

Abstract for the International meeting on health sentinel networks

Isabel Marinho Falcão, Coordinator of the Portuguese Sentinel Network

The Portuguese Sentinel Practice Network is constituted by about 150 general practitioners (GPs)/family doctors whose professional activities are engaged in the health centres of all the mainland of Portugal and the Autonomous Regions of Madeira and Azores.

The participation of the GPs in the Sentinel Practice Network is strictly voluntary and the two forms of collaboration are: 1- A weekly continuous notification, of the new cases of illnesses occurring to the patients enrolled in the lists of the participating GPs; 2- Side studies and participation in national and international studies, under proposal of the participating GPs or others.

The main objectives of the activity of this network are: 1. To estimate the incidence rates for some illnesses or of related situations which occur with the population enrolled in the sentinel practice network; 2. To do an epidemiological vigilance of some illnesses that occur in the community, in such a way as to allow an early identification of eventual "outbreaks"; 3. To set up a database that enables, at any moment, a thorough epidemiological analysis of illnesses with interest to the public health.

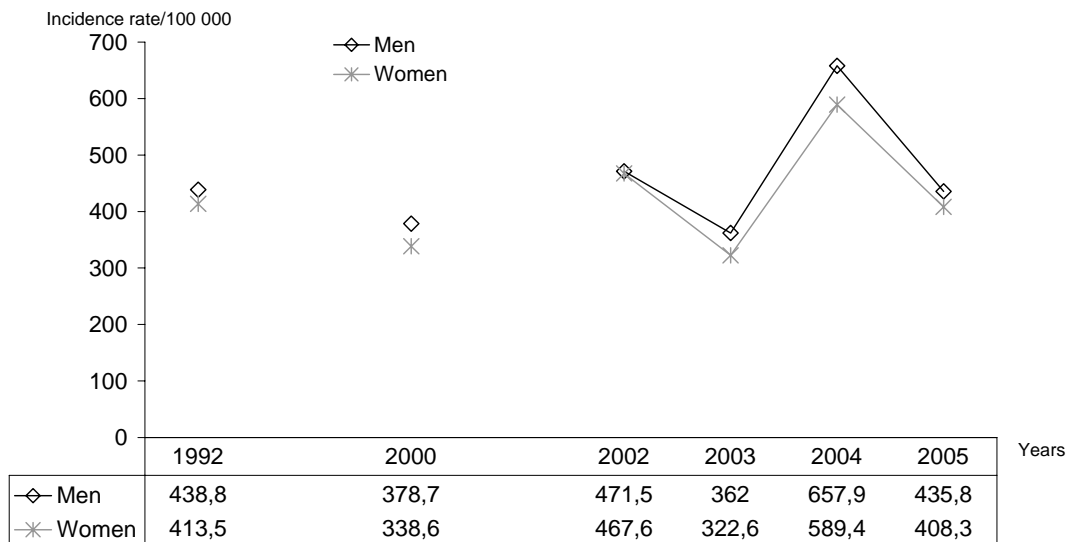
The denominators used by Médicos-Sentinela, are known by age and sex and yearly updated. There are two types: 1- The maximum population under observation, which is used for prevalence studies, is obtained by summing up the number of patients of the lists of all the GPs participating in the network; 2- The population under effective observation, which is estimated by summing up the lists of patients of the GPs that were *actives* (those who had during a certain week at least 1 case to report or declared that had zero cases) during a certain period of time.

There will be presented some results concerning the first observation of a 3 years follow up study about incidence of complications of diabetes mellitus. The data collected during the first observation of this study concerns 4589 patients with diabetes, 2147 men (46,8%) and 2442 women (53,2%). The type of diabetes was available in 4601 patients, as follows: diabetes type 1 was present in 156 patients (3,4%), type 2 in 4389 (96,6%). All data has been being validated and prepared until now for the analysis, and some results are expected to be available for the presentation during this meeting.

There will be also presented the results of the epidemiological surveillance of abortion, chickenpox, diabetes, influenza, myocardical infarction and stroke and which graphics are as follows.

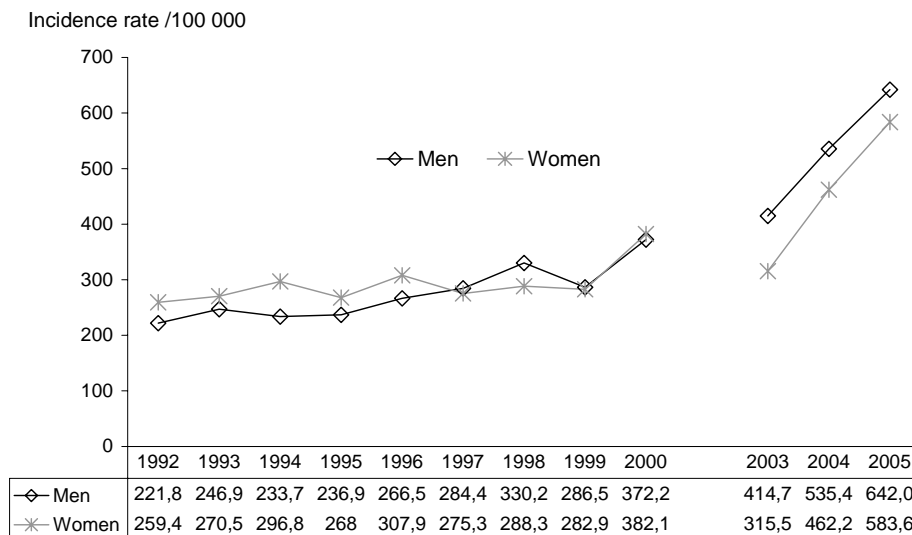


Fig. 1 - Distribution of the incidence rate of **abortion** in Portugal, by age group, during the periods 1992-1998 and 2004-2005



From: Médicos-Sentinela of Portugal

Fig. 2 - Distribution of the incidence rate of **chickenpox** in Portugal by sex and age group, in 1992, 2000 and 2002-2005



From: Médicos-Sentinela of Portugal

Fig. 3 - Distribution of the incidence rate of **diabetes mellitus** in Portugal by sex and age group, during the periods 1992-2000 and 2003-2005

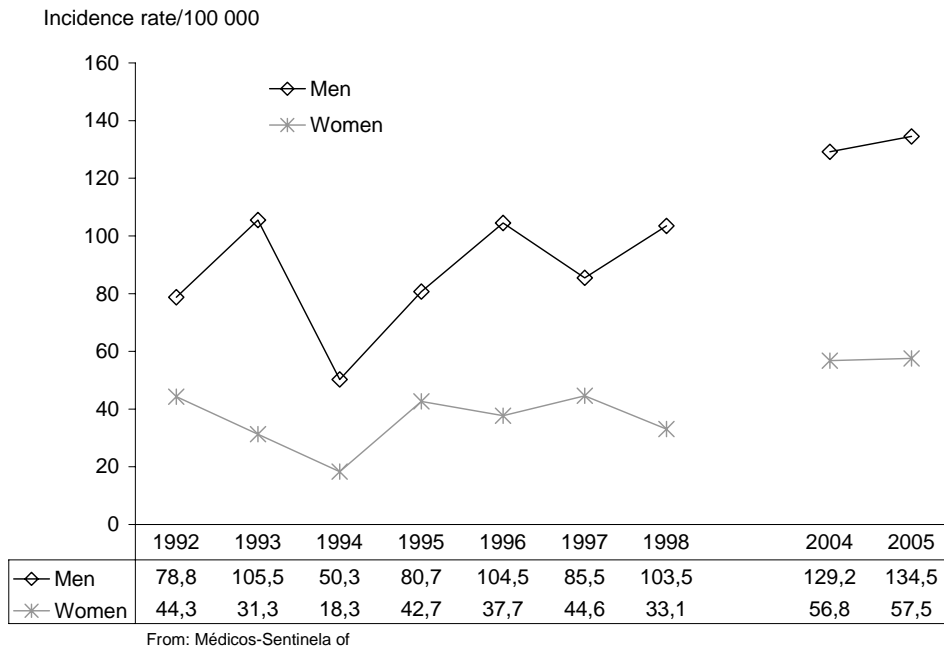


Fig. 4 - Distribution of the incidence rate of **myocardial infarction** in Portugal by sex and age group, during the periods 1992-1998 and 2004-2005

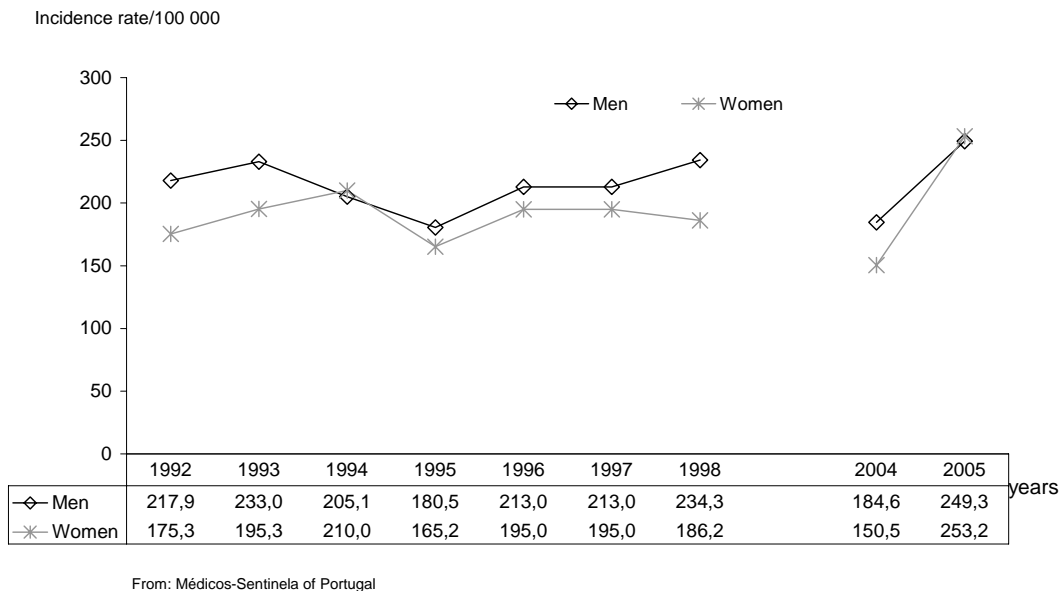


Fig. 5 - Distribution of the incidence rate of **stroke** in Portugal by sex and age group, during the periods 1992-1998 and 2004-2005.