

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
Date:	6 December 2017
Title:	Public Health Alert: Whooping cough and Mumps outbreaks

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

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

Immunise NOW – protect patients and staff from whooping cough, mumps before the holiday season.

KEY POINTS

Whooping cough

- New Zealand is in the early stages of a nation wide whooping cough outbreak. There have been more than 1500 cases of whooping cough across the country this year.
- Areas with highest numbers of cases include: Auckland, Waikato, Hawkes Bay, Nelson Marlborough, Canterbury and Otago Southland.
- Locally, there have been 141 cases in the CCDHB region, 55 in the HVDHB region, and 3 in the Wairarapa this year.
- Babies are at high risk of severe disease, and are at higher risk of infection until their 3rd immunisation at 5 months of age. Across NZ this year, approximately 90 babies under 1 year have had whooping cough and half of these have required hospital admission.
- Pregnant women who get vaccinated protect themselves and pass some immunity on to their unborn baby.

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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 tonu mai. E Tika Hoki.



Mumps

- New Zealand has a large on-going mumps outbreak with the majority of cases in Auckland (~80% of cases). There have been 23 cases in the CCDHB region, 8 in HVDHB and none so far in the Wairarapa.
- Approximately 8% of people were infected during overseas travel.
- 75% of cases have occurred in people aged 10-29 years.
- Pacific people have the highest number of cases (53% of cases) followed by European/other (20%), Māori 14% and Asian people 11%.
- Many Pacific people are vulnerable to mumps as some Pacific Islands (i.e. Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) only offer the measles and rubella vaccine (MR) **not** MMR.

Actions that primary care, LMCs and secondary care can take to stop whooping cough and mumps:

- Advise pregnant women that there is a nationwide whooping cough outbreak and recommend the free Boostrix vaccination at 28-38 weeks of gestation.
- Check that children who live in the same house as pregnant woman, are up-to-date with their immunisations. Also, consider vaccination (unfunded) for other adults in the house or who will have regular close contact with the newborn baby.
- Advise parents to keep young babies away from anyone with a cough.
- Support families to vaccinate babies and children on time. This is especially important prior to family gatherings and travel over the holiday season. Protection from immunisation takes ~ 10-14 days to develop.
- Offer MMR to all patients who have not had 2 MMR vaccinations. This is especially important for Pacific people who may not have protection from mumps.
- Ask about protection from mumps, measles and rubella before travel. If in doubt, vaccinate. MMR is free for anyone (including overseas students) who needs it.
- Provide tissues and faces masks in your reception and treatment areas.
- Ensure your staff, including reception and administrative staff, are protected from whooping cough and mumps.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Additional information is available by visiting our website www.rph.org.nz

Factsheets on mumps and whooping cough are available below.

<http://www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/illness-and-disease/mumps/mumps-factsheet.pdf>

<http://www.rph.org.nz/public-health-topics/illness-and-disease/whooping-cough-pertussis/whooping-cough-fact-sheet.pdf>

And the Ministry of Health website www.health.govt.nz

www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/whooping-cough

www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/mumps