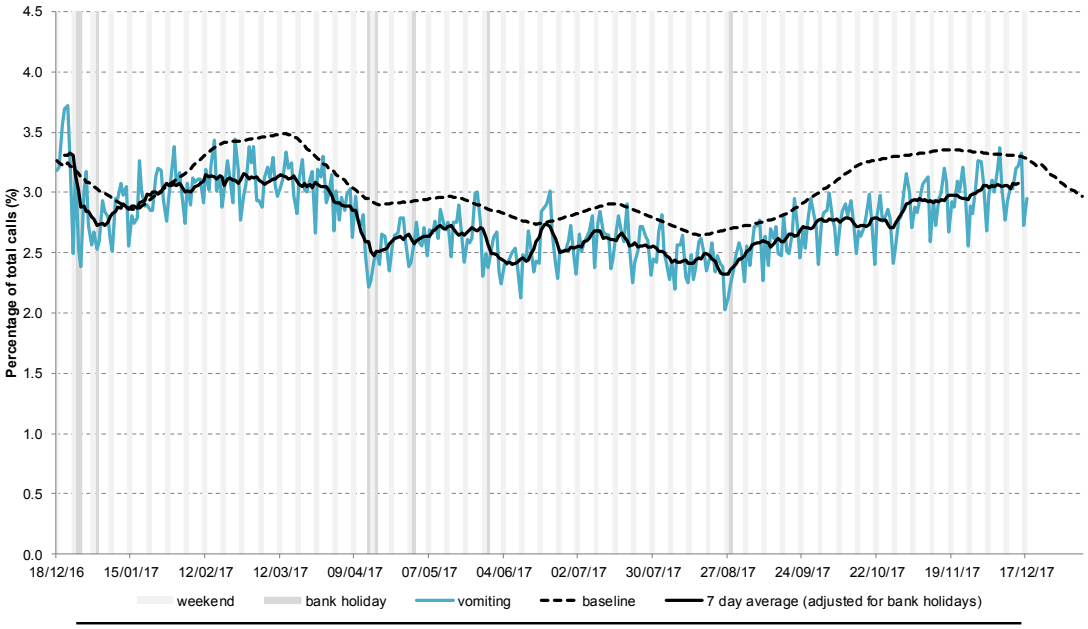
## 7. Diarrhoea

Daily 'diarrhoea' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.



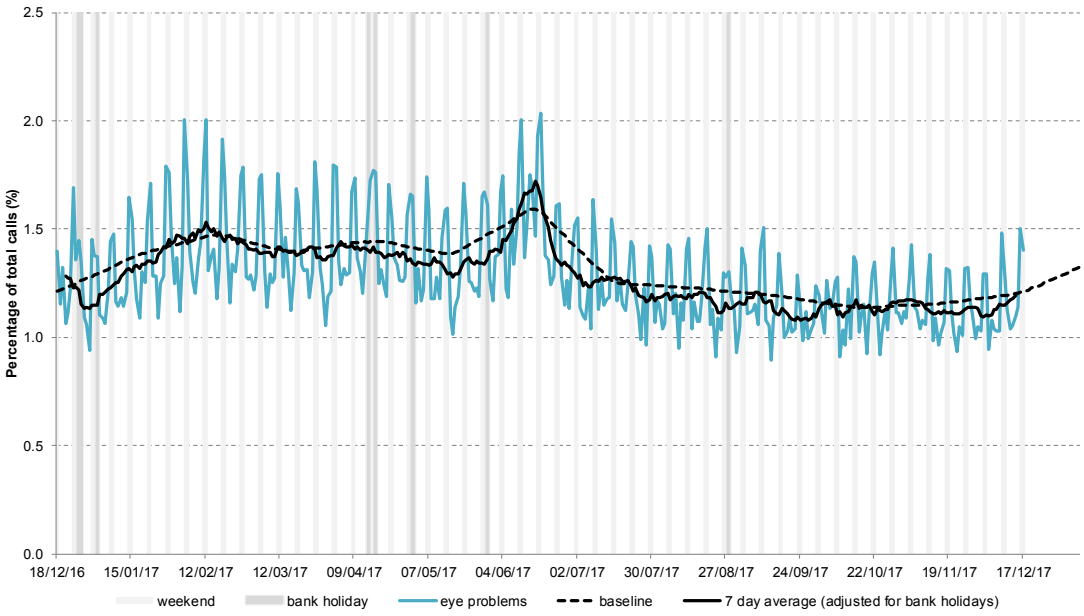

## 8: Vomiting

Daily 'vomiting' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.



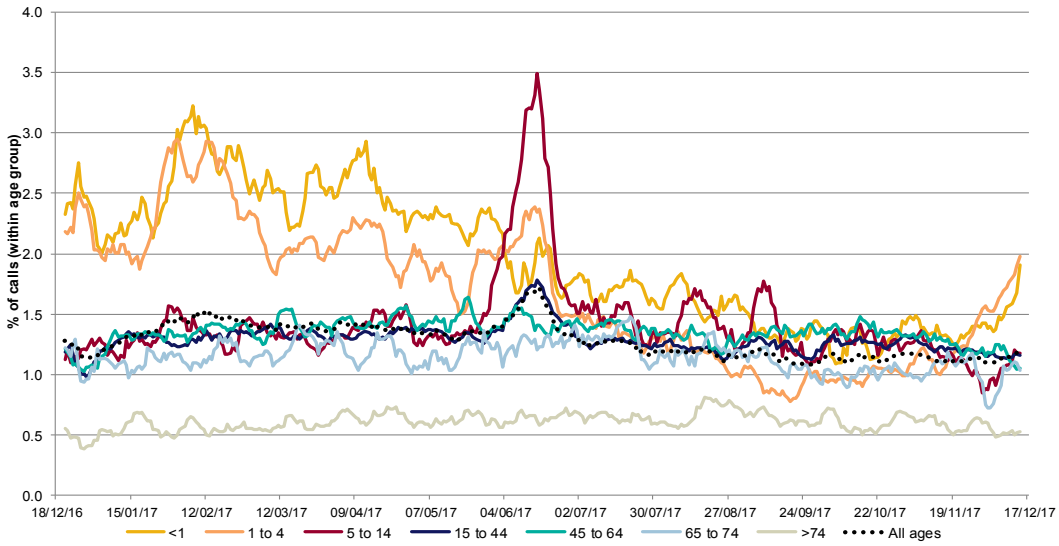

## 9: Eye problems

Daily 'eye problems' calls as a percentage of total calls. Baselines are constructed from historical data since 2010, including data from NHS 111 and NHS Direct.



## 9a: Eye problems by age group

Eye problems calls as a percentage of total calls within each age group, shown as a 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.

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**Introduction to charts:**

- Weekends and bank holidays are marked by vertical **grey** lines (bank holidays **darker grey**).
- A 7-day moving average (adjusted for bank holidays) is overlaid on the daily data reported in each chart, unless specified.
- Baselines represent seasonally expected levels of activity and are constructed from historical data. Furthermore, they take into account any known substantial changes in data collection, population coverage or reporting practices. Baselines are refreshed using the latest data on a regular basis.
- NHS 111 call data are analysed on a daily basis to identify national and regional trends. A statistical algorithm underpins each system, routinely identifying activity that has increased significantly or is statistically significantly high for the time of year. Results from these daily analyses are assessed by the ReSST, along with analysis by age group, and anything deemed of public health importance is alerted by the team.

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**Notes and further information:**

Further information about NHS 111 can be found at:

http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Emergencyandurgentcareservices/Pages/NHS-111.aspx

The Remote Health Advice Syndromic Surveillance bulletin can also be downloaded from the PHE Real-time Syndromic Surveillance website which also contains more information about syndromic surveillance:

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/syndromic-surveillance-systems-and-analyses

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**Acknowledgements:**

We are grateful to NHS 111 and to NHS Digital for their assistance and support in providing the anonymised call data that underpin the Remote Health Advice Syndromic Surveillance System.

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