



Facsimile Cover Sheet /Wharangi Nama Waea

Date/Te Ra: **21 October 2011**

To/Kia: GPs, Practice nurses at Primary Care Centres, After-hours Centres, Wellington Free Ambulance staff, Pharmacists, Emergency Department and Hospital Staff in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions.	From/Na: Dr Annette Nesdale Medical Officer of Health Regional Public Health
Name of Agency/Wahi Mahi:	Fax Number>Nama Waea:

Update on Measles and change in recommended laboratory testing

I would be grateful if you could distribute the following Public Health Alert regarding measles to relevant staff in your organisation. A copy of this update can be found on our website:
<http://www.rph.org.nz>.

If you would also like to receive this by email for ease of distribution, storage and retrieval please advise RPH of your email on rph@huttvalleydhb.org.nz.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Nesdale'.

Dr Annette Nesdale
Medical Officer of Health

The information contained in this facsimile message is legally privileged and confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately. Thank you.

He ture no nga korero katoa kei roto o tenei karere, no reira, kia tupato. Mehemea kaore matau kua e mau. Me whakamohiotia atu ki to Tari, me te mea nana I tono mai. E Tika Hoki.



Date: 21 October 2011

To: GPs and Practice nurses at Primary Care Centres, After-hours Centres, Wellington Free Ambulance staff, Pharmacists, Emergency Department and Hospital Staff in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions.

From: Dr Annette Nesdale, Medical Officer of Health, Regional Public Health

Public Health Alert

Measles Update

There are five confirmed cases of measles in the region. All cases have been in adults, aged between 19 - 41 years, who work in the central business district and live in Wellington. Prior to diagnosis the ill people went to a number of locations where they may have unknowingly passed the infection on to others. Please refer to Appendix 1 for details of locations and times.

Changes in recommended testing for measles

In response to increasing numbers of measles cases there is a change in recommended testing for measles. A naso-pharyngeal or good throat swab put into viral transport media for PCR is **currently** the recommended test. Serology is not currently recommended for diagnostic purposes.

Serology is also not routinely indicated prior to vaccination and delays the person getting protection. Over requesting of serology will overwhelm laboratory services. Regional Public Health may carry out serology on close contacts who are unsure of their measles immunity, of a confirmed case if indicated.

Primary care doctors should request PCR testing if the suspected measles case meets the following criteria:

1. - Person born after 1969 **and**
- Presence of morbilliform rash **and**
- Fever (38 C or higher) **and**
- One of cough, coryza, sore red eyes or Koplik spots
2. Or any febrile illness and rash in a known contact of a confirmed case of measles within 14 days of contact.

For PCR testing outside of these criteria please contact the on-call Microbiologist or on-call Medical Officer of Health to discuss the clinical situation. Measles rarely occurs in people older than 42 years.

Please note testing criteria may change in response to case numbers.

Please check now, that you have a **small** number of viral transport media and swabs available for Measles testing.. Also check the expiry date on existing swabs as they have a shelf life of approximately 6 months.

If a patient with suspected measles is booked in and you don't have any swabs, ring Aotea on 04 381 5900 and talk to the Stores Department. They may be able to get swabs out to medical centres within 3 to 4 hours using their courier system. Otherwise swabs can be ordered through the usual process. Further information about testing is available on the Aotea pathology website.

Measles is a notifiable disease

All suspected cases of acute measles must be notified to the on-call Medical Officer of Health.

Please call ahead!

If you have advised any ill person with suspected measles to be clinically assessed in another healthcare facility, please advise the facility so they can prepare for the arrival of a potentially infectious person. **At least 20 minutes** will be needed to prepare infection control measures.

Hutt ED: Call Hutt Hospital on (04) 566 6999 and ask to speak to the ED triage nurse or the ED charge nurse

Wellington ED: Call Wellington ED reception on (04) 385 5432 and ask to be put through to the consultant on call, or call the Associate Charge Nurse Manager on 027 208 9272

Kenepuru A&M: Call Kenepuru A&M on (04) 918 2045 and ask for the triage nurse

Wairarapa ED: Call Masterton Hospital on (06) 946 9800, ask to speak to the Duty Nurse Manager or the ED Charge Nurse

Most people with measles or suspected measles can be managed in primary care.

Immunisation

The first MMR is the highest priority. It is recommended because of the current outbreak that infants are recalled to get their first MMR at 12 months, instead of 15 months. All the 15 month vaccinations should be given at this visit.

Anyone born after January 1969 who has not had two measles vaccinations is being advised to get an MMR. Where primary care capacity and an electronic database is available, please recall all patients up to the age of 42 who are not up-to-date with MMR vaccinations.

MMR should not be given to pregnant women.

Many people develop a mild fever and rash 10-14 days after MMR vaccination and should not be tested because both IgM serology and throat PCR will predictably be positive. Vaccine strains are not transmitted and contacts are not at risk.

You may wish to advise parents that unimmunised schoolchildren who are contacts of a confirmed case of measles may be excluded from school for two weeks from the time of contact with the case. This date may be extended if further cases occur.

This advice is equally important for all healthcare staff and their families.



Appendix 1

Locations where measles could have spread

BNZ building at 60 Waterloo Quay

- Tuesday 11 October
- Wednesday 12 October
- Friday 14 October

Wasabi Sushi at James Cook Arcade, Lambton Quay

- Monday 10 October between midday – 7.00pm
- Tuesday 11 October between midday – 7.00pm
- Wednesday 12 October between 2.00pm – 7.00pm

Kaffee Eis on Courtenay Place

- Tuesday 11 October between 7.30am – 4.00pm
- Wednesday 12 October between 7.30am – 4.00pm
- Thursday 13 October between 6.00pm – 11.00pm
- Friday 14 October between 7.30am – 2.00pm
- Saturday 15 October between 9.00am – midday

Emergency Department at Wellington Regional Hospital

- Sunday 16 October between 6.00pm – 9.00pm
- Tuesday 18 October between 4.00pm – 7.00pm