

Facsimile Cover Sheet
Wharangi Nama Waea

Date/Te Ra: **16 August 2013**

To/Kia: General Practitioners, Practice Nurses, Paediatricians, ID Physicians, Pharmacists, After-hours Centers and Emergency Departments in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa region	From/Na: Dr Annette Nesdale
Name of Agency/Wahi Mahi:	Fax Number/Nama Waea:

Public Health Alert

- 1. Influenza B outbreak at Waikanae Primary School**
- 2. Increase in Shigellosis cases associated with Samoa**

I would be grateful if you could distribute the following information to relevant staff in your organisation.

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,



Dr Annette Nesdale

Medical Officer of Health

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

Public Health Alert

Regional Public Health
Better Health For The Greater Wellington Region



Date: 16 August 2013

To: General Practitioners, Practice Nurses, Paediatricians, ID Physicians, Pharmacists, After-hours Centers and Emergency Departments in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa region

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

1. Outbreak of influenza B – Waikanae Primary school

Waikanae primary school has a laboratory confirmed outbreak of Influenza B. Yesterday there were 125 pupils absent (approximately 27% of the school roll). Common symptoms include high temperatures, chills, headache, nausea, and some vomiting and diarrhoea. Younger children are more likely to experience vomiting and diarrhoea with the 'flu. Public health nurses are working with the school to reduce spread of infection.

Influenza Vaccination

The Ministry of Health funded influenza vaccination programme ended on 31 July. Advise people who request non-funded influenza vaccination that it takes 10-14 days from the time of vaccination to develop full immunity and if somebody has already been exposed to the flu virus before immunity develops, the vaccine will not prevent infection. Healthcare Logistics (09 918 5100) still have influenza vaccine available and this can be ordered via your usual channels.

Treatment

The B and A influenza strains circulating are susceptible to oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza). Consider treating with anti-viral medication when:

- Treatment can start early, ideally within 24 hours of symptom onset
- The person has underlying health conditions that put them at risk of severe infection or deterioration
- Women who are pregnant

Watch for and treat secondary bacterial complications (pneumonia, otitis media) early.

Discuss people with severe disease or complex medical conditions with the on-call Infectious Disease Physician, Paediatrician or Microbiologist.

Infection Control

Review your infection control procedures for staff seeing ill people and that staff have had their influenza vaccination. Have tissues, alcohol hand gel and masks available at your reception area. Avoid patients with obvious 'flu like symptoms sitting in the main waiting area.

Key public health messages for ill people include;

- Washing and drying hands well
- Staying off work/ school when you are sick
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue
- Knowing how to identify and get help if someone is deteriorating.

Resources Influenza can spread quickly in schools, early child care centres and long term care facilities. RPH has sent information to all schools and Early Child Education Centres to promote with parents about watching out for possible complications of 'flu and how to reduce transmission in the school/ centre, family/ household. These resources are available on the RPH website www.rph.org.nz under the 'Influenza' on the 'Health information' tab.

2. Increase in Shigellosis cases in Porirua and Johnsonville

Over the last 4 weeks RPH has been notified of 3 people with laboratory confirmed Shigellosis. All 3 are *Shigella flexneri*. The first 2 are different types (1 A, 1 B) and the typing of the 3rd is pending. While none had recently travelled outside NZ all three have a connection to Samoa- either through eating food that has come from Samoa or contact with an ill person who has recently returned from Samoa. There are 2 children and one adult and they are not known to each other. The onset dates of illness range from mid July to 10 August. We would be grateful if you would test for Shigellosis if a person presents with diarrhoea, especially if associated with blood, and the person has a connection to the Samoan community.