



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

# **Remote Health Advice Syndromic Surveillance System Bulletin (England) 2024 Week 12**

## Key messages

### Data reported to: 24 March

During week 12 there was a continued small increase in NHS 111 cold/flu online assessments. Increases were also observed in NHS 111 calls for eye problems, in line with seasonally expected levels.

Please note that a further update to the NHS Pathways clinical system used by NHS 111 has affected levels of NHS 111 cold/flu and cough calls, particularly calls in children and selected regions. Cold/flu and cough call data presented in this report should therefore currently be interpreted with caution. Please see '[Notes and Caveats](#)' for further information.

## Syndromic indicators at a glance

**Table 1: The current trend (based on previous weeks, not only the current week) and the level (compared to the expected baseline), of each indicator included in this bulletin.**

| Indicator   | Trend <sup>1</sup>      | Level                            |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Total NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 1</b> )                 | No trend                | No baseline                      |
| Total NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 2</b> )                | Decreasing              | No baseline                      |
| Cold/flu NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 3</b> )              | No trend <sup>2</sup>   | Below baseline <sup>2</sup>      |
| Cold/flu NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 4</b> )             | Increasing              | Similar to baseline              |
| Fever NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 5</b> )                 | No trend                | Below baseline                   |
| Fever NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 6</b> )                | Decreasing              | Below baseline                   |
| Cough NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 7</b> )                 | Increasing <sup>2</sup> | Similar to baseline <sup>2</sup> |
| Cough NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 8</b> )                | Decreasing              | Above baseline                   |
| Difficulty breathing NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 9</b> ) | Increasing              | Above baseline                   |
| Sore throat NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 10</b> )          | No trend                | Below baseline                   |
| Sore throat NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 11</b> )         | No trend                | Above baseline                   |
| Potential COVID-19 NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 12</b> )   | Decreasing              | No baseline                      |
| Potential COVID-19 NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 13</b> )  | No trend                | No baseline                      |
| Diarrhoea NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 14</b> )            | No trend                | Similar to baseline              |
| Diarrhoea NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 15</b> )           | No trend                | Above baseline                   |
| Vomiting NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 16</b> )             | No trend                | Similar to baseline              |
| Vomiting NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 17</b> )            | Decreasing              | Similar to baseline              |
| Eye problems NHS 111 calls ( <b>Figure 18</b> )         | Increasing              | Similar to baseline              |
| Eye problems NHS 111 online ( <b>Figure 19</b> )        | No trend                | Similar to baseline              |

<sup>1</sup> trend reports on the trend seen over most recent and earlier weeks

<sup>2</sup> see [Notes and Caveats](#) for information about changes to cold/flu and cough calls

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## About this syndromic surveillance system

This bulletin presents data from the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) remote health advice syndromic surveillance system.

Syndromic surveillance can be used to:

- assess current trends
- assess current trends and levels compared to historical baselines
- compare trends between age groups/areas

Syndromic surveillance should not be used to:

- estimate total burden or number of 'cases' of a condition (see **Notes and caveats**)
- compare levels between age groups/areas

Fully anonymised, daily NHS 111 call and NHS 111 online assessment data are analysed and reported here, to identify and describe trends for a variety of syndromic indicators:

- syndromic indicators include groupings such as cold/flu, fever and diarrhoea
- syndromic indicators are based on:
  - symptoms (known as the Symptom Group or Pathway) identified from both NHS 111 calls and NHS 111 online assessments respectively
  - the potential COVID-19 syndromic indicator is based on the Symptom Group in NHS 111 calls and the outcome (known as the Disposition), in NHS 111 online (rather than the Pathway)
- **Key messages** describes any notable trends nationally (England), by age group and/or by geographical area (based on UKHSA Regions)
- the full list of syndromic indicators reported here, along with their current level and trend, are summarised in **Table 1**
- charts are provided for each syndromic indicator on a national basis, by age group and by geographical area (UKHSA Region). Each chart includes a year of data with:
  - 7-day moving averages (adjusted for weekends and bank holidays) to aid in the identification of trend
  - statistical baselines (where available) to aid in the assessment of level compared to historical expectations

For further information please see the **Notes and caveats** section.

Previous weekly bulletins from this system are available [here](#).

### Data quality issues of note this week

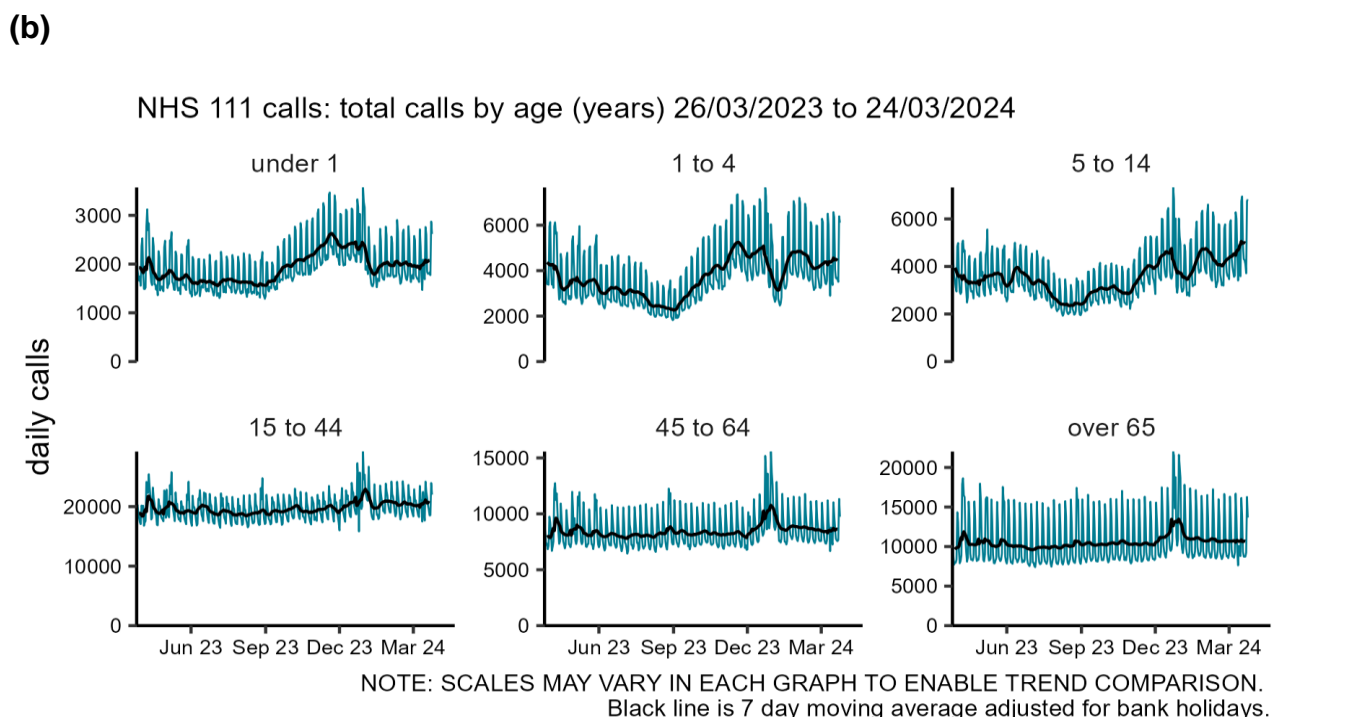
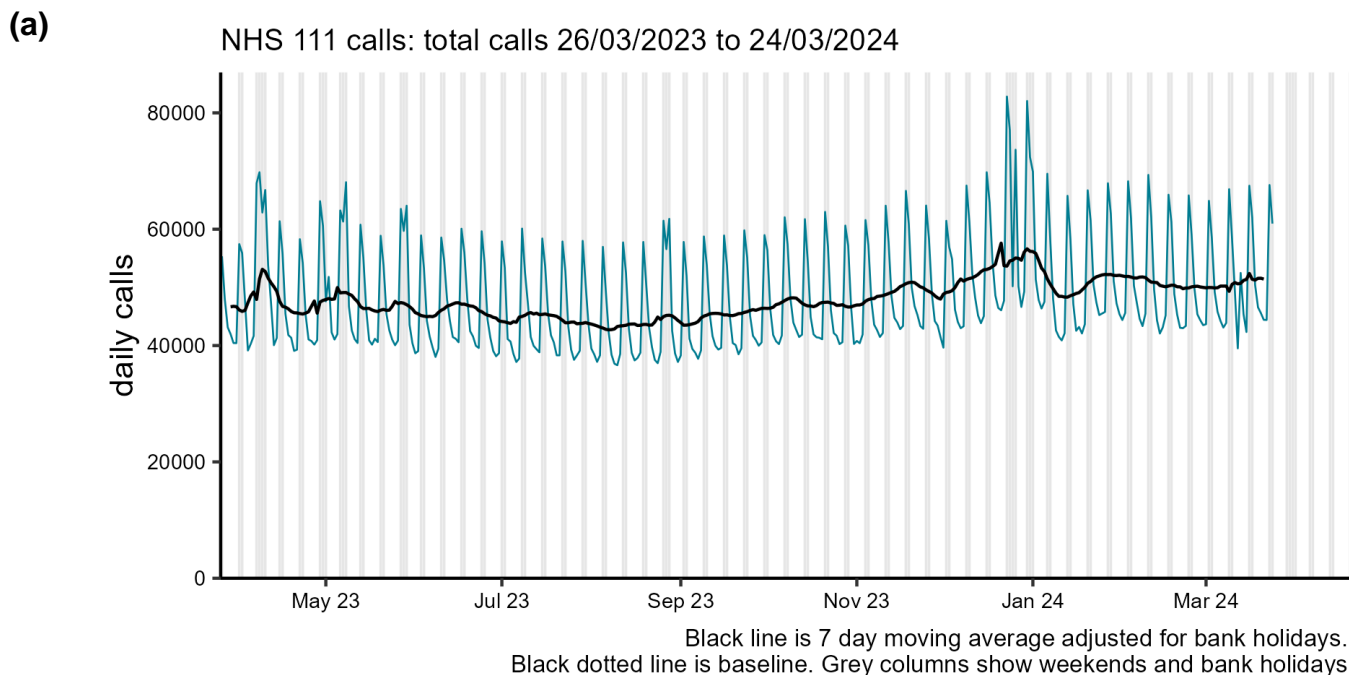
Please see the [Notes and Caveats](#) section about the current impact of newly released NHS Pathways system updates (NHS Pathways Release 41 and 42) on syndromic data reporting.

Technical problems at certain NHS 111 call providers affected call numbers during week 11, particularly in the West and East Midlands.

# Total contacts

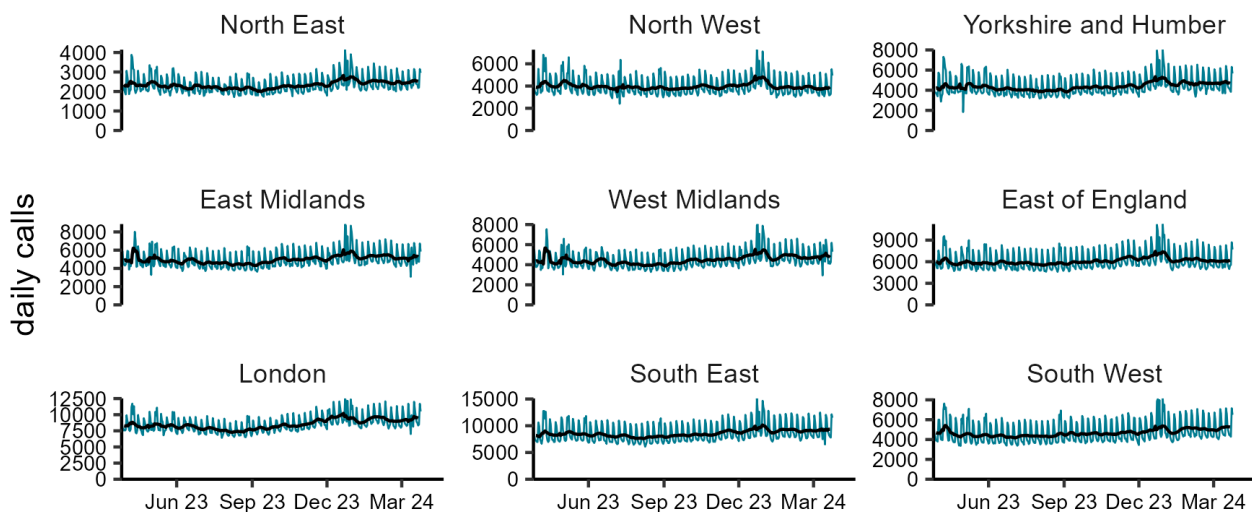
## NHS 111 calls

**Figure 1: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (with 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) recorded in this syndromic surveillance system in England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

NHS 111 calls: total calls by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



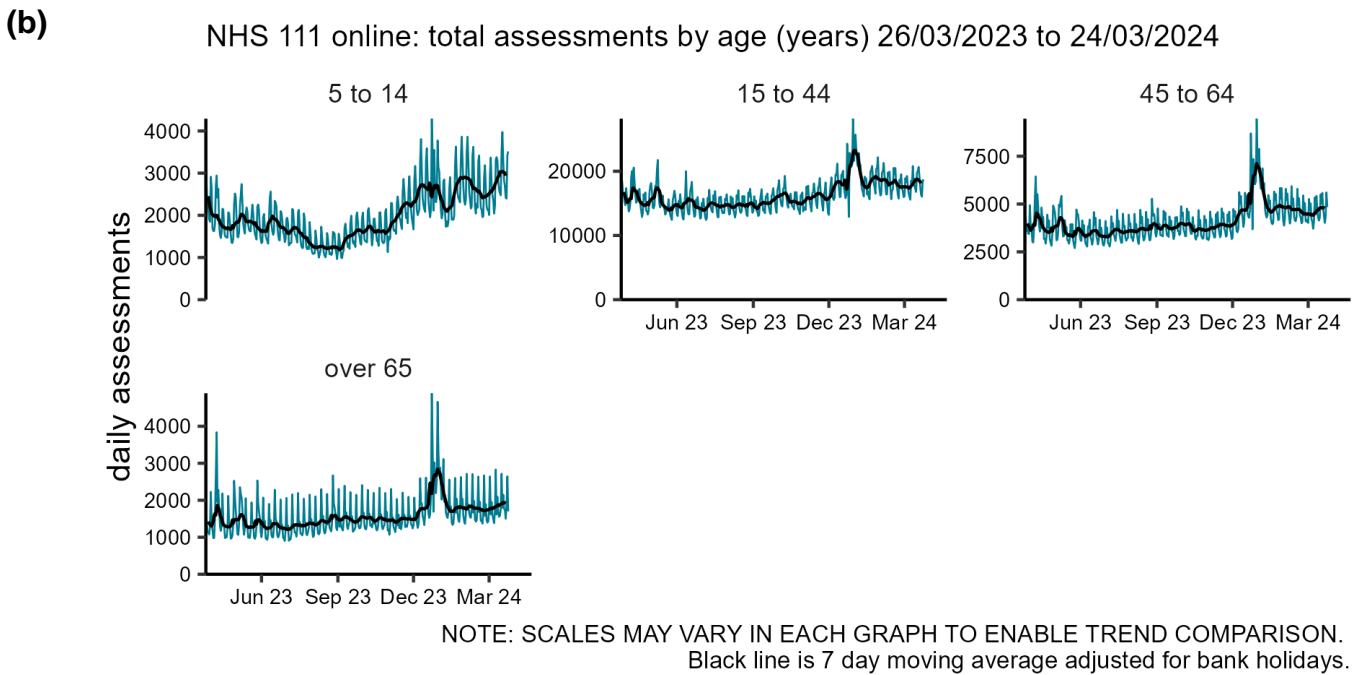
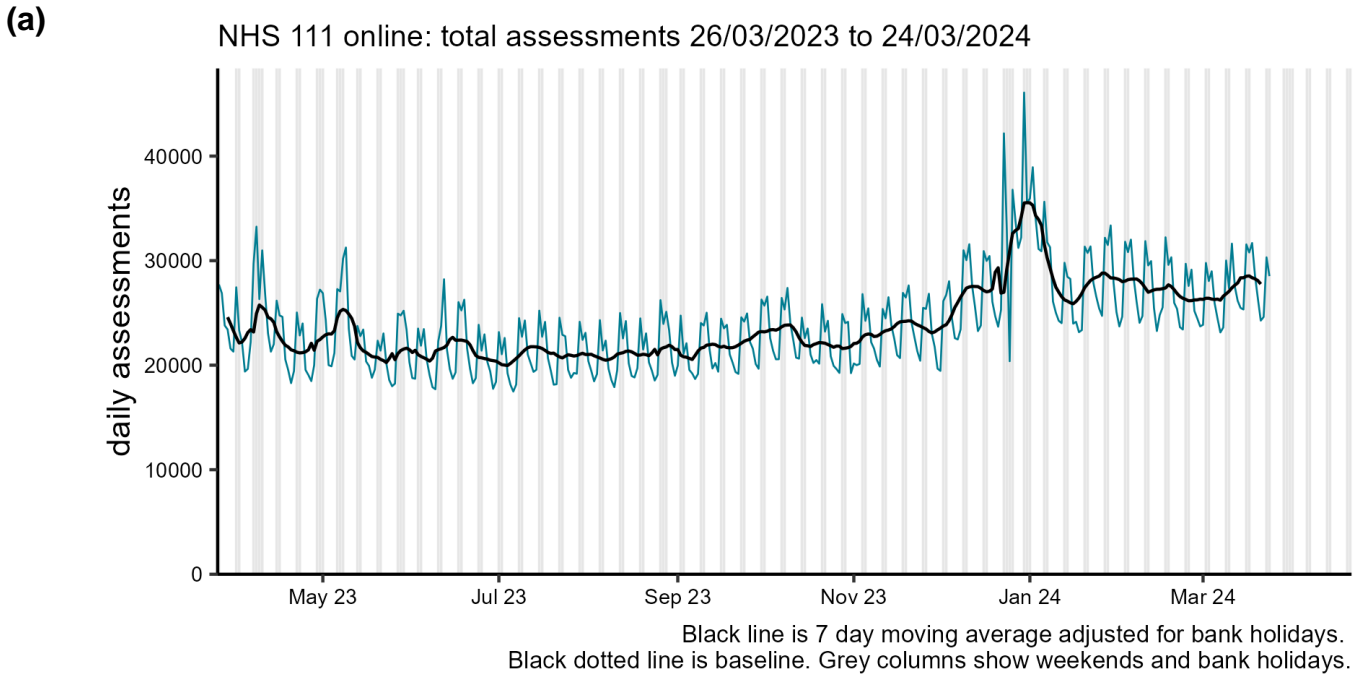
NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
 Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
 Black dotted line is baseline.

**Table 2: The number of NHS 111 calls in England recorded each day in the most recent week.**

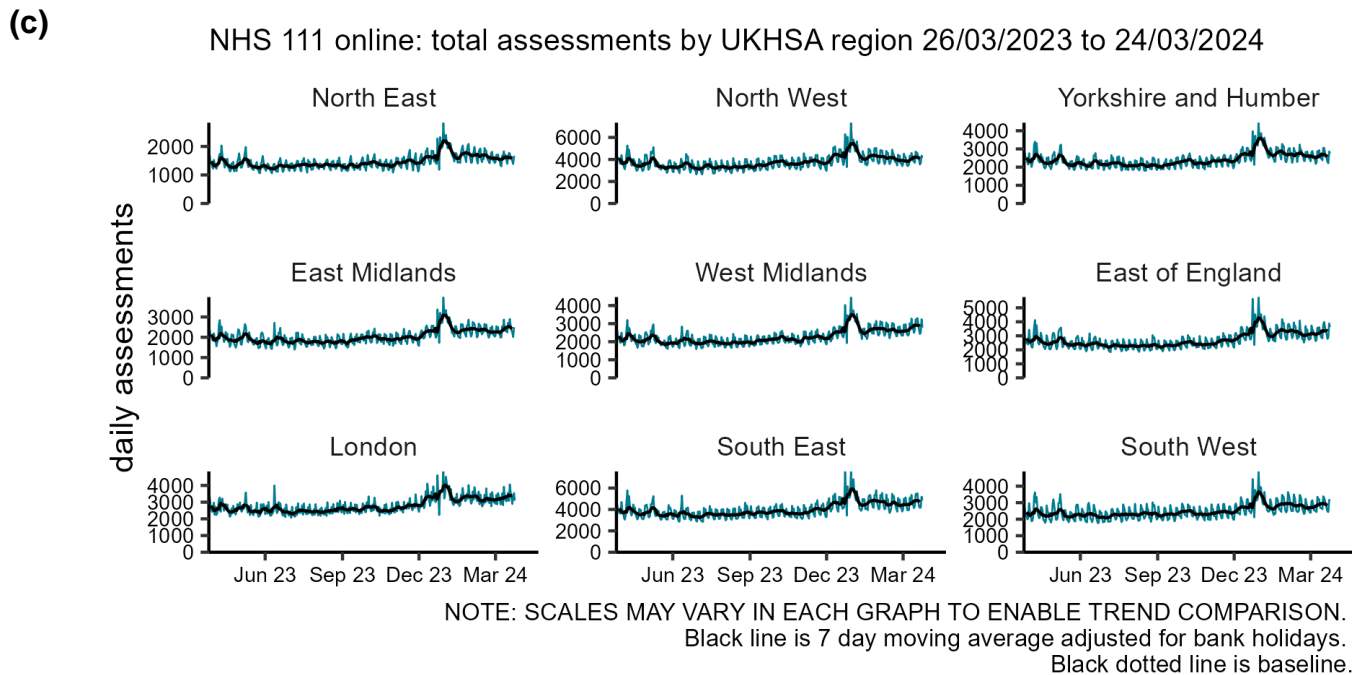
| Date          | Number of calls |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 18 March 2024 | 51,509          |
| 19 March 2024 | 47,400          |
| 20 March 2024 | 46,421          |
| 21 March 2024 | 45,190          |
| 22 March 2024 | 45,186          |
| 23 March 2024 | 68,882          |
| 24 March 2024 | 62,190          |

# NHS 111 online

**Figure 2: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (with 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) recorded in this syndromic surveillance system in England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**







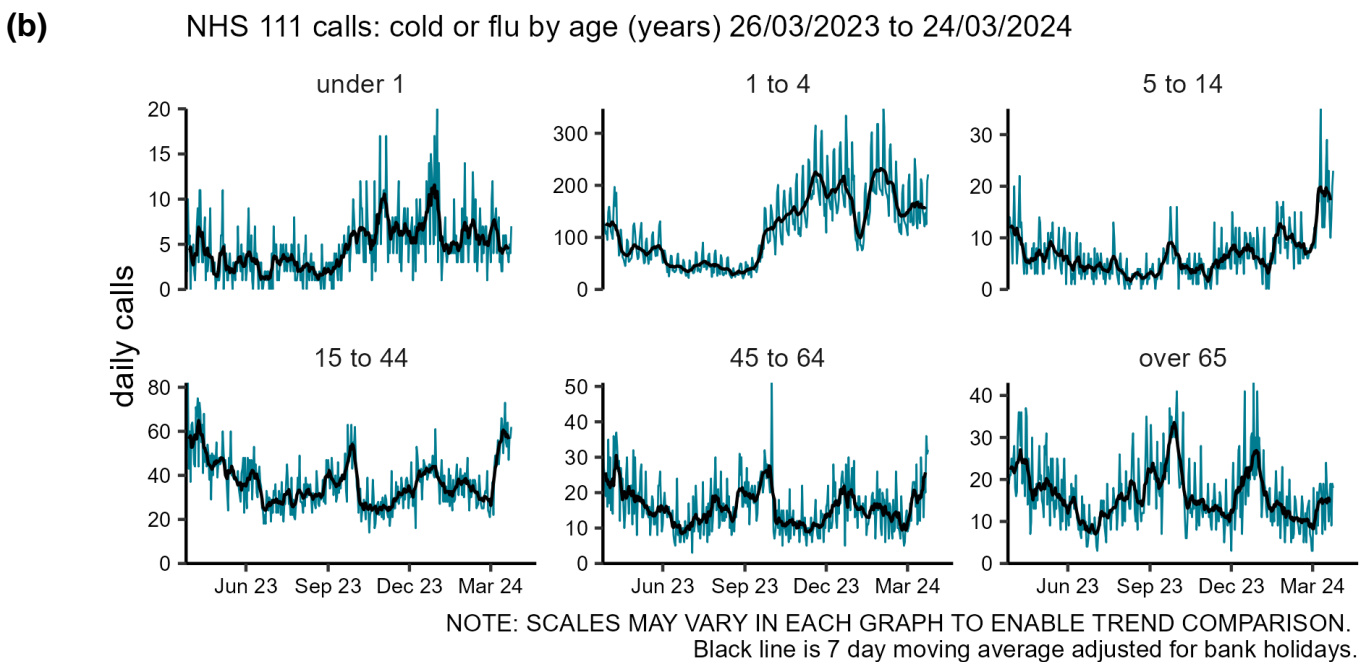
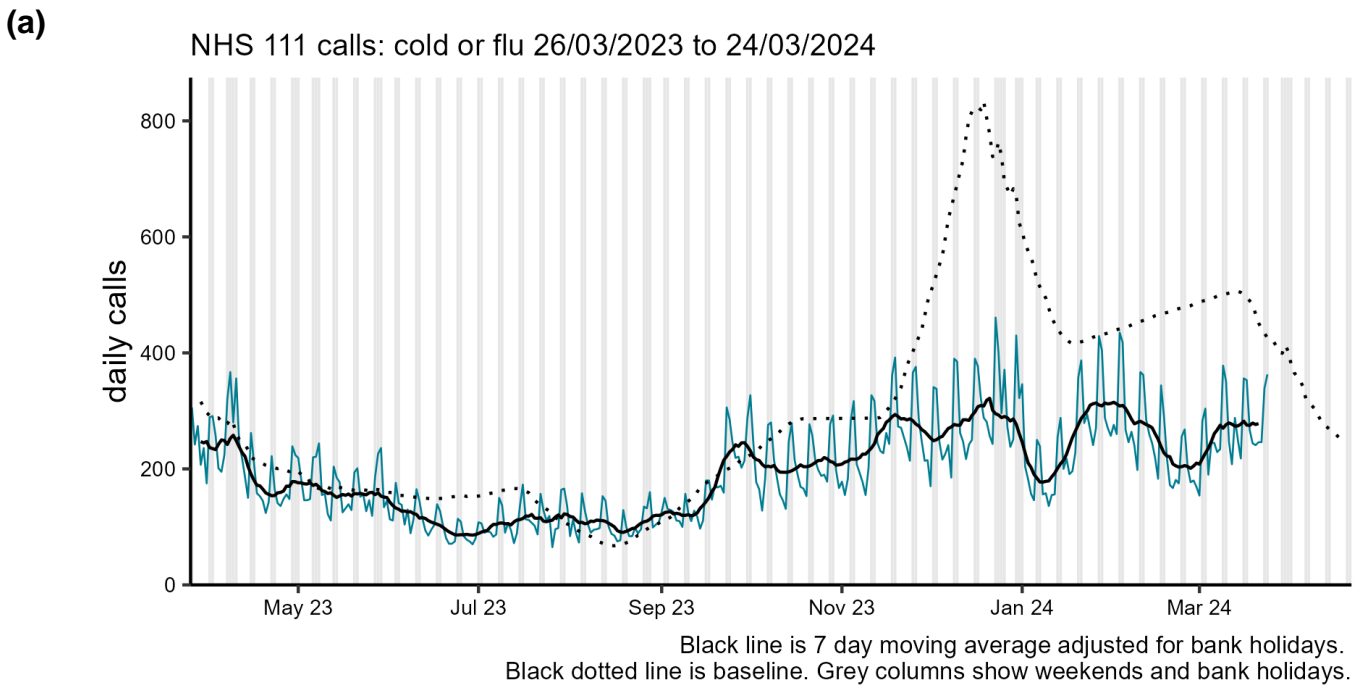
**Table 3: The number of completed NHS 111 online assessments in England recorded each day in the most recent week.**

| Date       | Number of completed assessments |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| 18/03/2024 | 30,186                          |
| 19/03/2024 | 27,091                          |
| 20/03/2024 | 25,025                          |
| 21/03/2024 | 23,055                          |
| 22/03/2024 | 23,504                          |
| 23/03/2024 | 28,898                          |
| 24/03/2024 | 26,811                          |

# Respiratory conditions

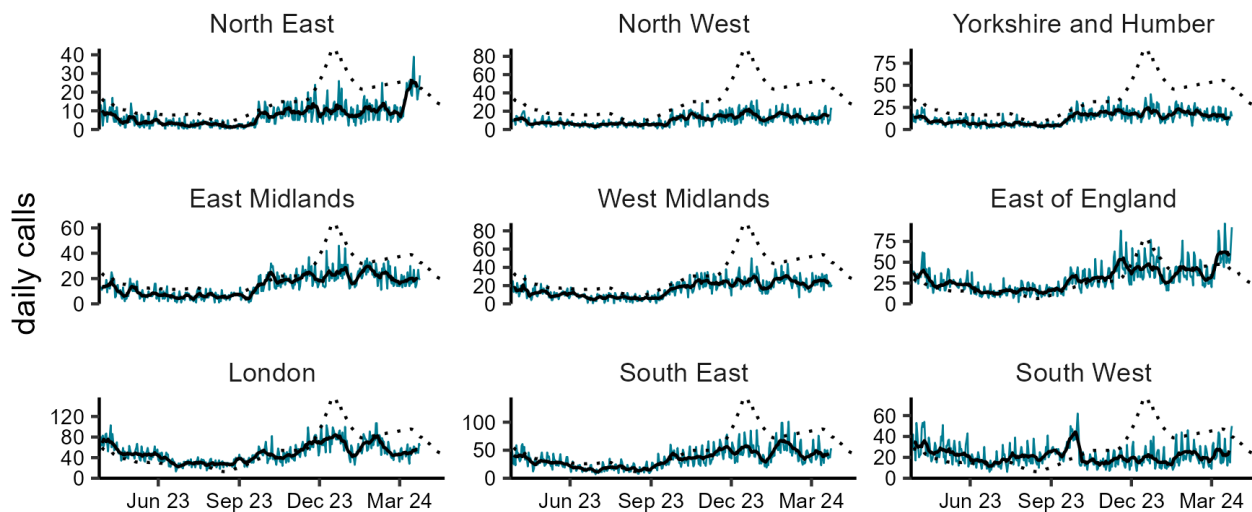
## Cold/flu NHS 111 calls

**Figure 3: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for cold/flu, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

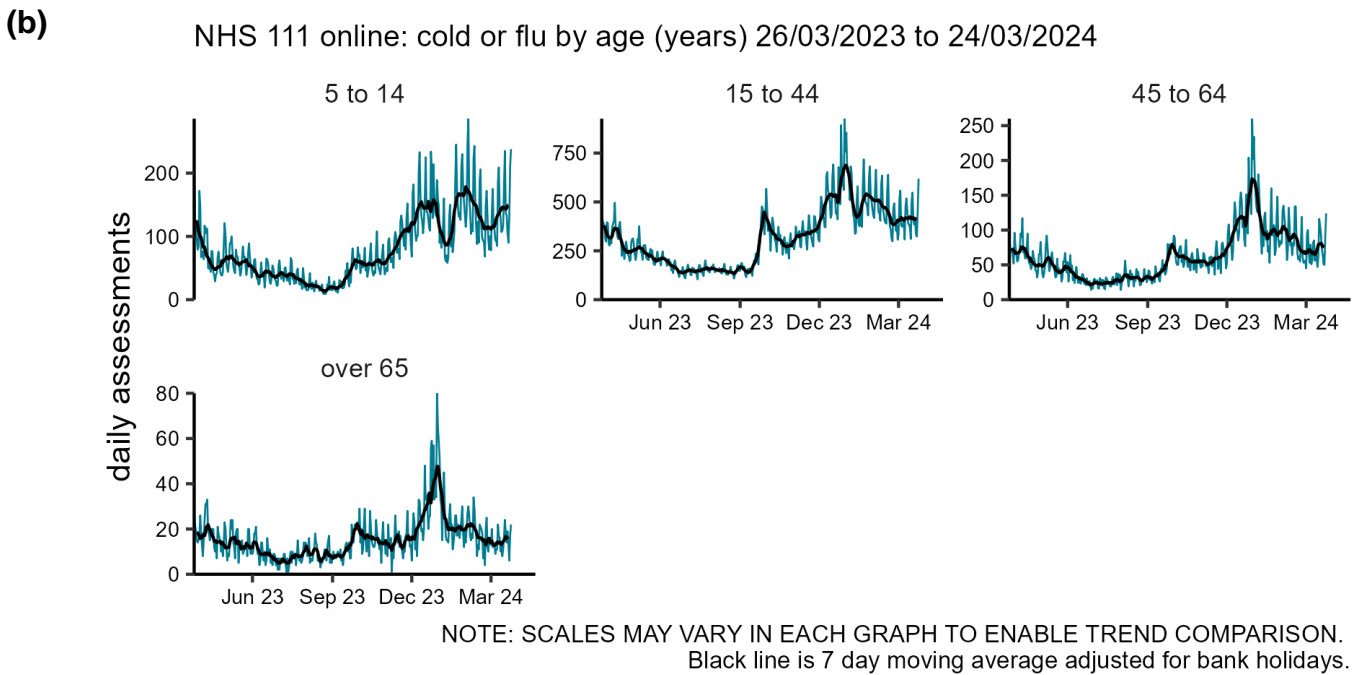
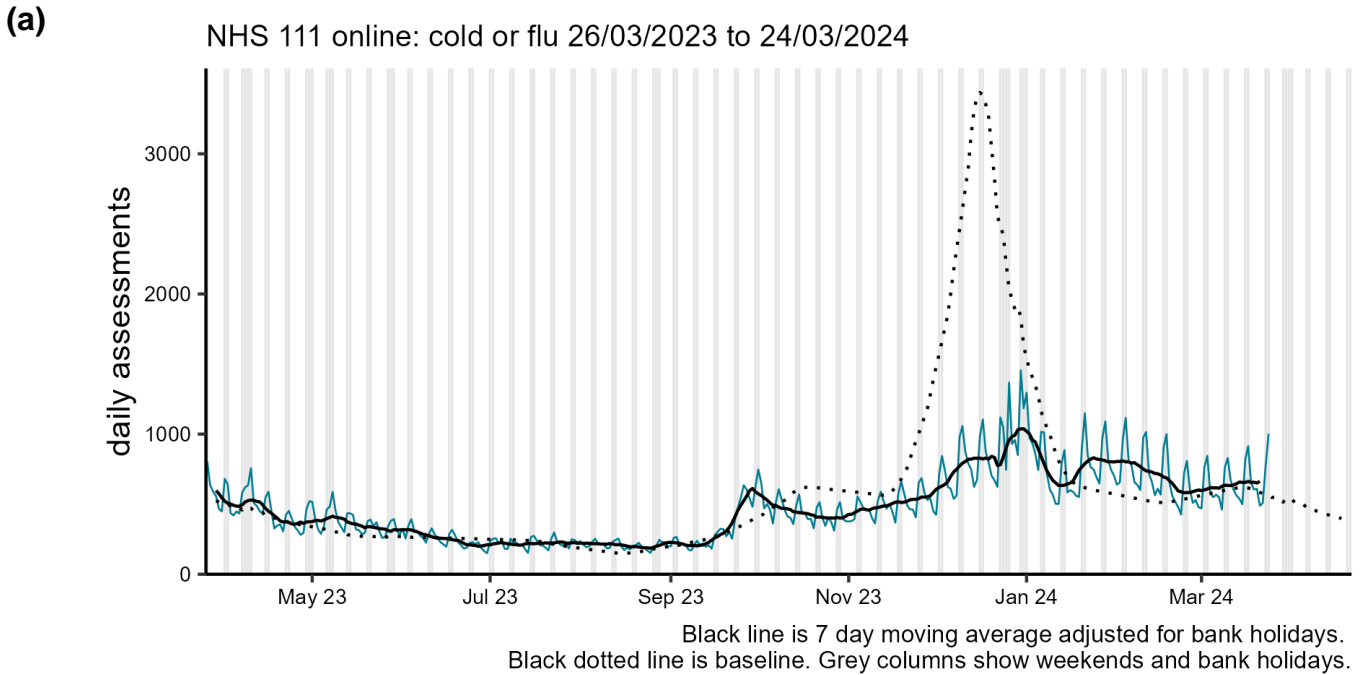
NHS 111 calls: cold or flu by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

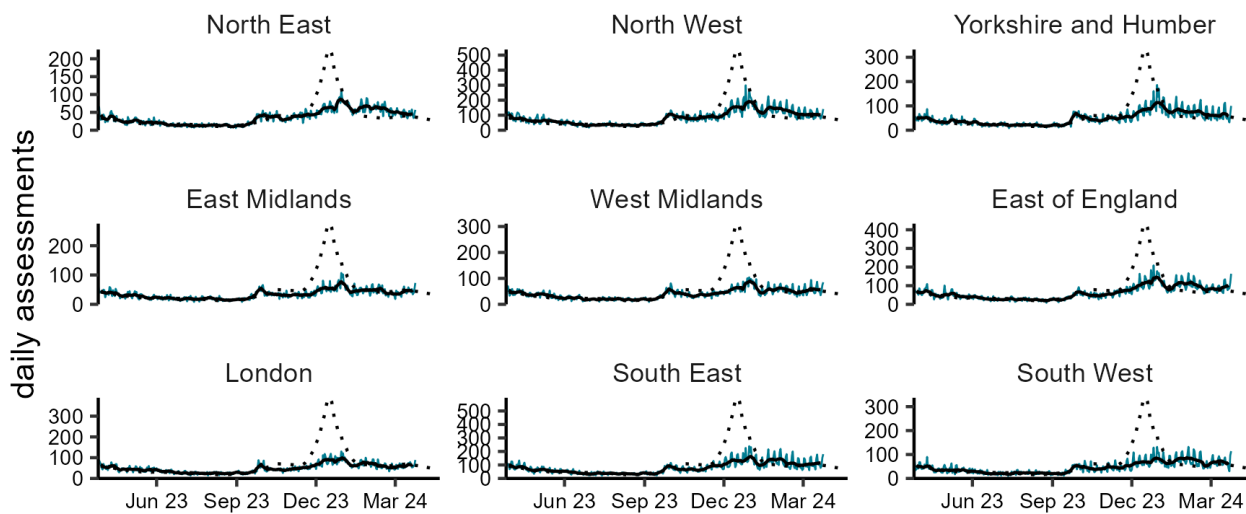
# Cold/flu NHS 111 online

**Figure 4: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for cold/flu, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

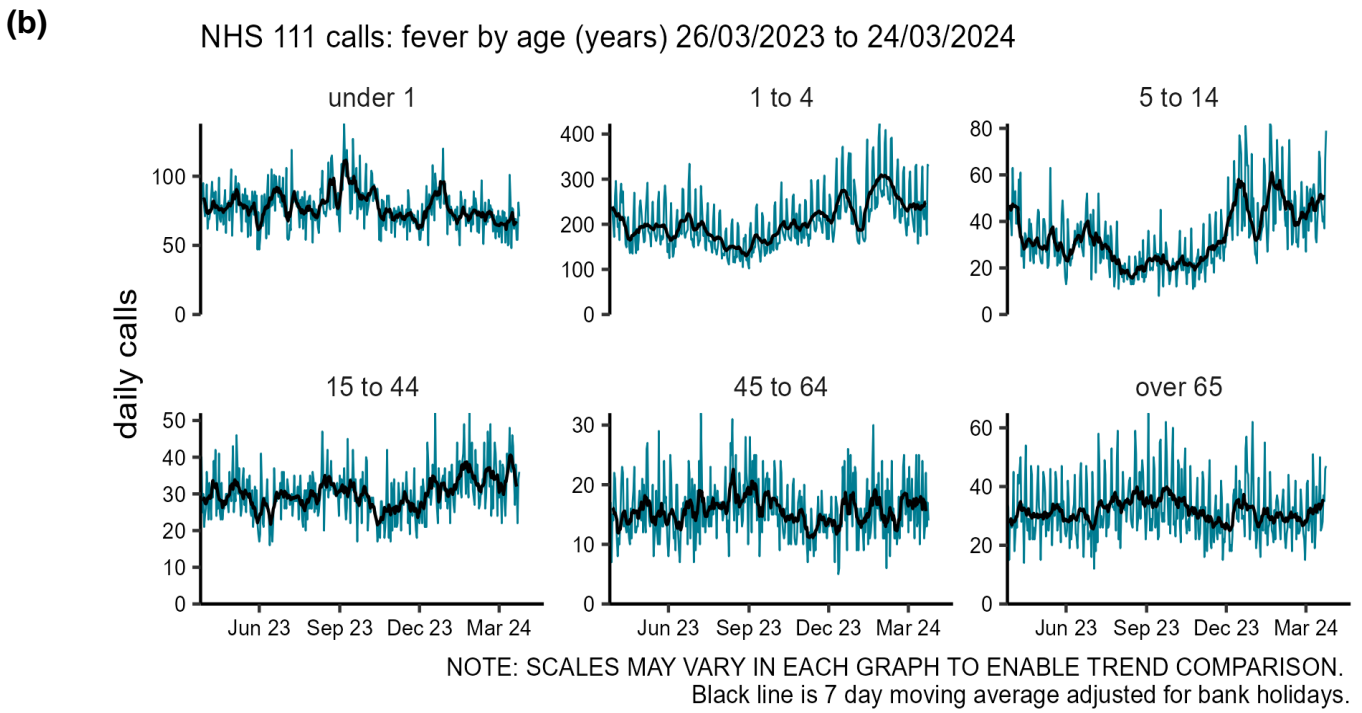
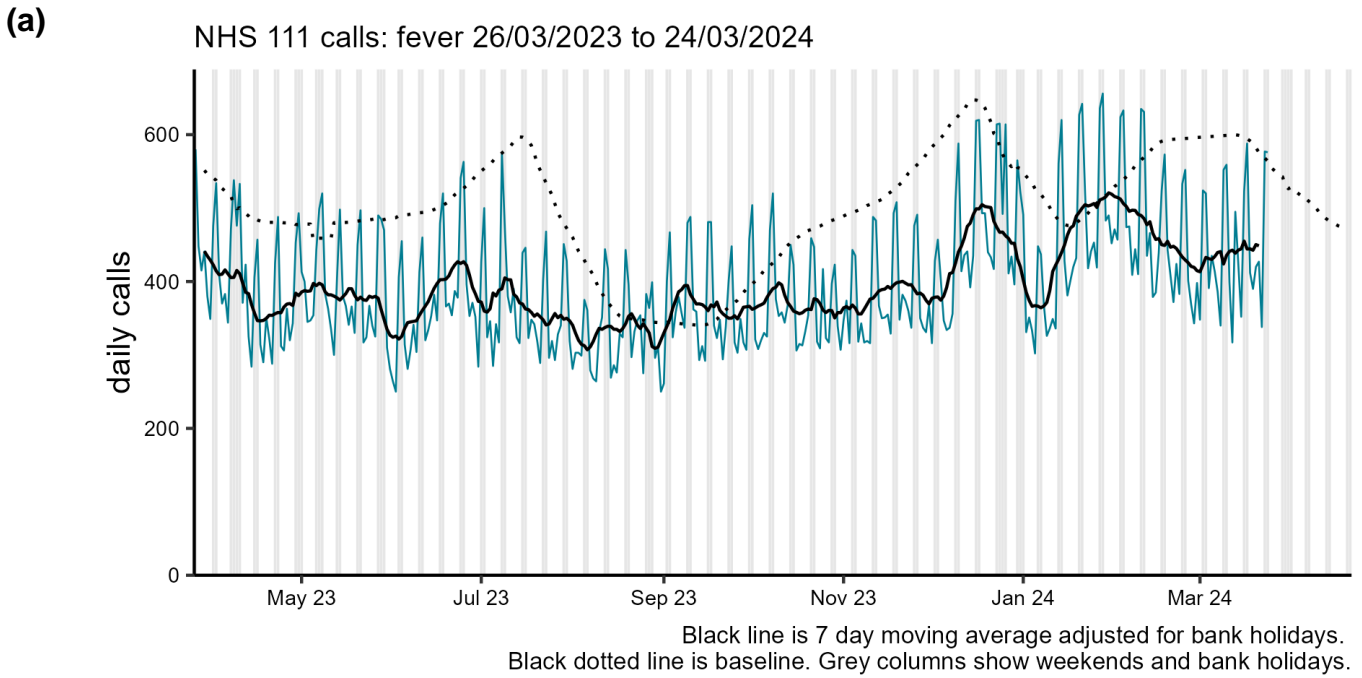
NHS 111 online: cold or flu by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

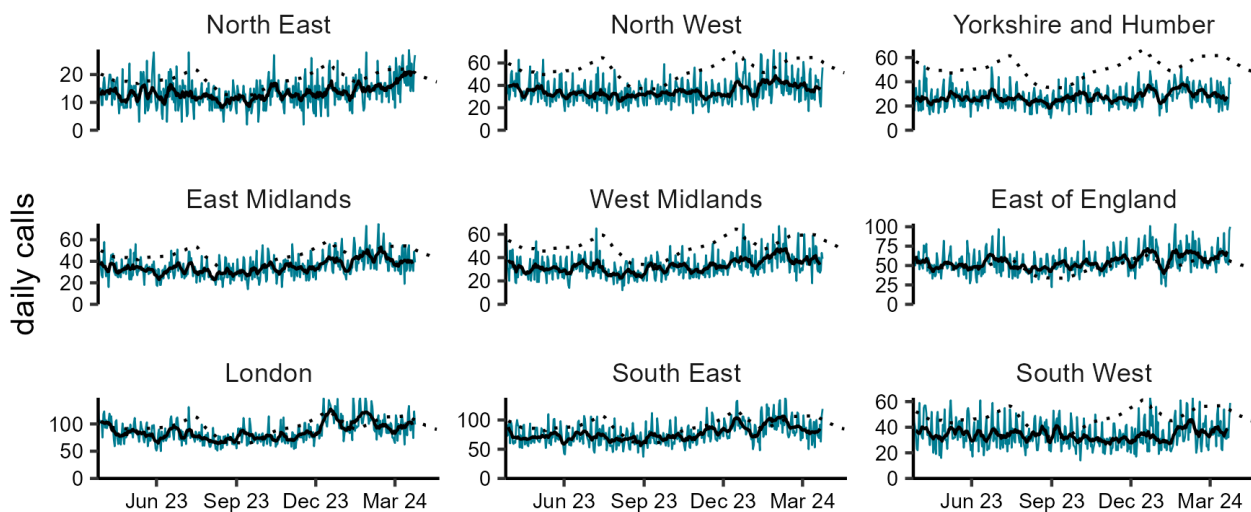
# Fever NHS 111 calls

**Figure 5: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for fever, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

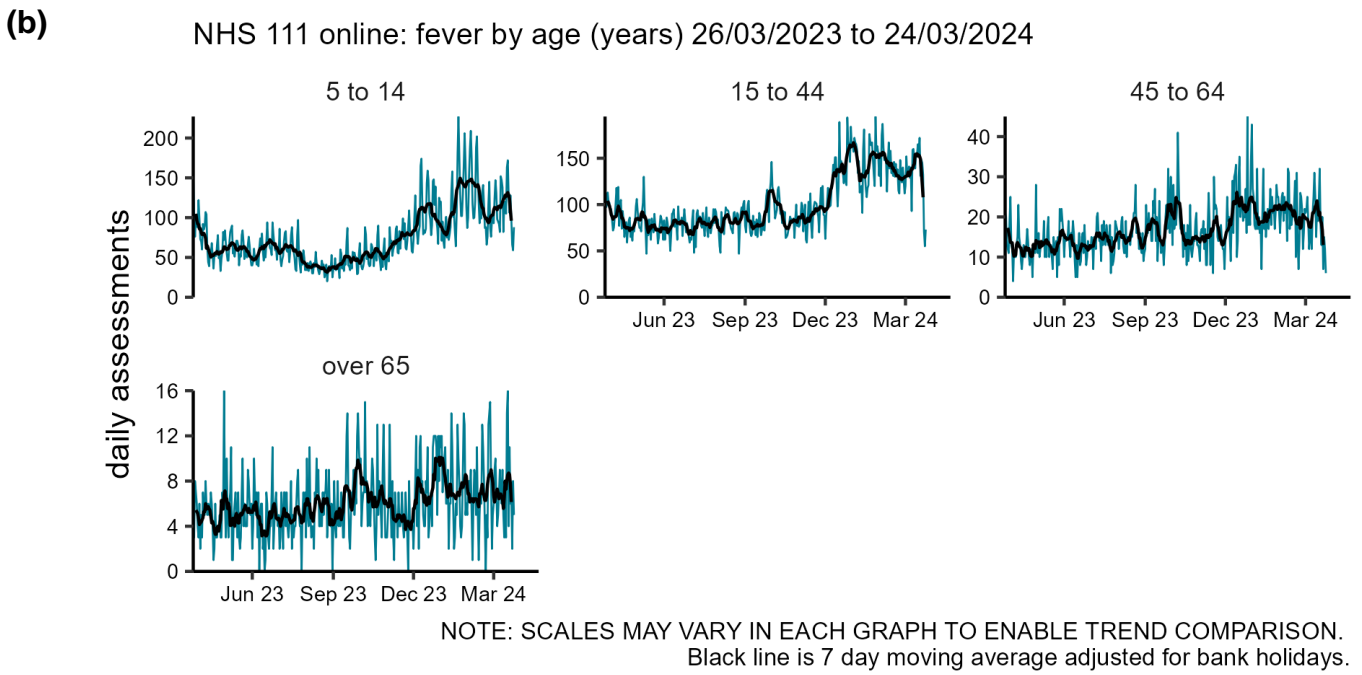
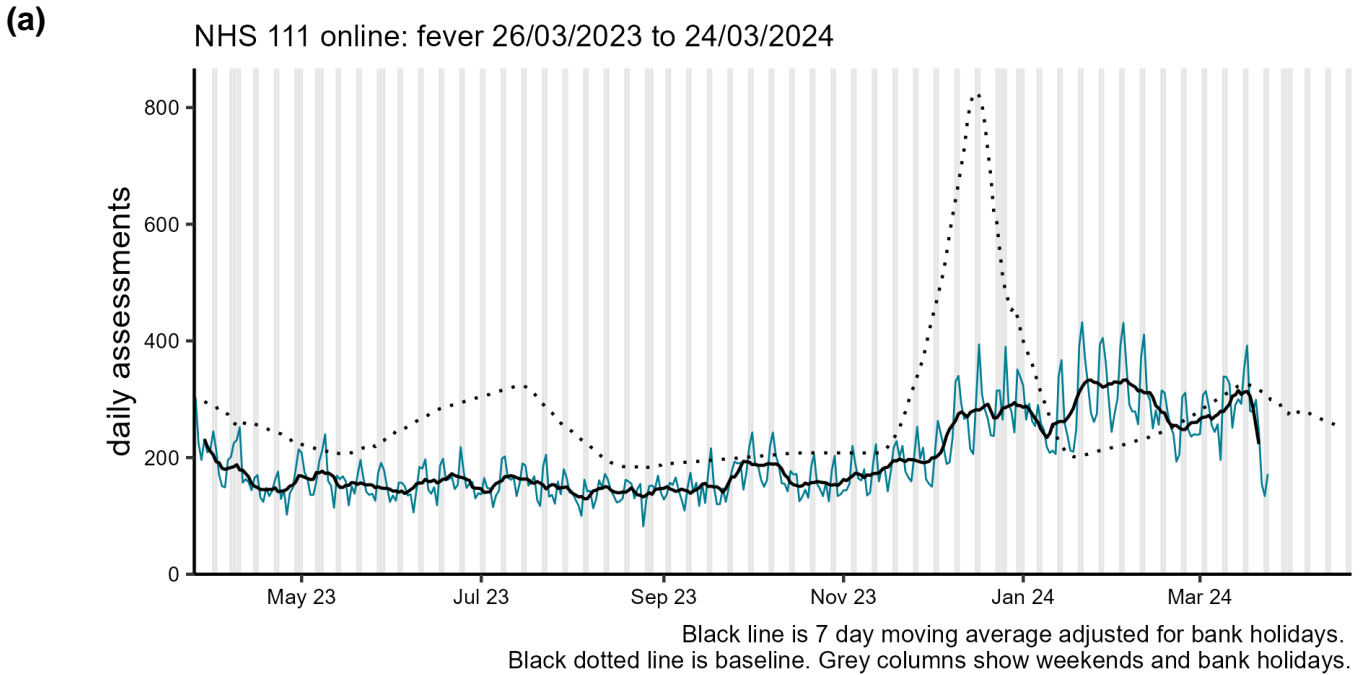
NHS 111 calls: fever by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

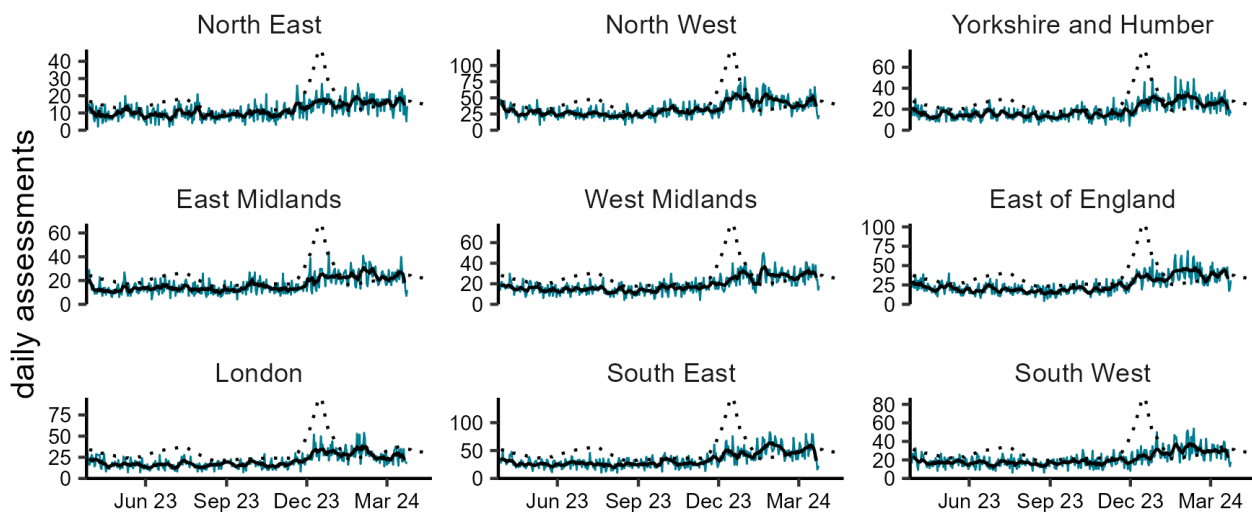
# Fever NHS 111 online

**Figure 6: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for fever, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**





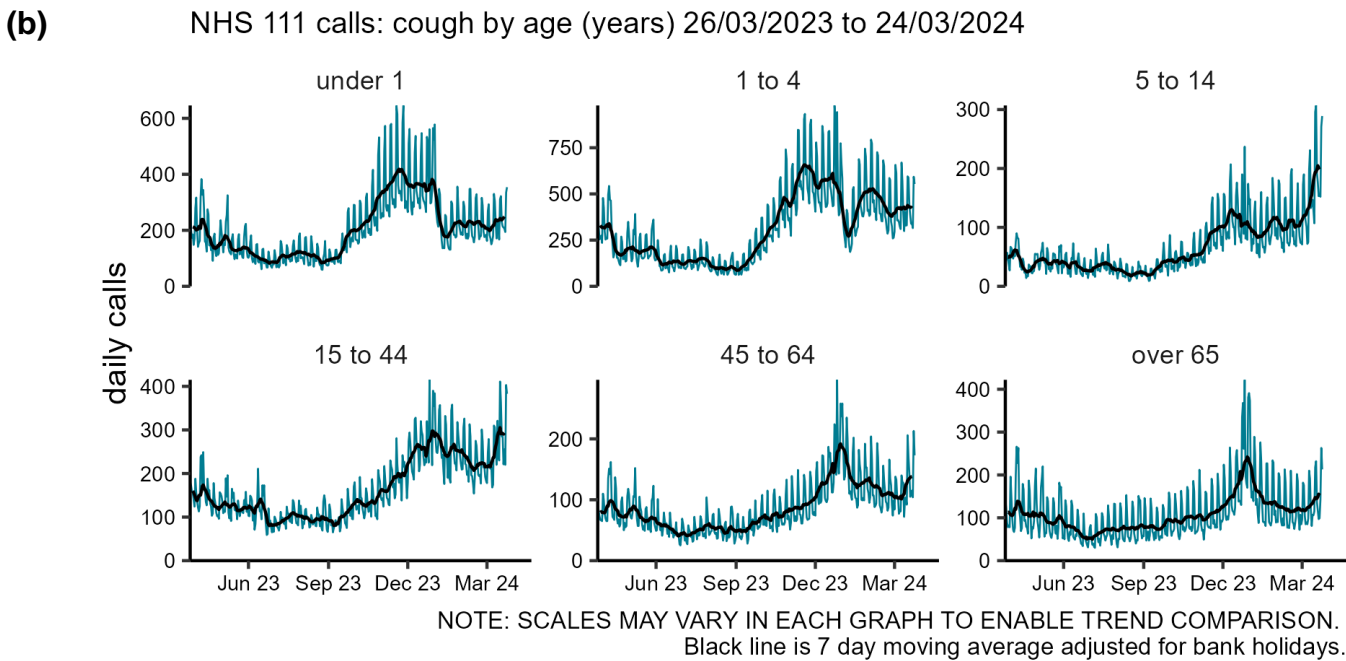
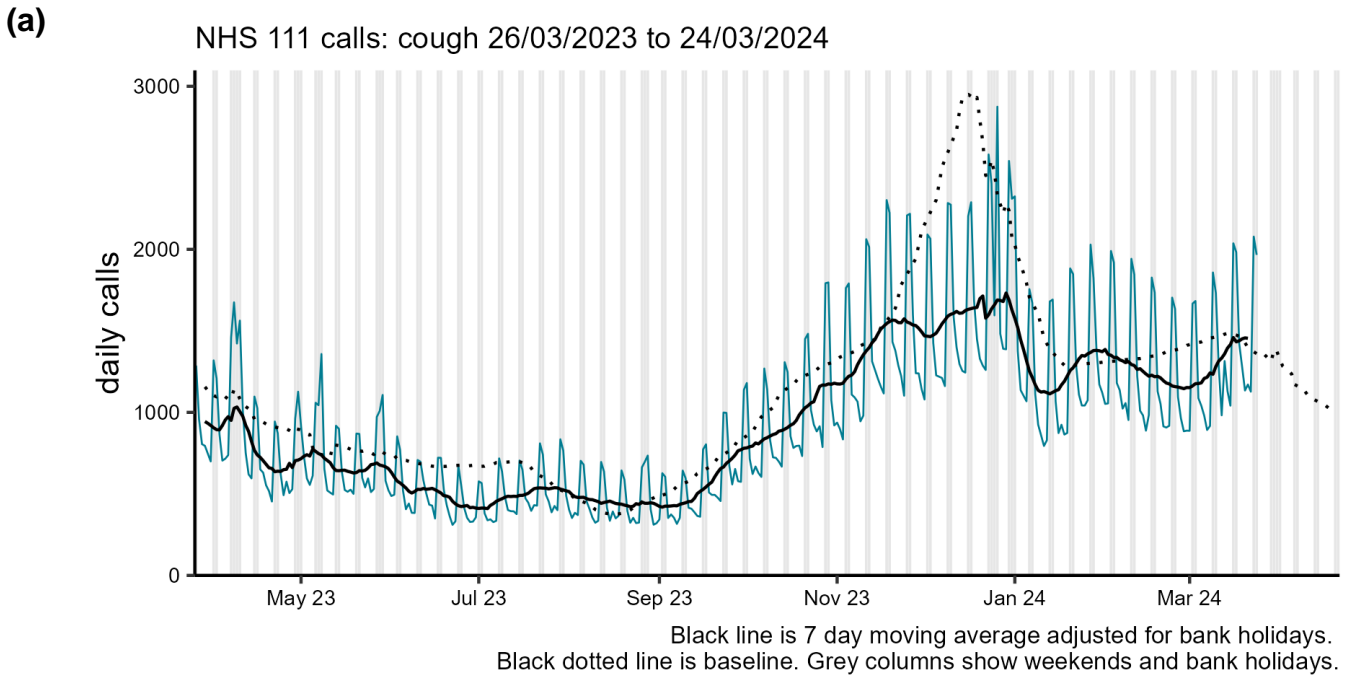
(c) NHS 111 online: fever by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



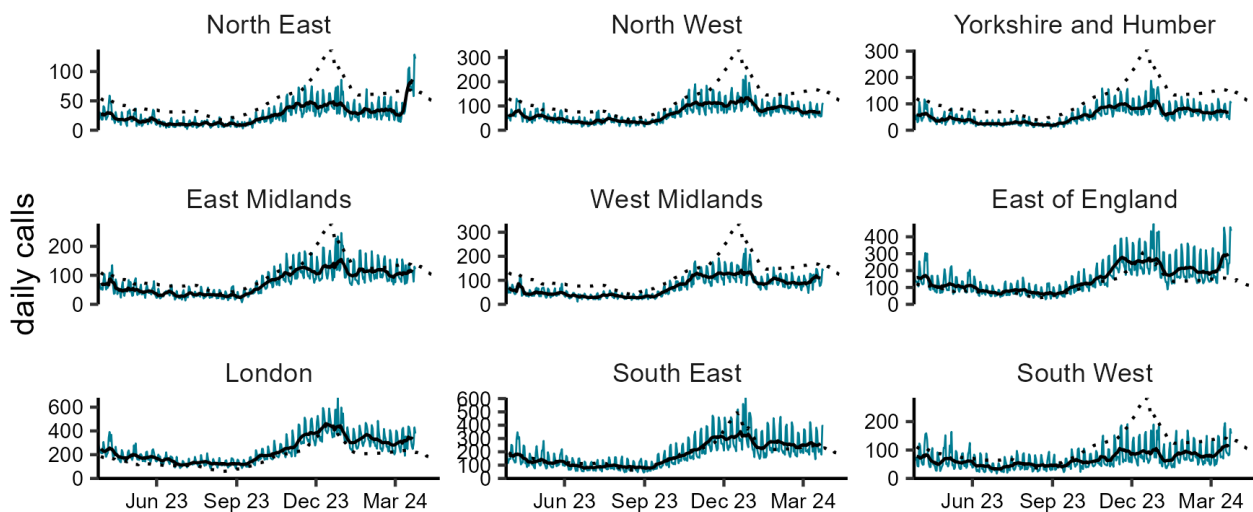
NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

# Cough NHS 111 calls

**Figure 7: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for cough, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



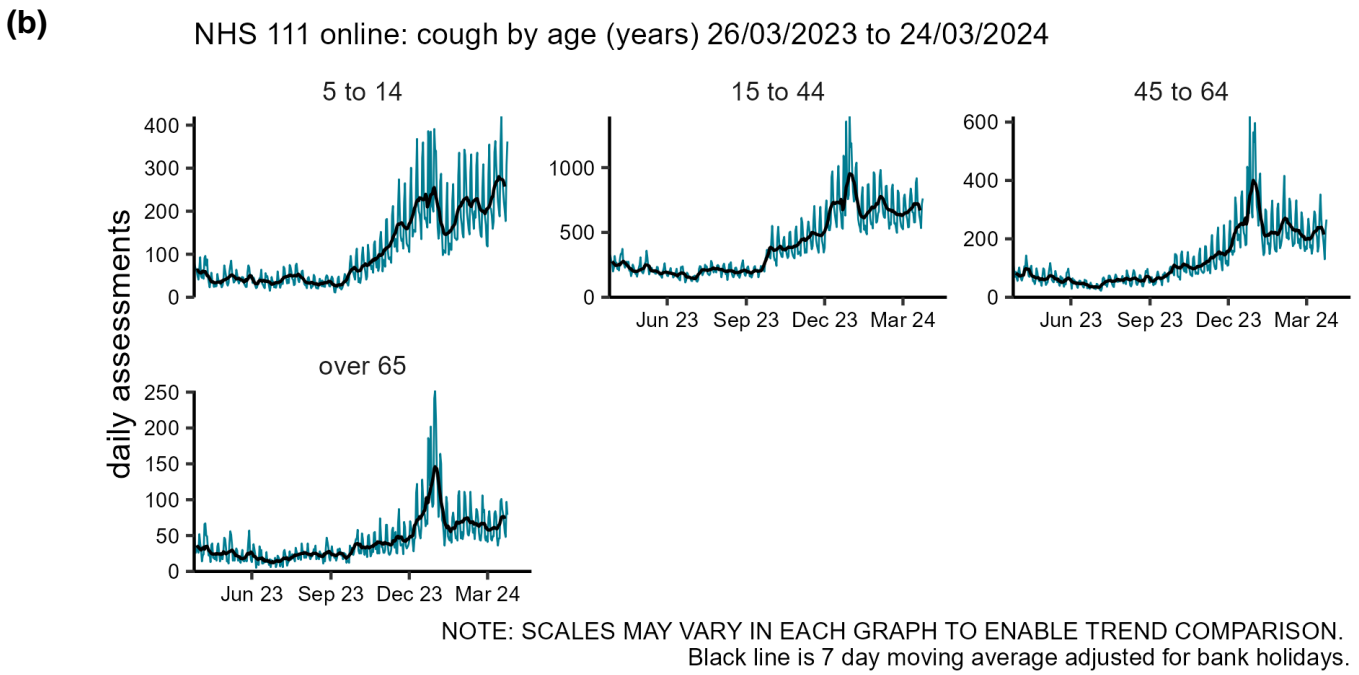
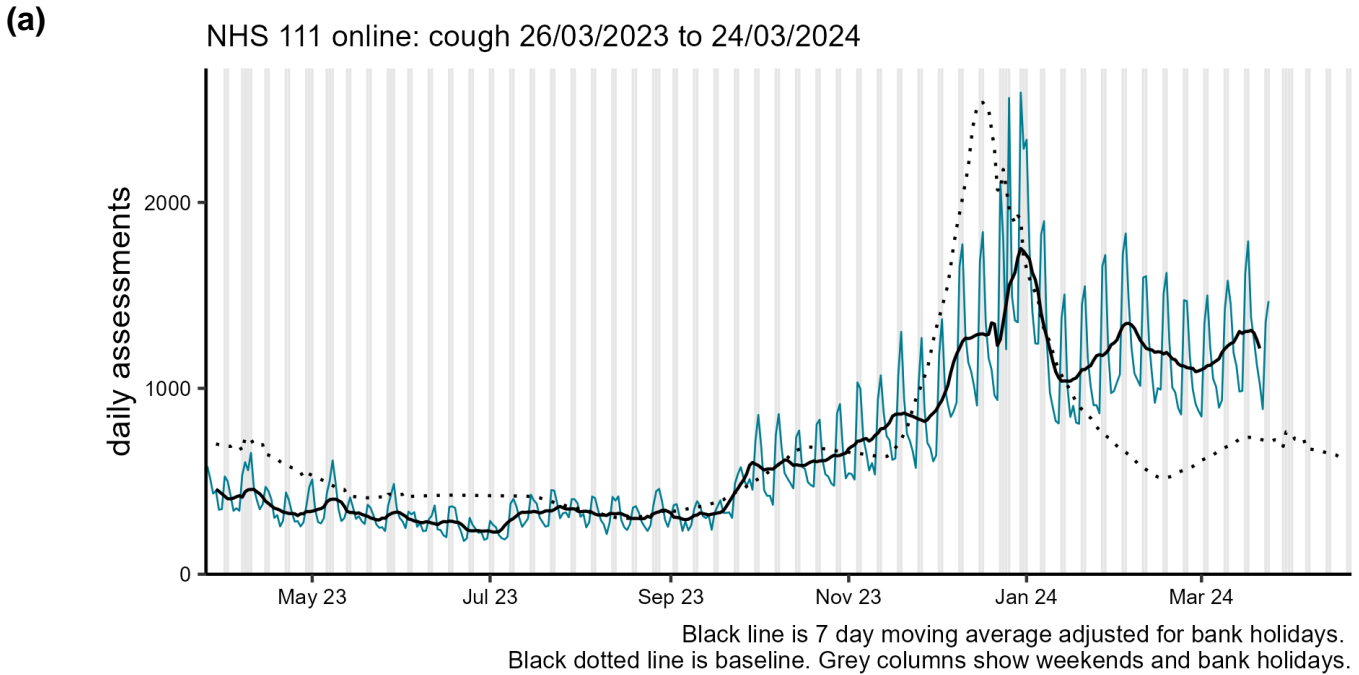
(c) NHS 111 calls: cough by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



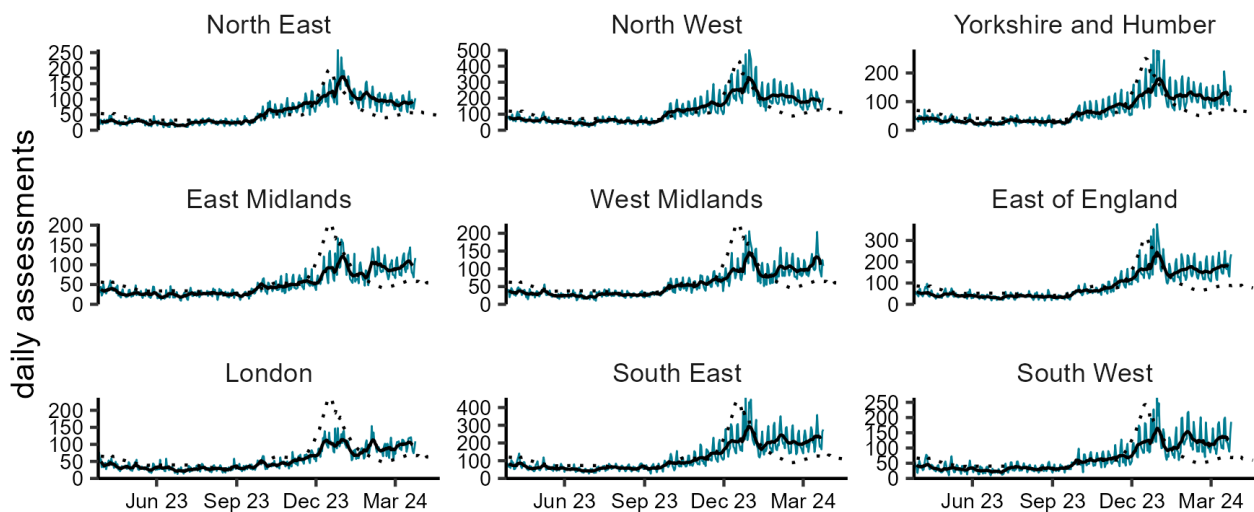
NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

# Cough NHS 111 online

**Figure 8: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for cough, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



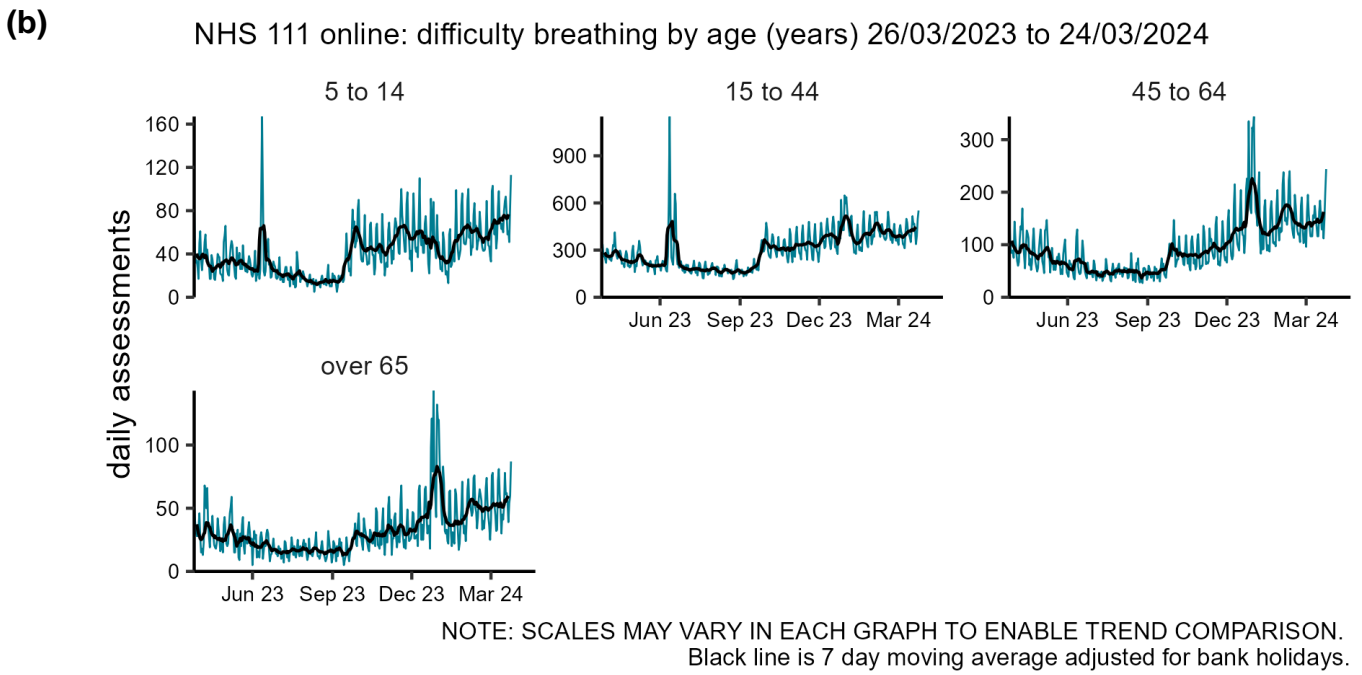
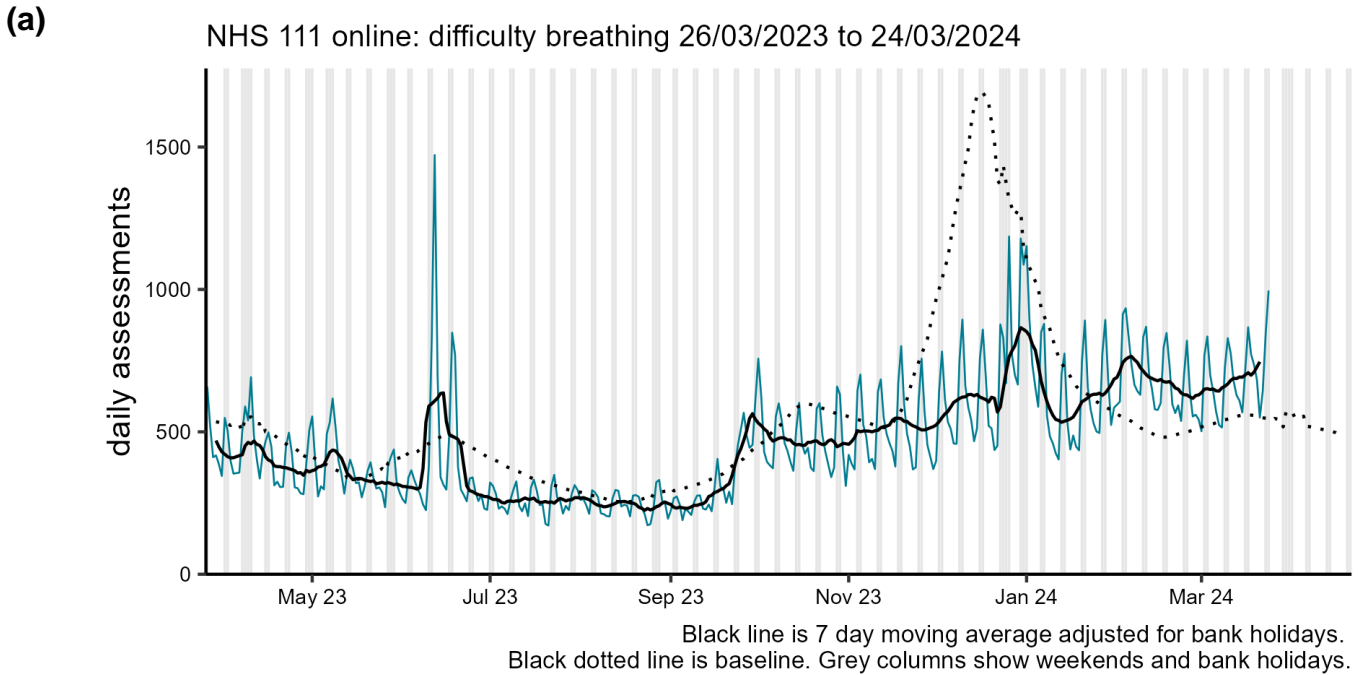
(c) NHS 111 online: cough by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

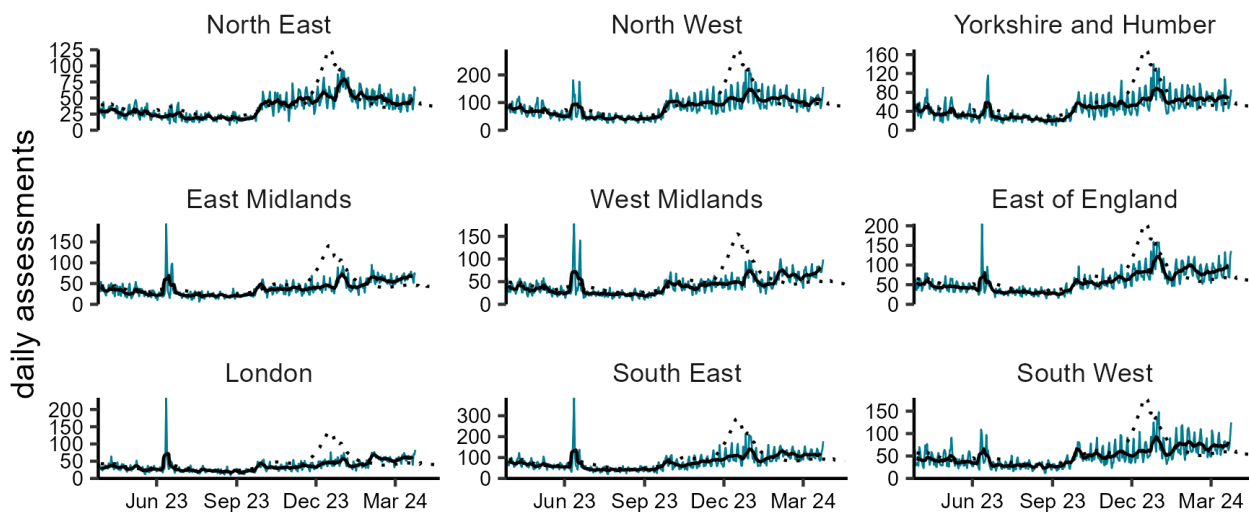
# Difficulty breathing NHS 111 online

**Figure 9: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for difficulty breathing, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

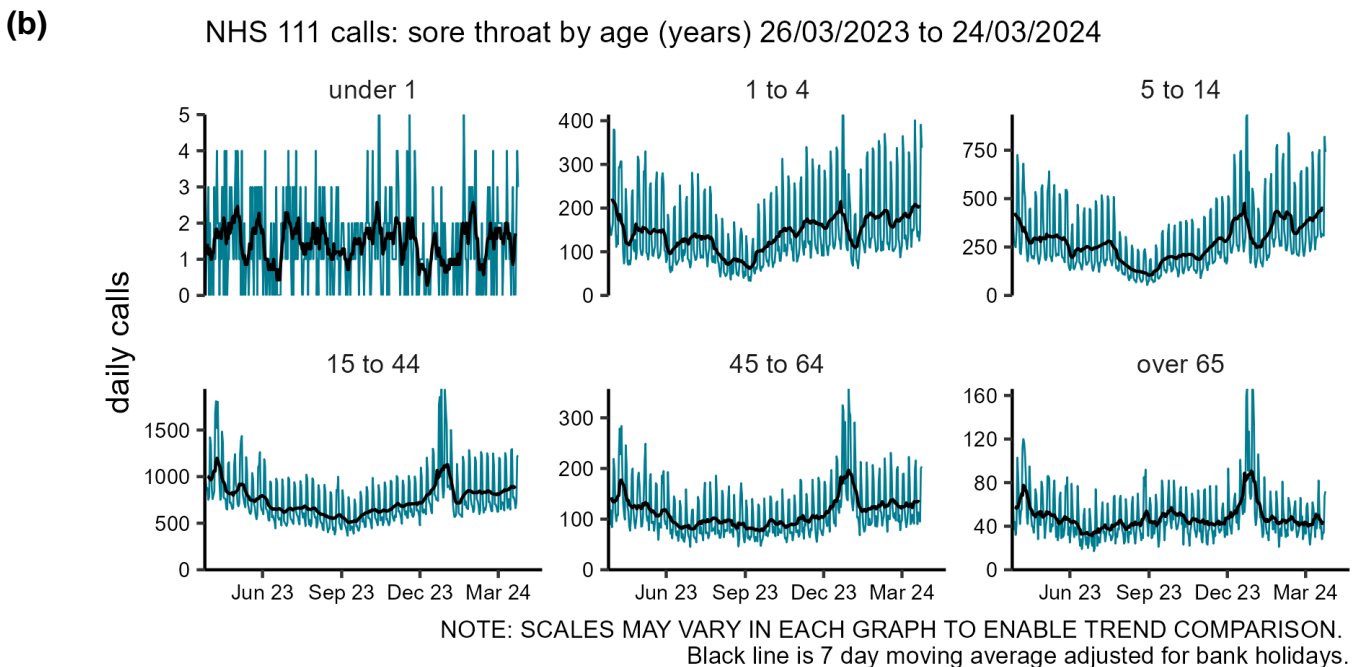
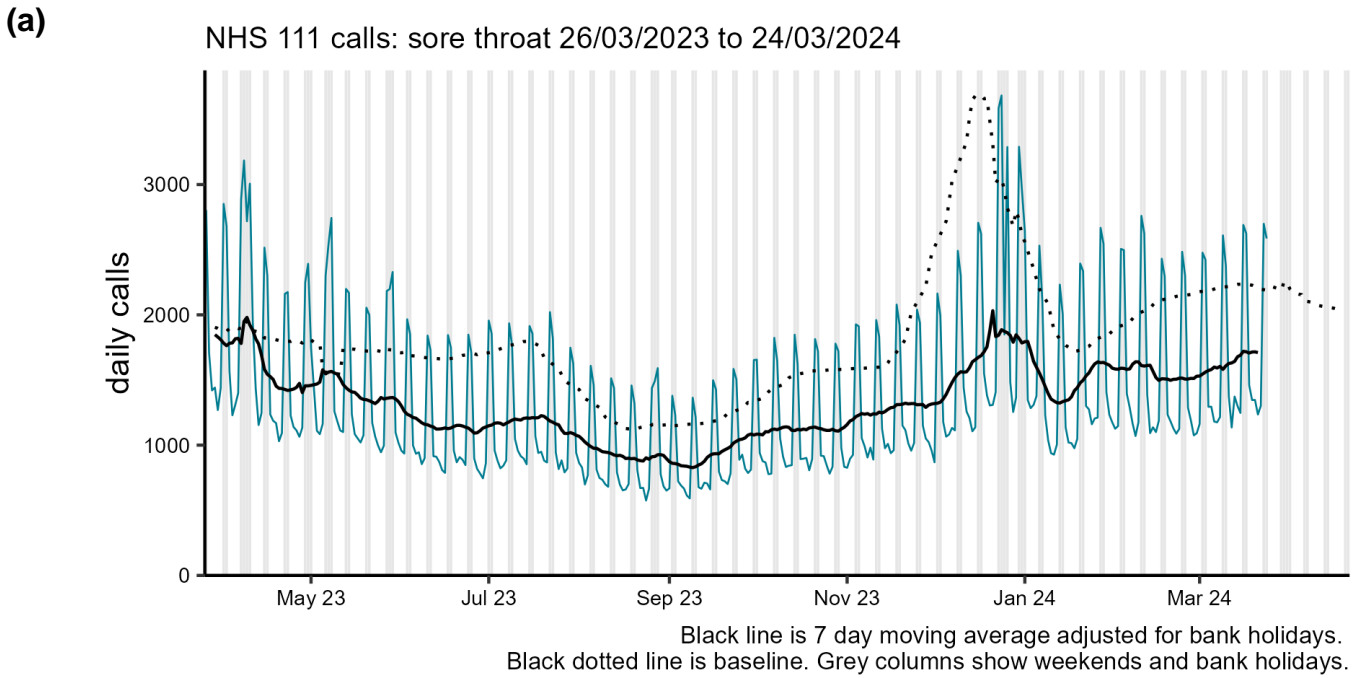
NHS 111 online: difficulty breathing by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

# Sore throat NHS 111 calls

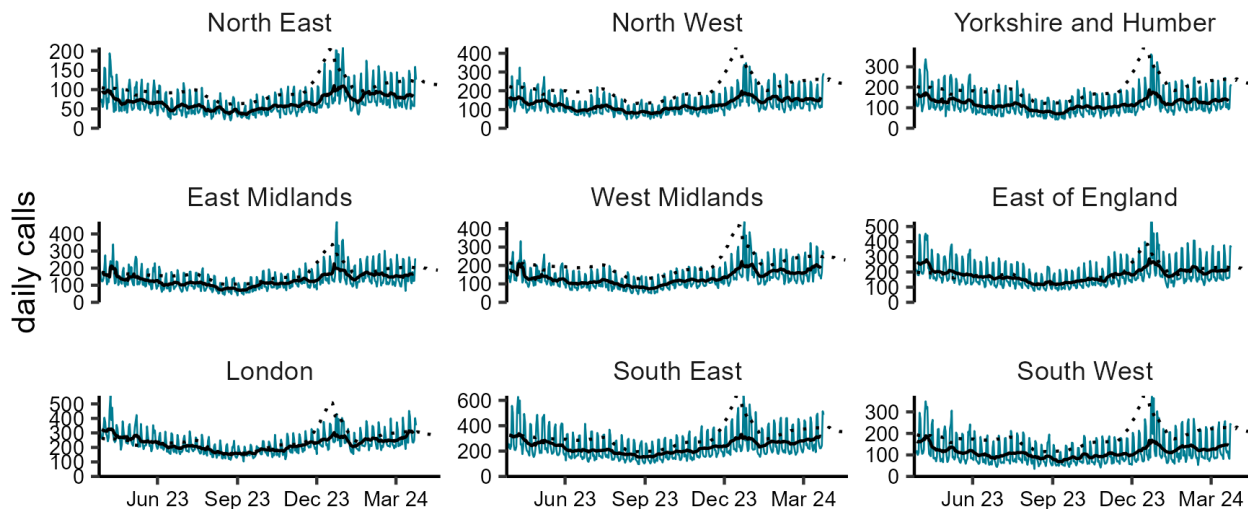
**Figure 10: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for sore throat, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**





(c)

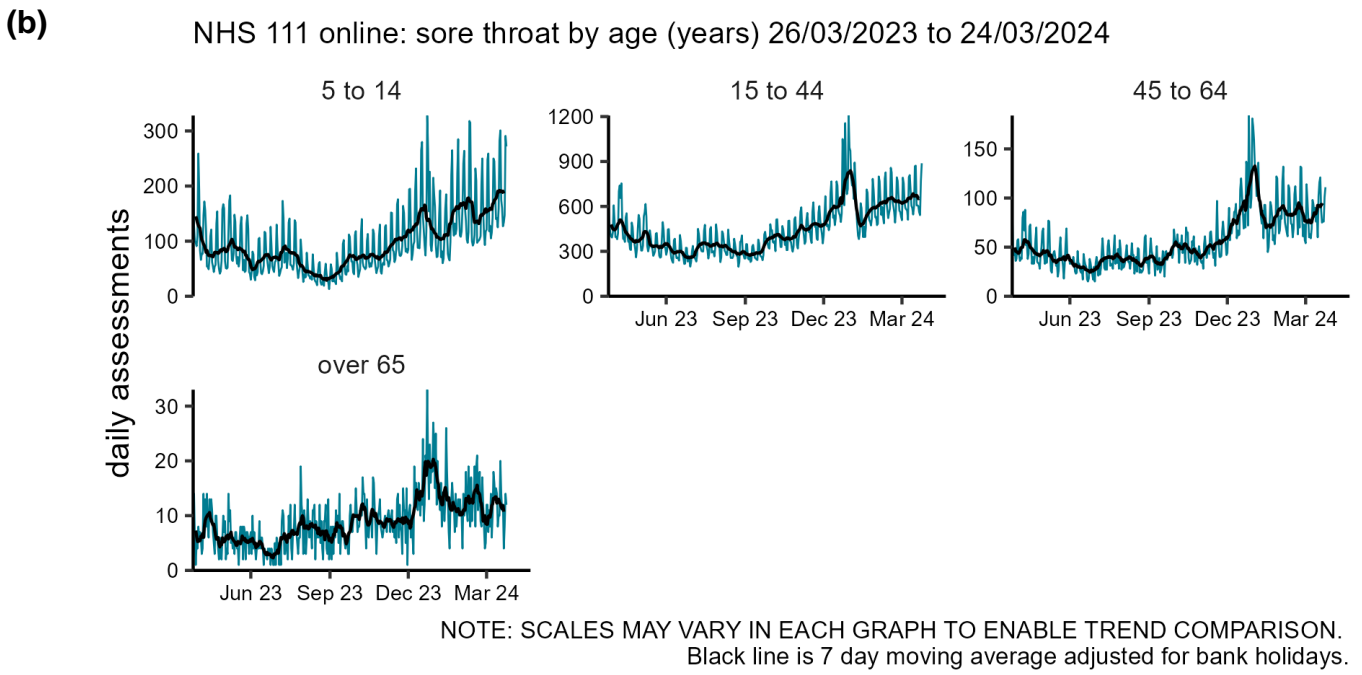
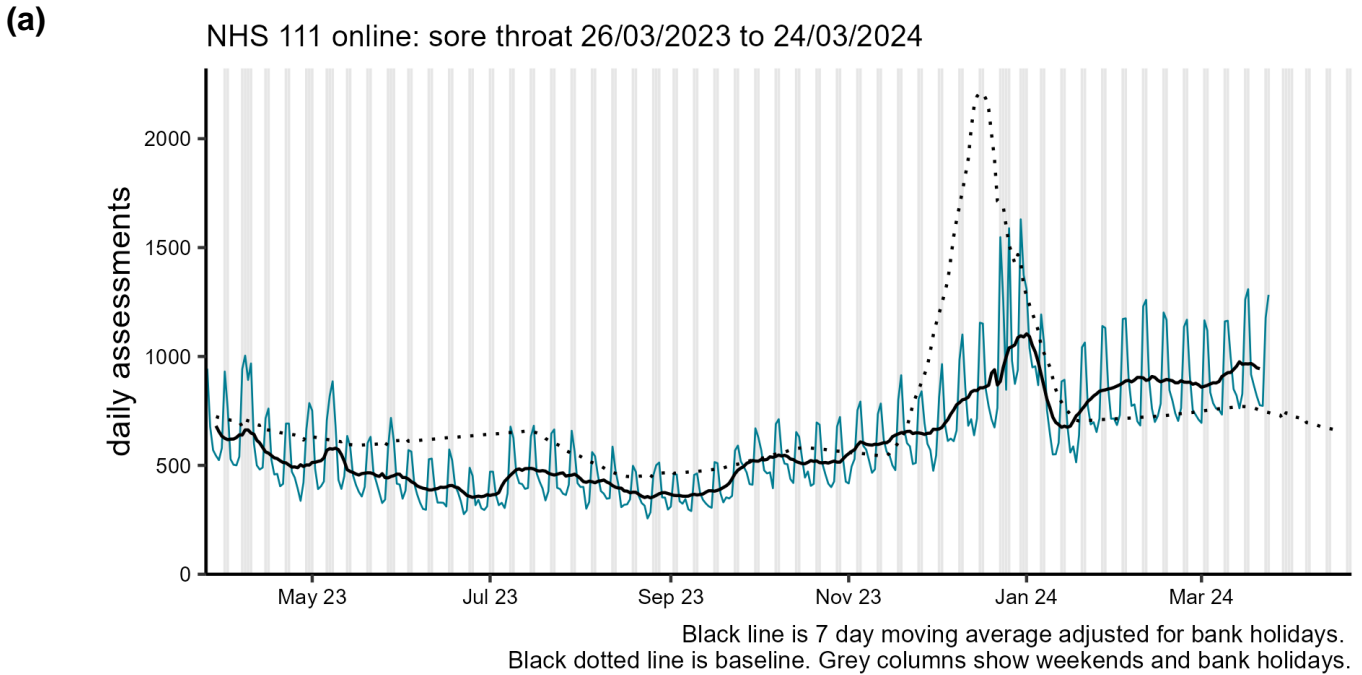
NHS 111 calls: sore throat by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
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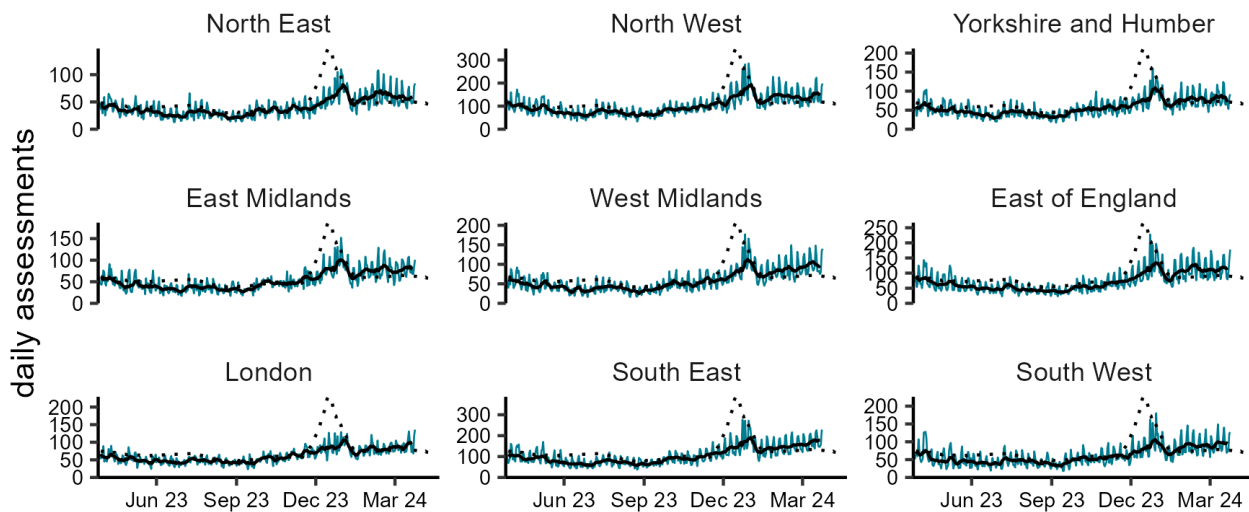
# Sore throat NHS 111 online

**Figure 11: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for sore throat, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

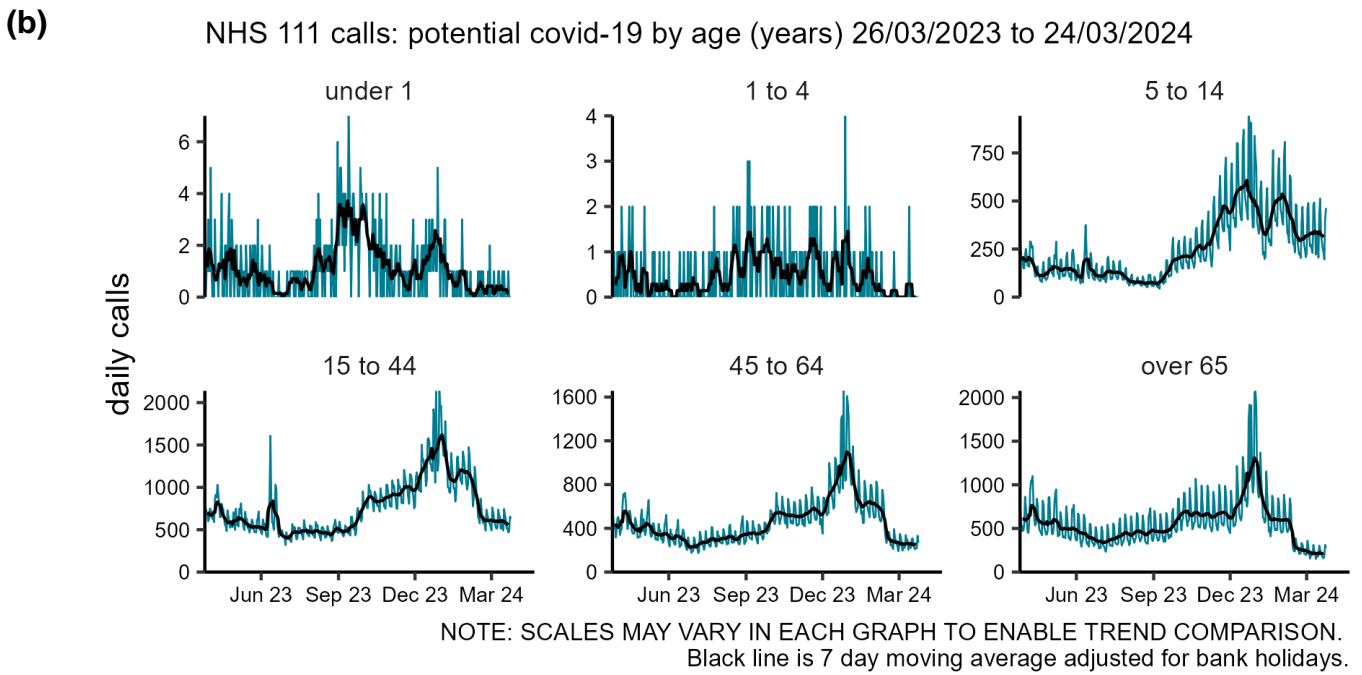
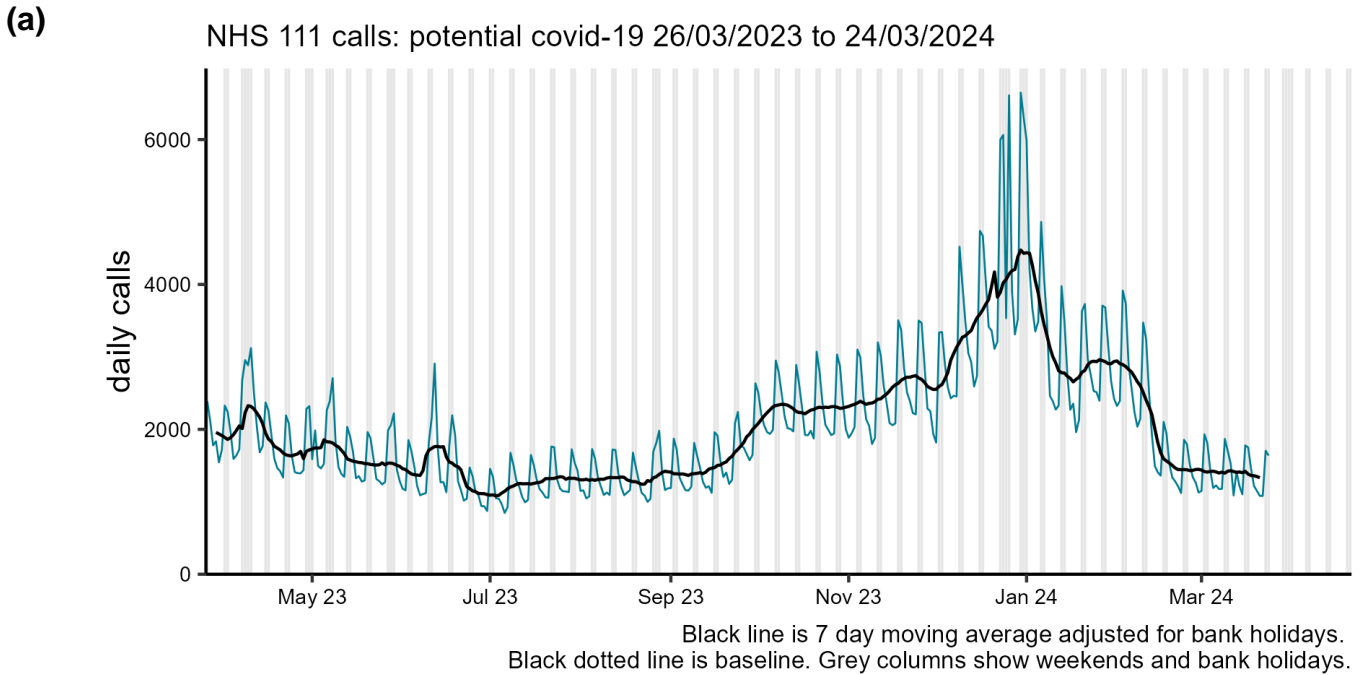
NHS 111 online: sore throat by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

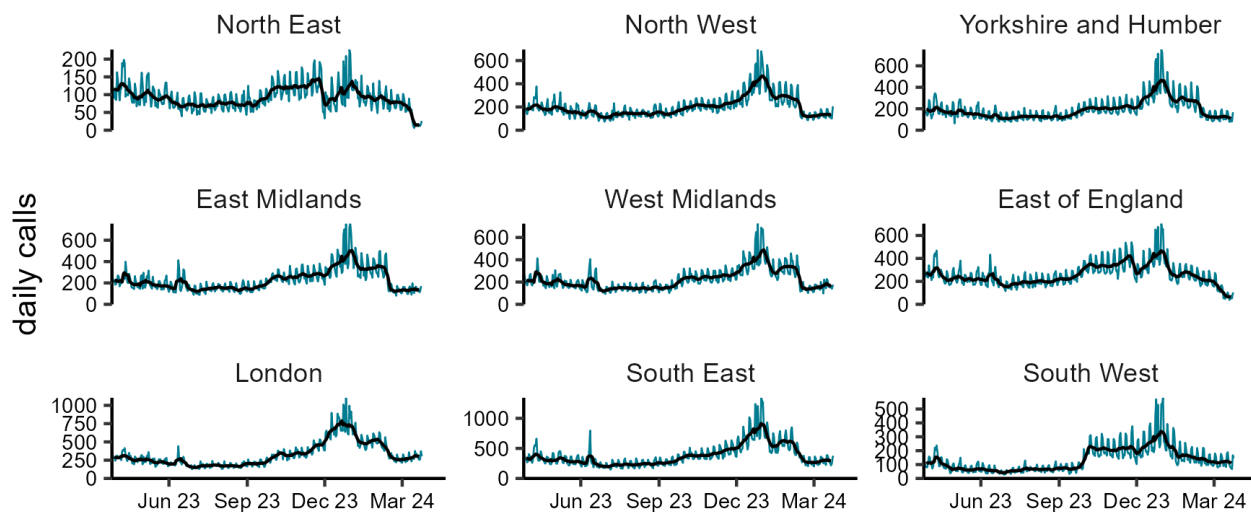
# Potential COVID-19 NHS 111 calls

**Figure 12: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for potential COVID-19, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

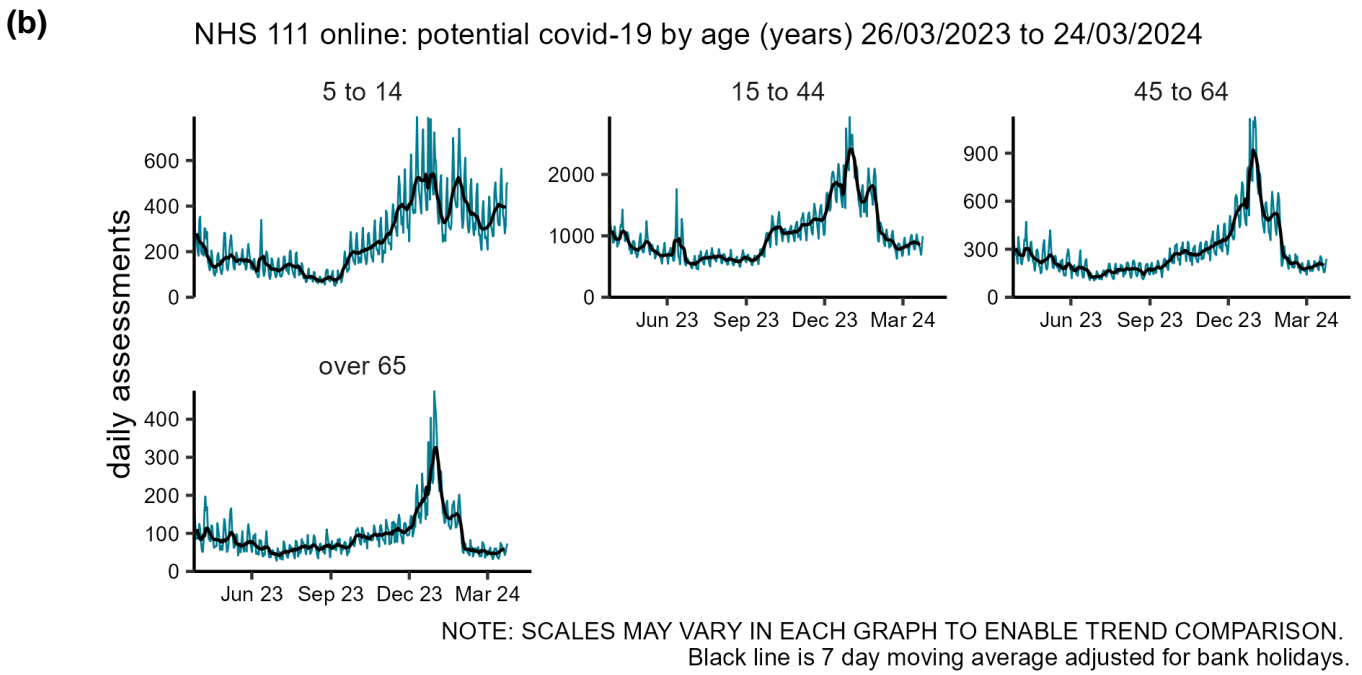
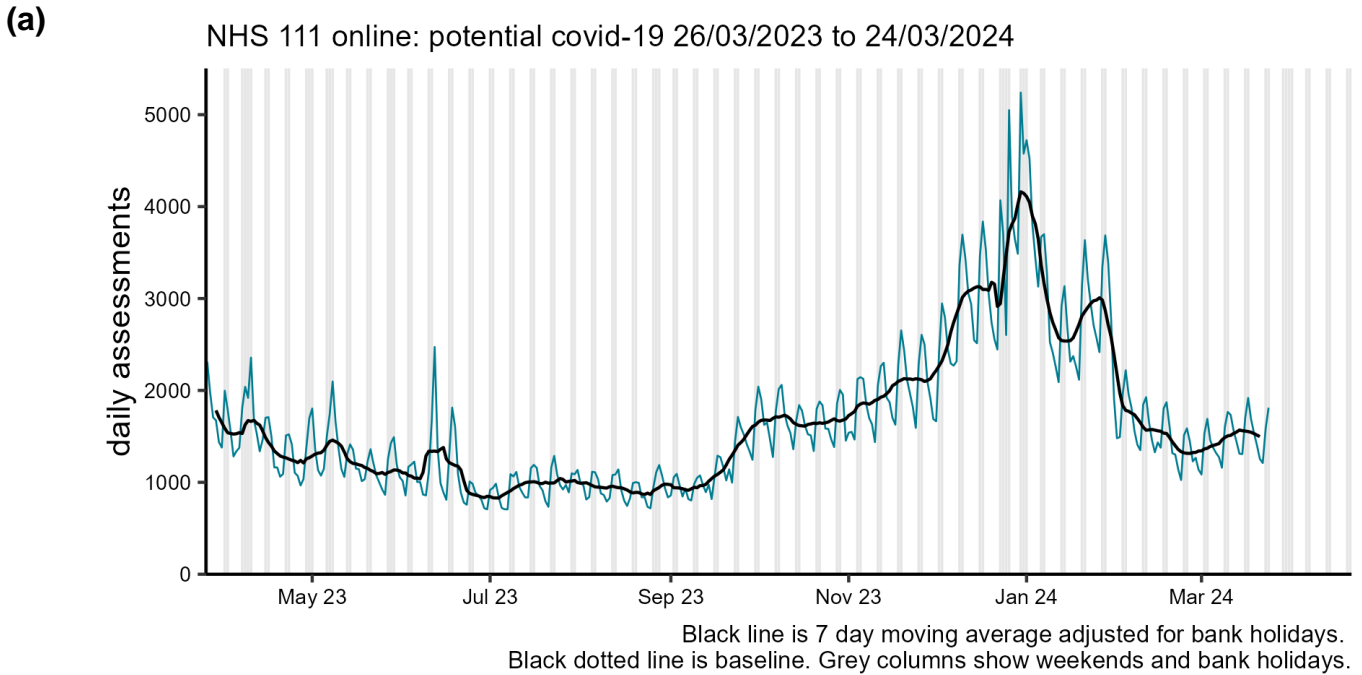
NHS 111 calls: potential covid-19 by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



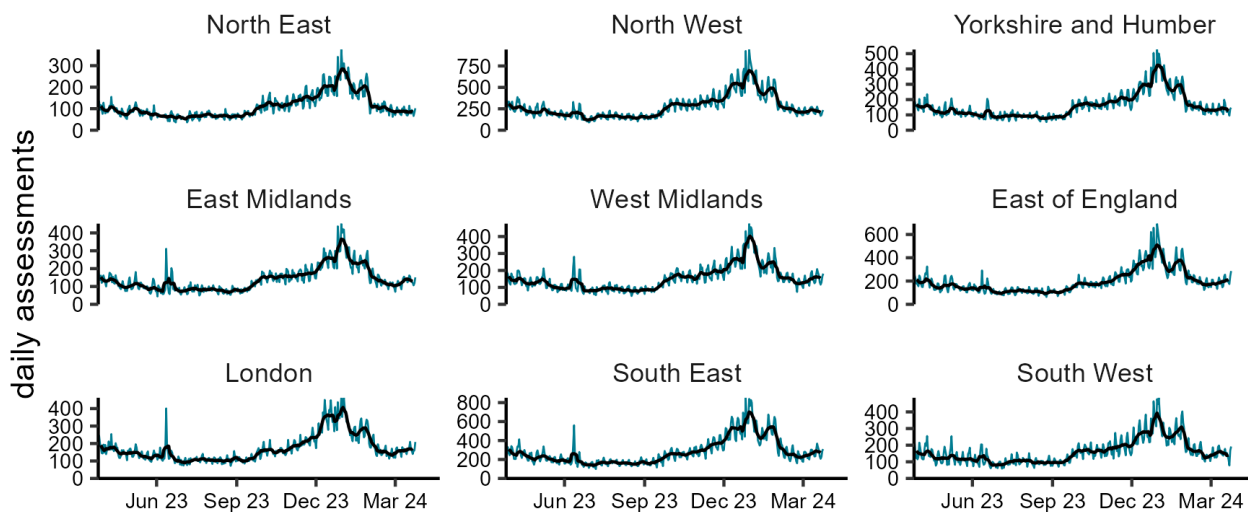
NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

# Potential COVID-19 NHS 111 online

**Figure 13: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for potential COVID-19, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c) NHS 111 online: potential covid-19 by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024

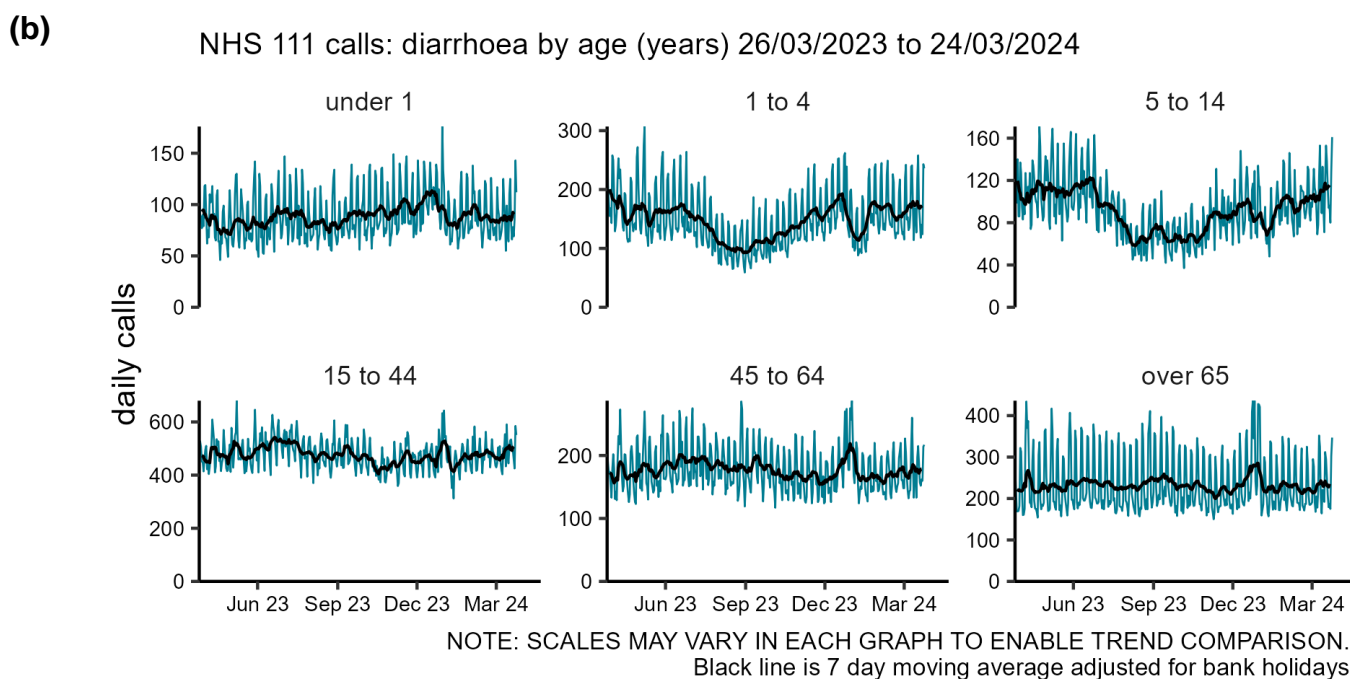
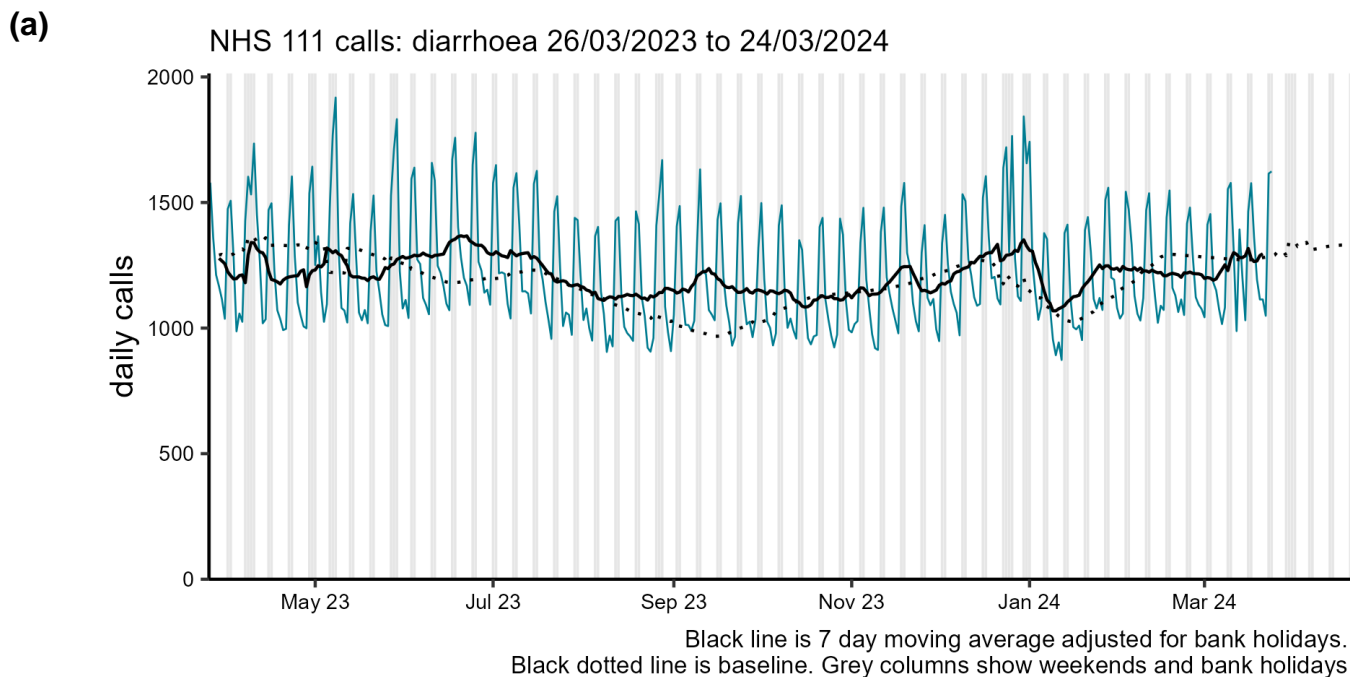


NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
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Black dotted line is baseline.

# Gastrointestinal conditions

## Diarrhoea NHS 111 calls

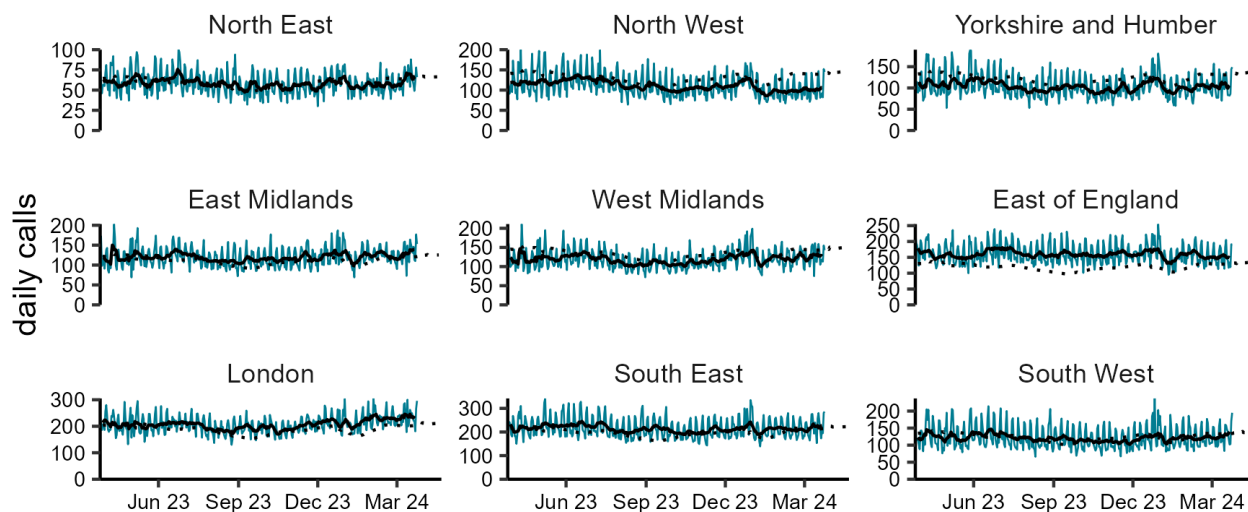
**Figure 14: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for diarrhoea, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**





(c)

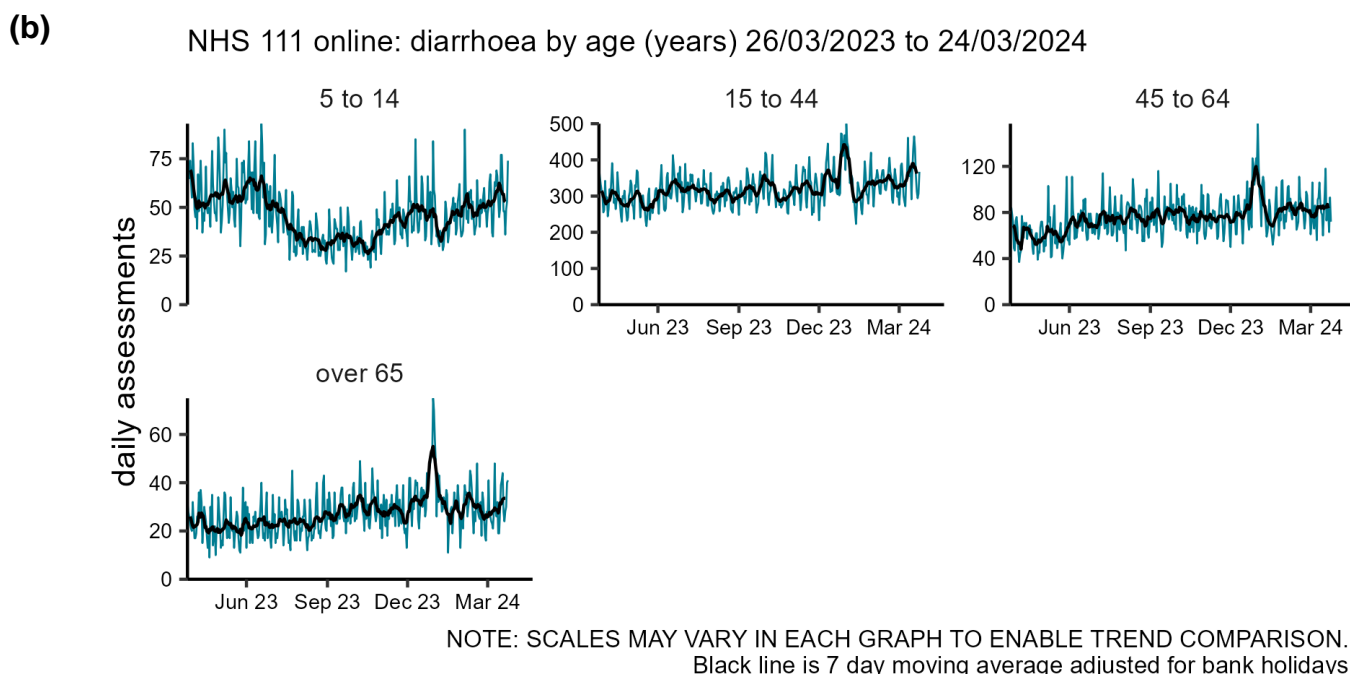
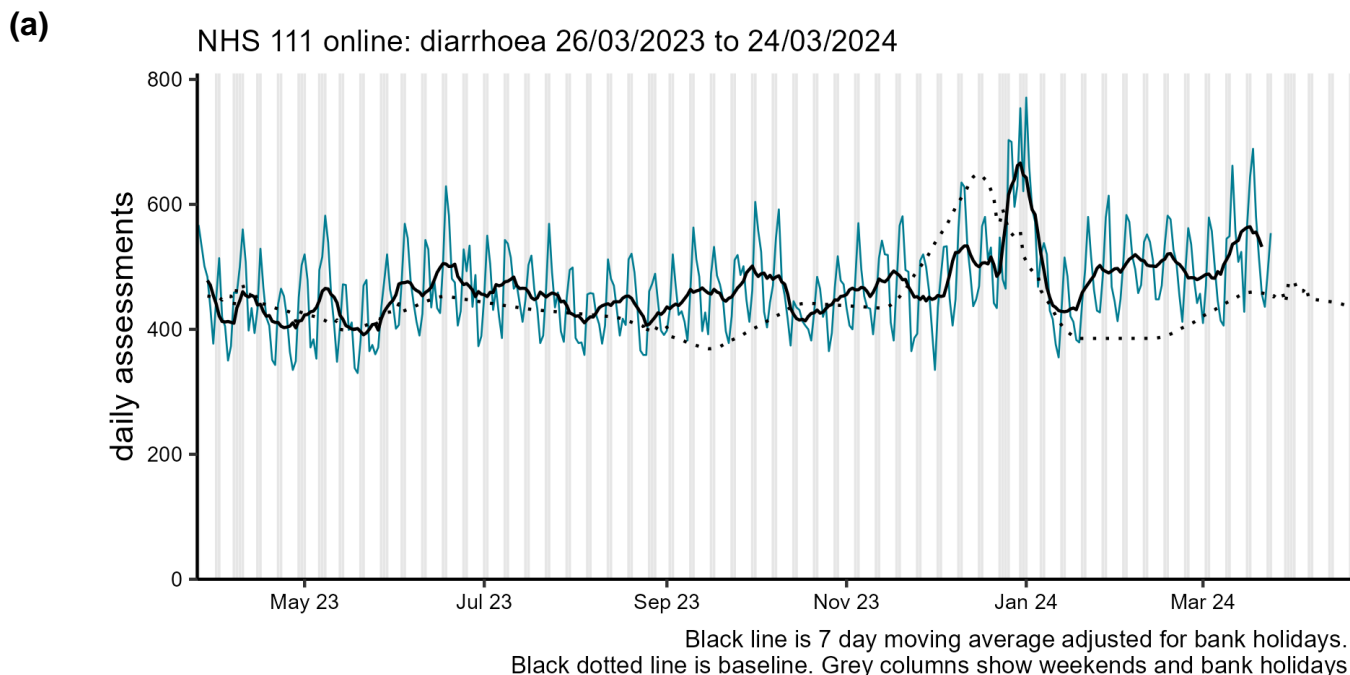
NHS 111 calls: diarrhoea by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

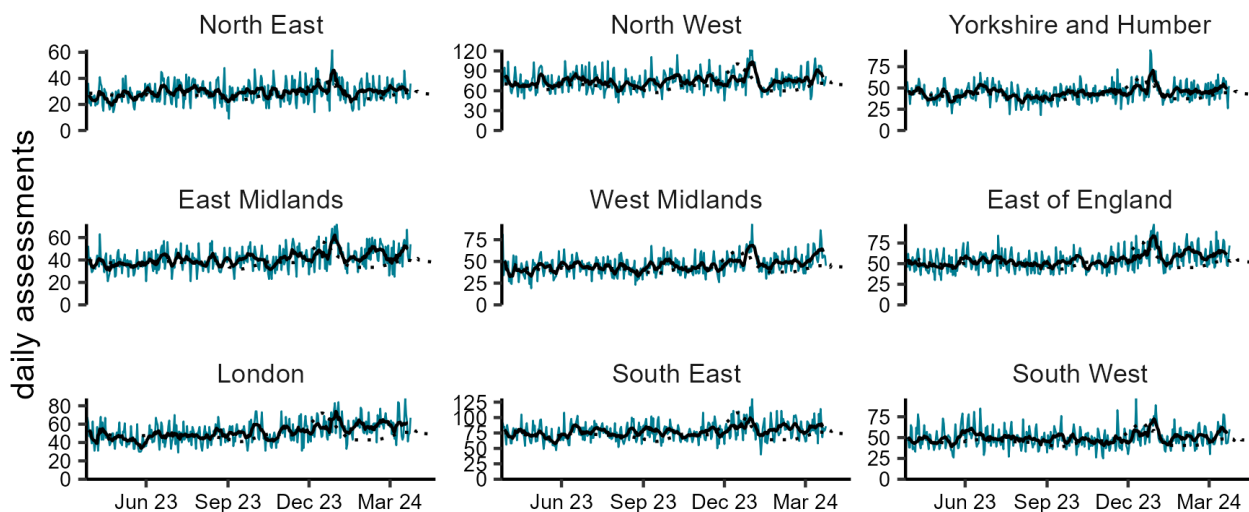
# Diarrhoea NHS 111 online

**Figure 15: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for diarrhoea, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

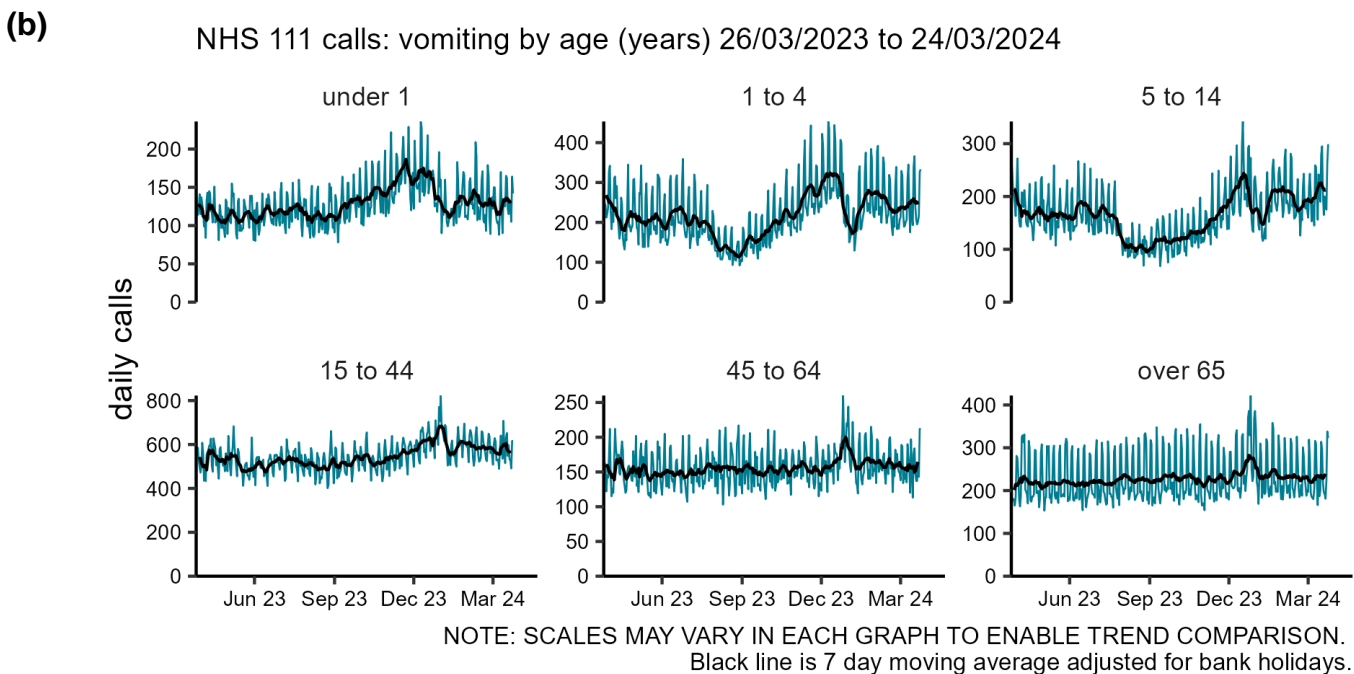
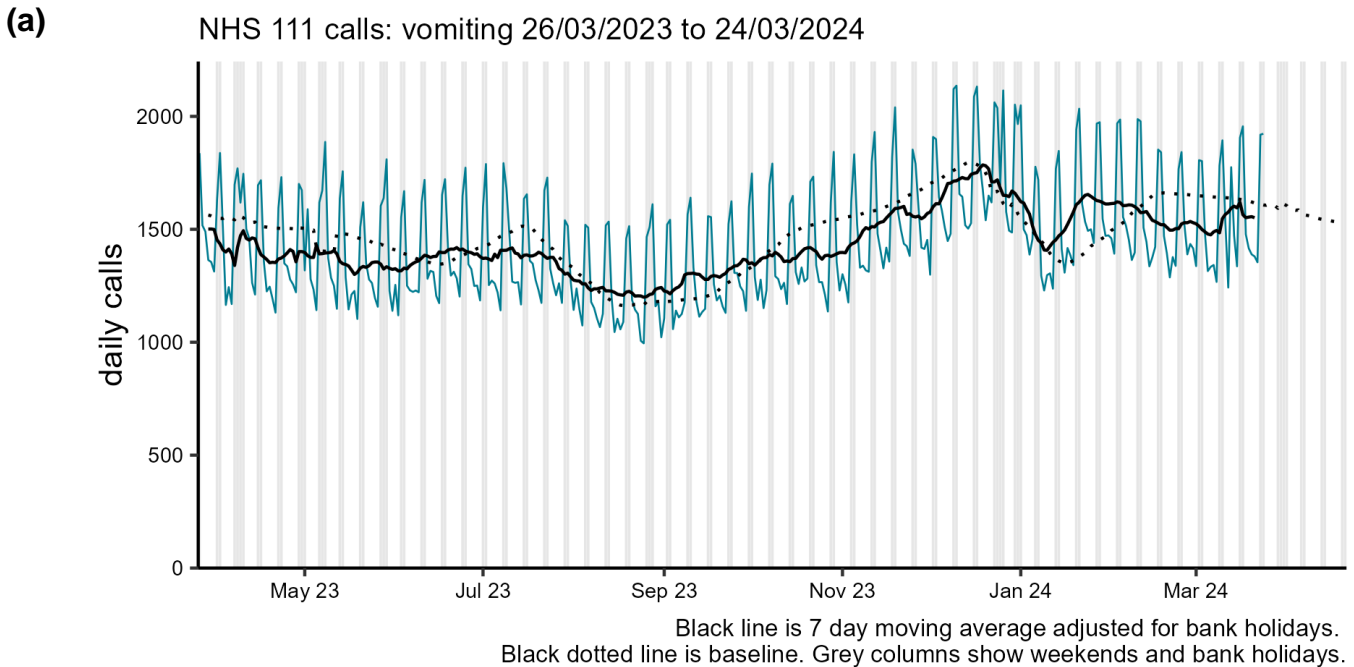
NHS 111 online: diarrhoea by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

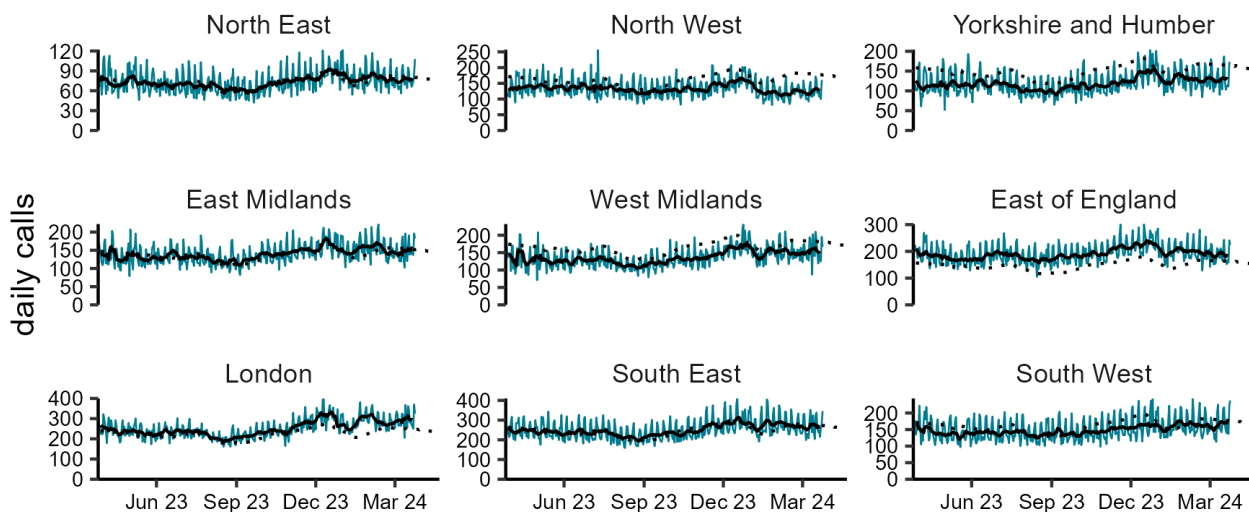
# Vomiting NHS 111 calls

**Figure 16: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for vomiting, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

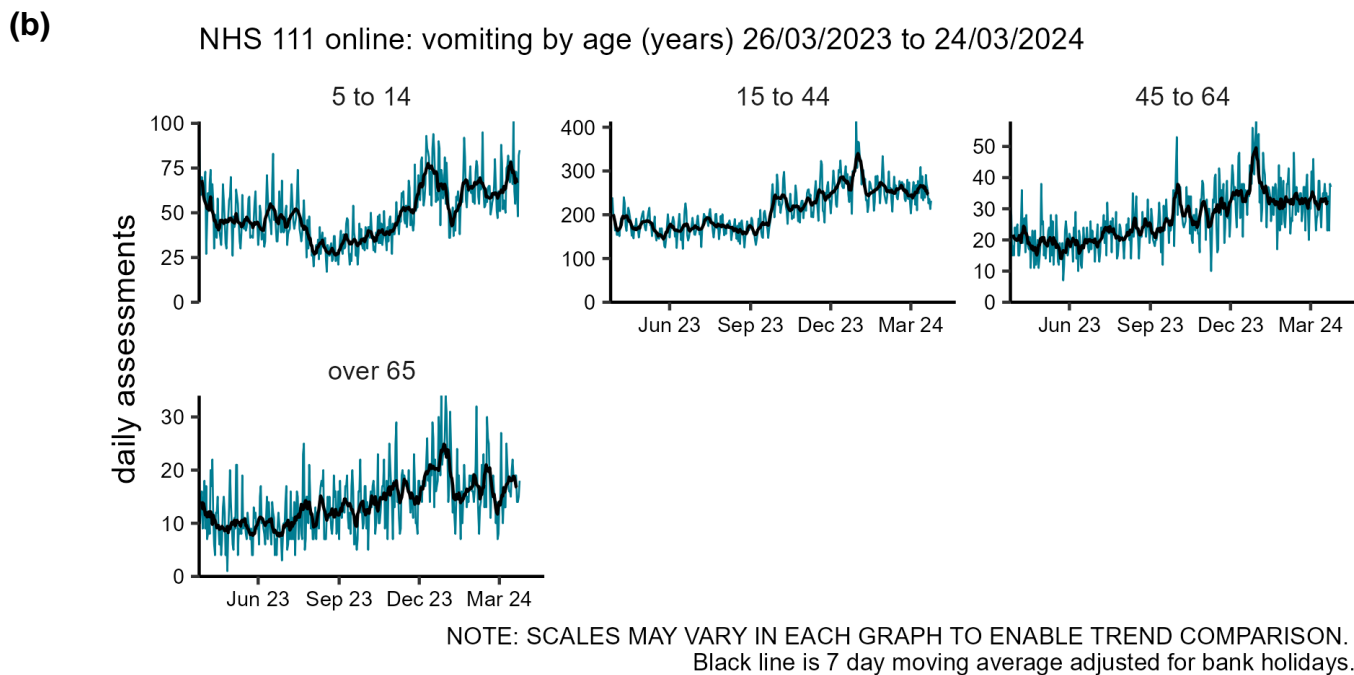
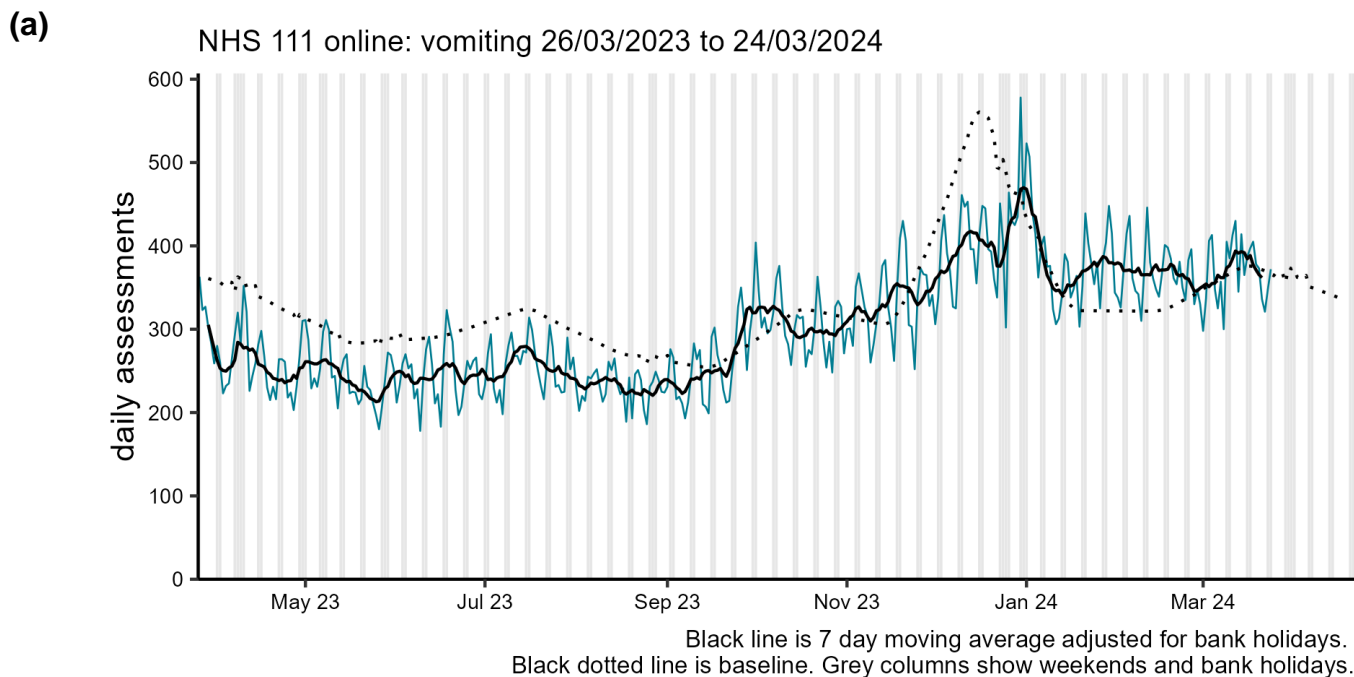
NHS 111 calls: vomiting by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

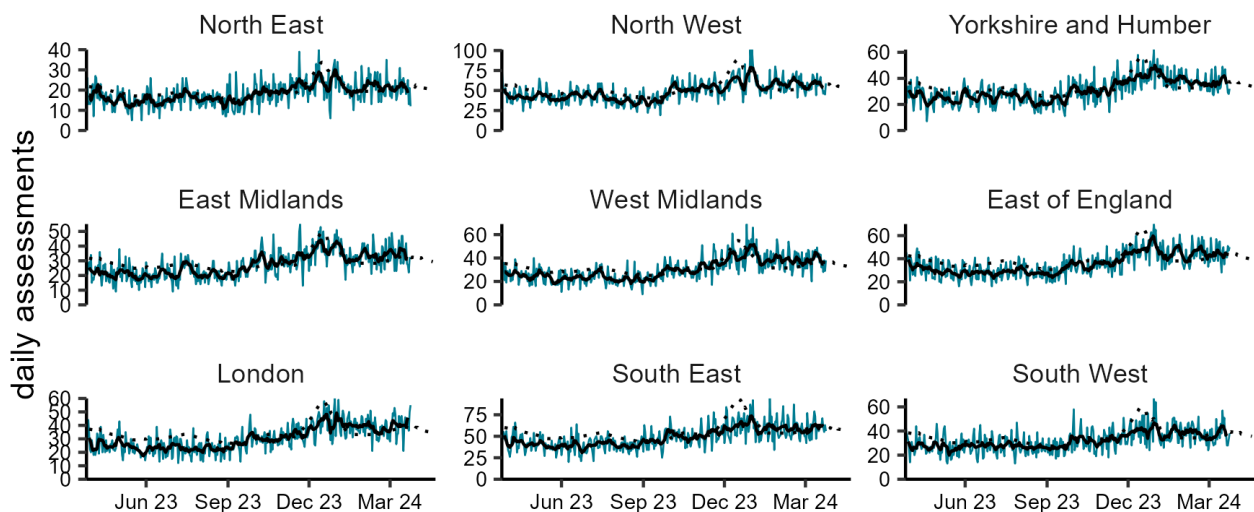
# Vomiting NHS 111 online

**Figure 17: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for vomiting, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c)

NHS 111 online: vomiting by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

## Seasonal environmental conditions

UKHSA and the Met Office operate a weather-health alert system that includes both heat and cold weather alert periods. Syndromic indicators are used to monitor the impact of both extreme hot and cold weather in England during these periods and will be included below (where an appropriate syndromic indicator is available).

[Cold weather alert](#) period: 1 November to 31 March

[Heat-Health Alert](#) period: 1 June to 30 September

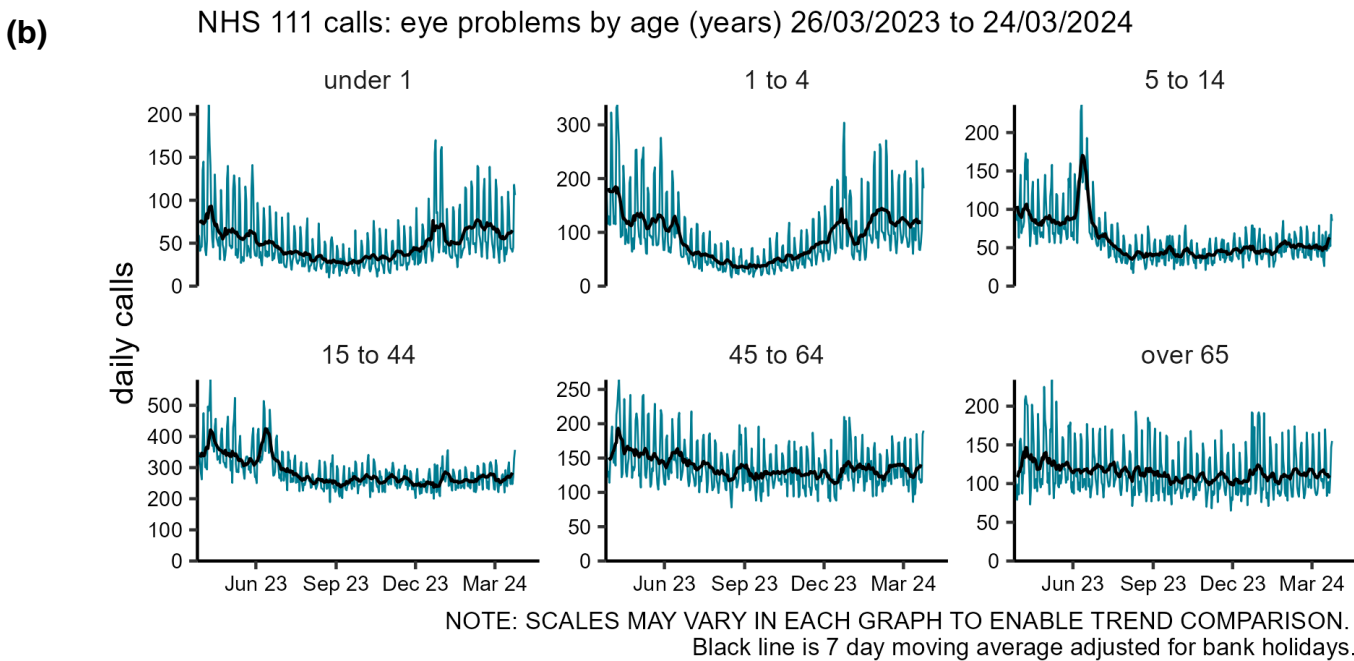
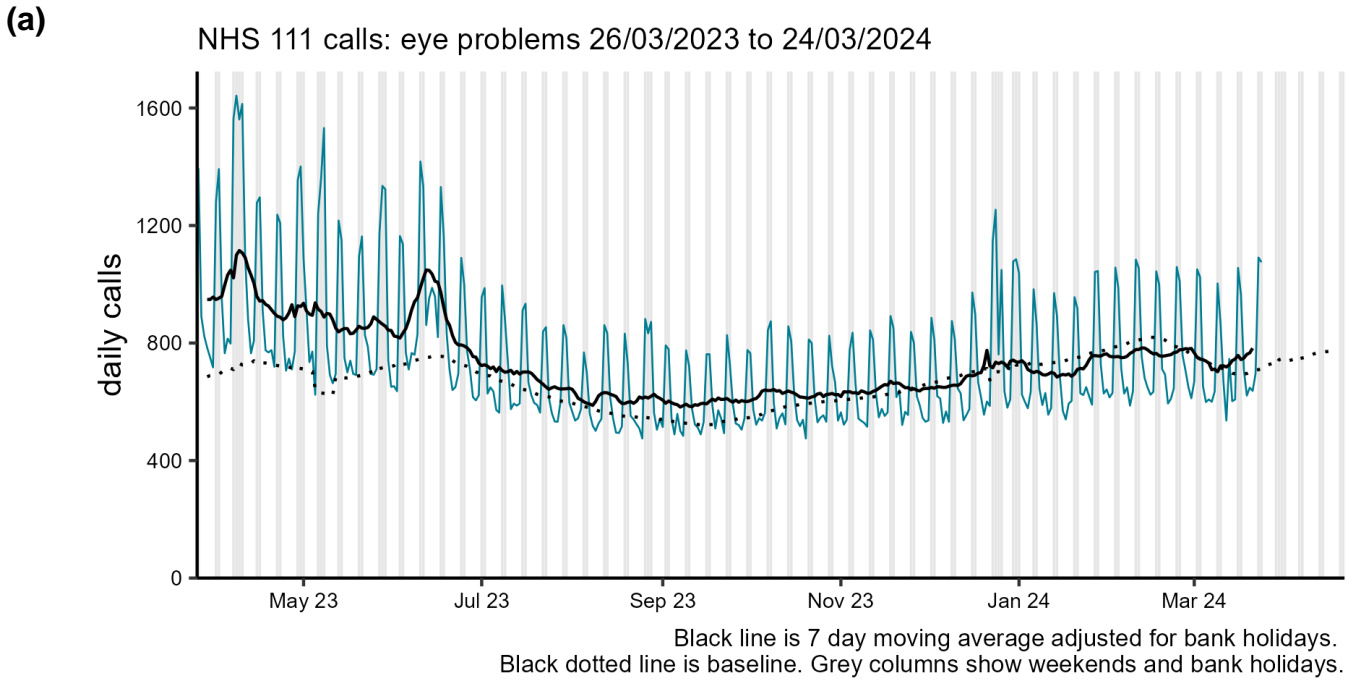
Highest weather alert level during the current reporting week:

**No alerts issued**

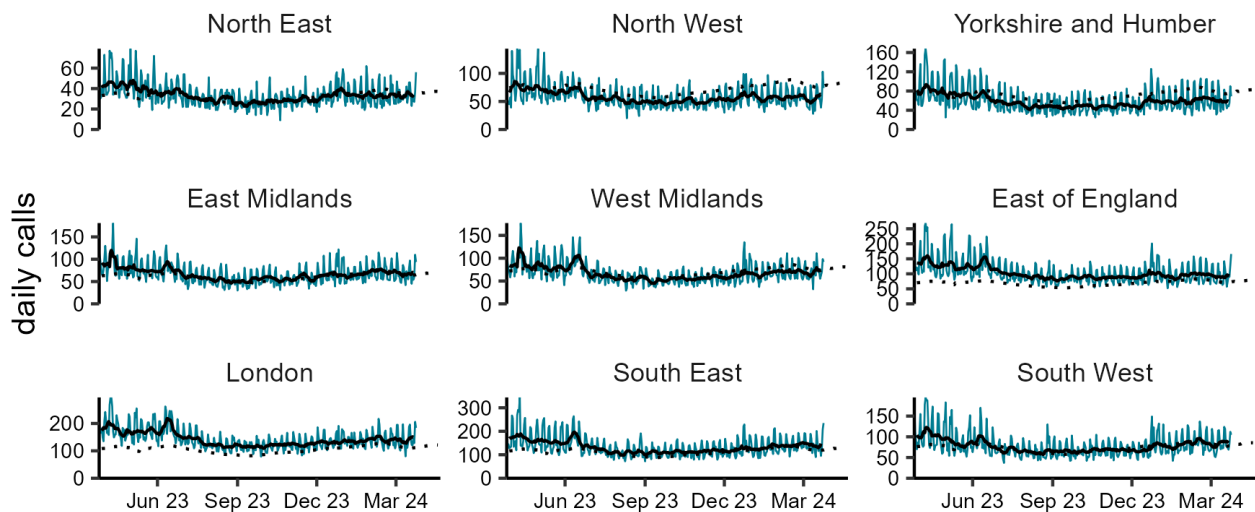


# Eye problems NHS 111 calls

**Figure 18: Daily number of NHS 111 calls (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for eye problems, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.sd**



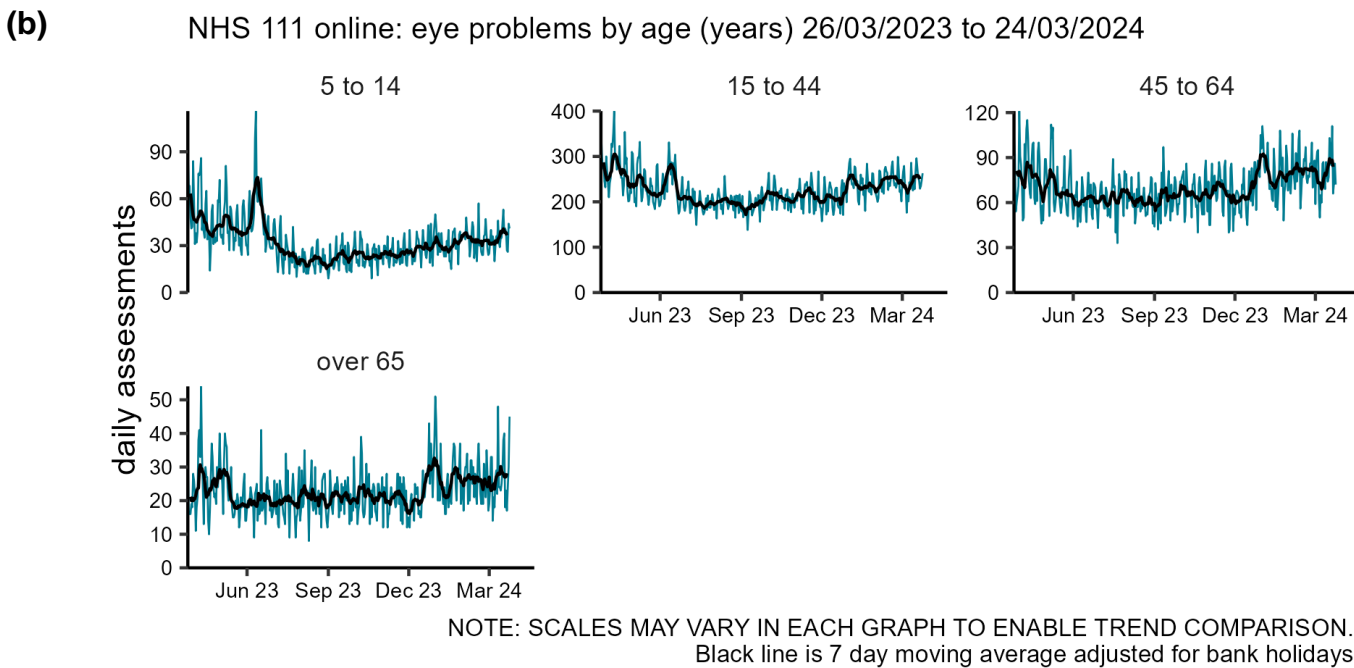
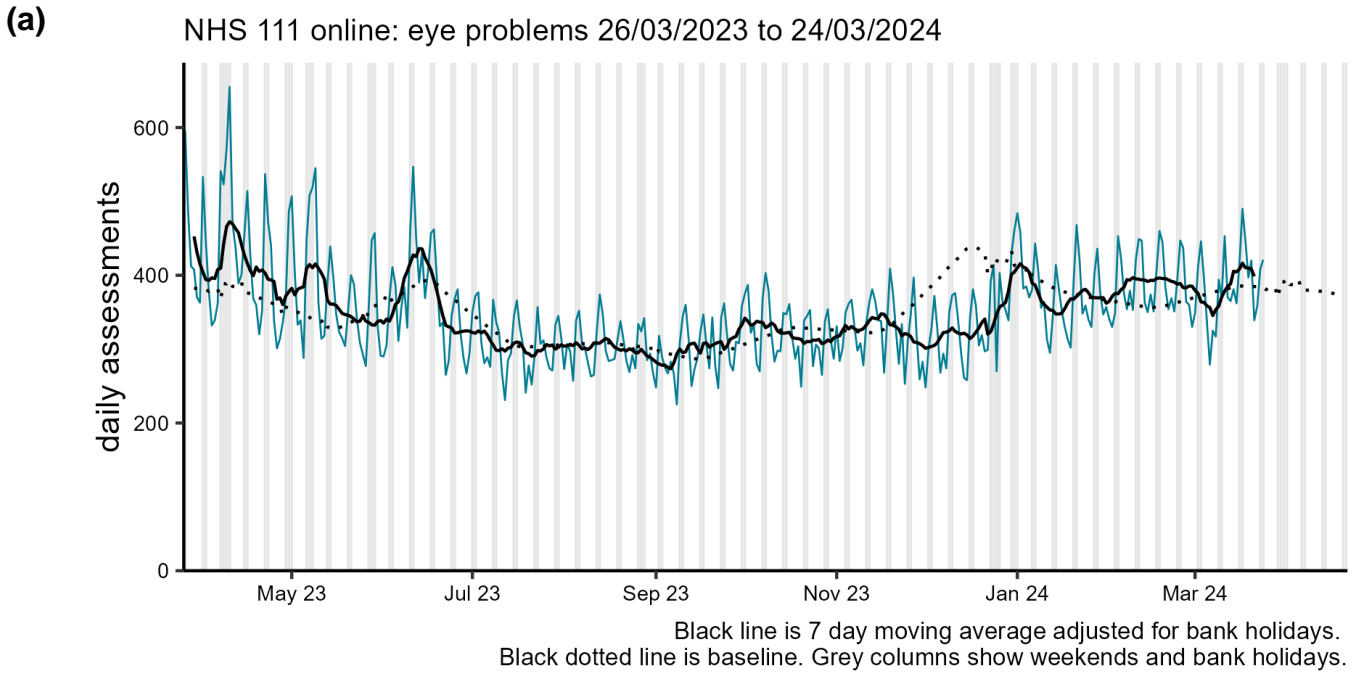
**(c)** NHS 111 calls: eye problems by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



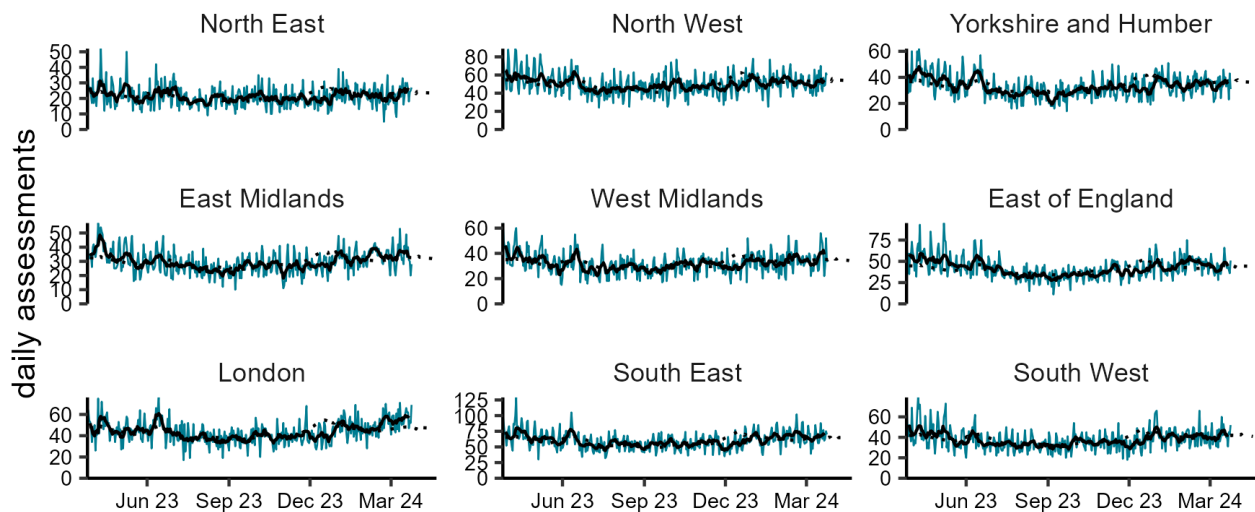
NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

# Eye problems NHS 111 online

**Figure 19: Daily number of completed NHS 111 online assessments (and 7-day moving average adjusted for bank holidays) for eye problems, England (a) nationally, (b) by age and (c) by UKHSA Region.**



(c) NHS 111 online: eye problems by UKHSA region 26/03/2023 to 24/03/2024



NOTE: SCALES MAY VARY IN EACH GRAPH TO ENABLE TREND COMPARISON.  
Black line is 7 day moving average adjusted for bank holidays.  
Black dotted line is baseline.

## Notes and caveats

The following additional caveats apply to the UKHSA remote health advice syndromic surveillance system:

- during Jan/Feb/Mar 2024, new NHS Pathways system updates (NHS Pathways Release 41 and 42) have resulted in updates to the clinical triage of certain calls and online assessments. These updates have particularly affected the number of syndromic NHS 111 calls for the cold/flu, cough, difficulty breathing and 'potential COVID-19' indicators. Due to challenges interpreting the NHS 111 difficulty breathing call indicator, it has been removed from this bulletin. NHS 111 syndromic calls for cold/flu, cough, difficulty breathing and 'potential COVID-19' indicators should be interpreted with caution
- all NHS 111 syndromic trends should be interpreted with caution due to changes in national advice and guidance regarding access to health care services as well as updates and changes to service provision during the COVID-19 pandemic
- data presented should be used to monitor trends rather than numbers of 'cases':
  - commencing week 20 of 2023, NHS 111 calls are monitored using the NHS 111 Intelligent Data Tool, a repository of data on NHS 111 calls used by NHS England, UKHSA and service commissioners. The volume of calls for each syndromic indicator may be different to the call volumes presented in previous syndromic reports. This is because the Intelligent Data Tool records the Symptom Group allocated to each call following triage rather than the NHS Pathway. However, trends remain similar to those previously reported
  - NHS 111 calls data may not include the most urgent calls which are rapidly redirected to ambulance services
  - any user that launches an online assessment may access the service multiple times and can change their answers and follow multiple journeys through the online system: only complete assessments are included here
  - an individual may use both the NHS 111 online and NHS 111 telephony services; counts from the two services cannot be considered as distinct counts of individuals
  - NHS 111 online assessment data does not include children under 5 years of age
- baselines:
  - were last remodelled January 2024
  - are constructed from historical data since January 2018
  - represent seasonally expected levels of activity
  - take account of any known substantial changes in data collection, population coverage or reporting practices and consequently may vary slightly from week to week (and will rescale) if there are substantial changes in call/online activity

- the COVID-19 pandemic period is excluded
- as NHS 111 systems evolve to meet service needs, we continue to work with NHS 111 and NHS England to ensure that:
  - changes impacting on syndromic indicators reported in this bulletin are identified and accounted for as far as possible
  - changes are described in: **Data quality issues of note this week**
- further information about NHS 111 can be found [here](#)

## COVID-19 syndromic surveillance

The 'potential COVID-19' syndromic indicator reported here for all NHS 111 data is based on either the symptom of each call or the outcome of each online assessment (known as the disposition):

- 'potential COVID-19' is the only NHS 111 Online syndromic indicator that is based on disposition
- 'potential COVID-19' online assessments may therefore also appear in other syndromic indicators based on the Pathway of each online assessment
- these data are based on 'potential COVID-19' symptoms reported and are not based on outcomes of tests for coronavirus

## Acknowledgements

We are grateful to NHS 111 and to NHS England for their assistance and support in providing the anonymised data that underpin this system.

# About the UK Health Security Agency

UKHSA is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

UKHSA is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department of Health and Social Care.

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-health-security-agency)

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