



To:	General Practices, Pharmacists and Primary Care Organisations in the greater Wellington and Wairarapa regions
From:	Dr Craig Thornley
Date:	04/08/2016
Title:	National Health Advisory – Meningitis at World Youth Day

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)

NATIONAL HEALTH ADVISORY

Notification of Meningitis Death at World Youth Day, Poland

The Ministry of Health have requested circulation of the following information. On 2 August 2016 a death from meningococcal meningitis was reported in a participant returning from World Youth Day. This event, held from 25-31 July 2016 in Kraków, Poland, drew roughly 3 million participants, with an estimated 2 million present on the final day.

While returning home on 31 July Susanna Rufi, a 19-year old Italian woman, fell ill and was hospitalised in Vienna, Austria, where she subsequently died.

Meningococcal meningitis is a serious illness which can be passed between individuals who are in close contact with each other (e.g. sleeping at least one night in the same room or staying close to the case for more than 8 hours). As such, antibiotic prophylaxis against the illness has been recommended for those who have been travelling or staying with the deceased and those who may have visited or stayed at the **Casa Italia**, the centre for activities amongst Italian participants at the event.

New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Samoa were among the countries who sent representatives to the event. There is no indication at this stage that any attendees from these countries came into contact with the deceased or are at increased risk for meningococcal infection. However, if any attendees did visit the Casa Italia or were in close contact with the case they should contact their GP to begin antibiotics*. There is no need for other participants to begin antibiotics at this time.

If attendees develop flu-like symptoms (fever, headache, muscle or joint pain, and/or extreme fatigue) they should present to their GP for assessment and ensure they report their recent travel to this event.

The risk that attendees who were not close contacts of the case become ill is considered very low. If attendees have any questions, they should contact their GP.

Further information on meningococcal disease is available on the Ministry of Health website: <http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/meningococcal-disease-including-meningitis>.

*Regional Public Health note: should you be contacted by any World Youth Day attendee with exposures or symptoms described above, please contact **Regional Public Health** on **04 570 9002** for further advice

The information contained in this message is legally privileged and confidential. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that use, dissemination, distribution or reproduction of this message is prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please notify us immediately. Thank you.