

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

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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:	13 April 2018
Title:	Notification of measles cases in South Island, potential to spread further

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

If you would like to receive this by email please advise RPH of your email on rph@huttvalleydhb.org.nz.

All public health alerts are available at www.rph.org.nz (health professionals – public health alerts)

Potential for measles spread during the school holidays

The Ministry of Health has asked us to advise you to be alert for possible cases of measles during the next couple of weeks (school holidays) following five confirmed cases in the South Island

ADVISORY SUMMARY:

It is important that health practitioners are aware of measles symptoms and make sure people born after 1968 are fully immunised against measles. If a case of measles is suspected, they should be isolated from other patients, and those exposed to the case should receive an MMR vaccine ideally within 72 hours as post-exposure prophylaxis, otherwise as soon as possible, if they are considered as not immune against measles.

There have been five confirmed cases of measles notified in Queenstown, Wanaka, Canterbury and Nelson Marlborough, and other cases are possible, including elsewhere in New Zealand. The cases have visited a number of public places while they were infectious, including supermarkets, restaurants, camp grounds, various recreational facilities, other public places and general practices.

Before they became sick, the cases visited either Queenstown or Christchurch Airport or took flight NZ646 from Queenstown to Christchurch, or flight NZ8848 from Christchurch to Nelson on 22 March which are the likely places where they were infected. Investigations are continuing and close contacts are being identified for follow up. Nelson Marlborough DHB, Southern DHB and Canterbury DHB Public Health Units are working with affected work places to provide advice to staff. With the school holidays beginning next week and people moving around the country the Ministry of Health have issued a media statement to raise community awareness.

For further information on measles symptoms and complications please refer to the attached flow chart and

- www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/measles-information-health-professionals
- www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/communicable-disease-control-manual/measles

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Suspected cases of measles need to be confirmed as a matter of urgency.

