

To:	General Practices, Pharmacists, After-Hours Centres and Emergency Departments in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions
From:	Dr Annette Nesdale, Medical Officer of Health
Date:	6 September 2019
Title:	Public Health Alert: Measles update - 6 September 2019

Please distribute the following information to relevant staff in your organisation.

All public health alerts are available at www.rph.org.nz/publichealthalerts

MEASLES UPDATE – 6 SEPTEMBER 2019

Local and national epidemiology

- There is currently 1 case of measles in the greater Wellington region. A total of 21 cases this year.
- 1051 measles cases have been diagnosed across New Zealand this year, 877 of these in Auckland.
- Children under 5 years account for 30% of cases and 46% hospitalisations.
- Pacific and Maori are experiencing high rates of measles and account for 38% and 24 % of cases.

Diagnosis and testing guidance

- Is available on the 3D Health Pathways website at www.3d.healthpathways.org.nz

MMR vaccine and immunisation

- MMR vaccine is in high demand
- Maintaining the 15m and 4yr MMR vaccine is essential
- As vaccine supplies allow, immunise the following priority groups:

Babies aged 12-14 months travelling to Auckland are recommended to have their 1 st MMR early at 12m. Ideally 2 weeks before travel to allow protection to develop
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People travelling to Auckland, particularly Pacific or Maori people visiting family and friends in South Auckland

People (including babies 6-12months) travelling overseas where large measles outbreaks are occurring. Further advice and details of countries with measles outbreaks can be found at www.immune.org.nz/hot-topic/measles-overseas-and-new-zealand .

Opportunistic immunisation of people aged < 50 years who have not had a measles immunisation especially healthcare and education and childcare workers . A table showing people who may not be protected by year of birth can be accessed on our website www.rph.org.nz/measles
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- The following link has a useful document of frequently asked MMR questions: <https://www.immune.org.nz/hot-topic/measles-overseas-and-new-zealand>.

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Requests for measles vaccination records

Please support parents to get copies of their child's record of measles vaccine to update school and early childhood education centre registers. This information is critical for a school/centre to be able to identify people not protected if a measles case occurs at their school or centre.

Parents of children aged 0-14 years can email RES-NIR@huttvalleydhb.org.nz and ask for a copy of their child's National Immunisation Register (NIR) record for measles. They will need to provide:

- Child's first and last name
- Date of birth
- NHI (if known)
- Mother's first and last name. This will ensure we get the correct record if there are children with similar names born on the same day

NOTE: As the NIR was only established in 2005 it does not hold records for children over 14 years.

A copy of information we have sent to schools and early childcare centres can be found on our website www.rph.org.nz/measles

Suggestions for coping with the increased demand

We have heard the following great ideas that medical centres are using to minimise measles spread and cope with increased demand for immunisations:

- Masks at the entry door
- A poster on the front door requesting anyone with suspected measles/fever and rash to ring reception and wait in their car until someone brings them a mask
- Have information about MMR availability on the front page of your website
- Offering MMR clinics
- Encouraging email for measles enquiries
- Having links to the RPH website and the IMAC website their website

Finally, thank you for all the great work you are all doing to stop measles spreading in our communities.