

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:	8 May 2019
Title:	2 measles cases in Wellington region

Measles

- There are 2 measles cases currently in the Wellington region
- Both cases are directly linked to cases in the Bay of Plenty
- Neither of the ill people spent time in public places while infectious so there is a low risk of community spread in our region at this stage
- Remember to ask suspected cases about travel overseas or places in NZ where measles is occurring; Bay of Plenty, Auckland, Northland or Waikato
- Ensure suspected measles cases are offered a mask on entry to avoid transmission in your waiting room and therefore subsequent need to trace waiting-room contacts

Laboratory testing for measles

- Discuss suspected cases on suspicion with Regional Public Health (RPH) and contact Microbiology registrar or SMO on-call to facilitate urgent PCR testing
- Do NOT send patients into Wellington SCL collection centres for measles testing as it puts others at risk
- If unsure how to take samples safely call the Microbiology registrar or SMO on-call for advice.
- Remember serology (IgM) is not useful for diagnosis of suspected measles
- Serology (IgG) testing of contacts can be helpful in some situations – this will be guided by RPH.

Immunisation

The Ministry of Health has advised that the priority for measles immunisation is;

- Maintaining the 15 month and 4 year MMR immunisations
- People aged under 50 years who have never had measles immunisation or measles disease

Further information:

- Health Pathways provides updated clinical, infection control and laboratory testing information