

Pitopito kōrero

Quarterly newsletter from Regional Public Health - Wairarapa
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Issue 12

Public Health: working with you in our community



Early childhood gastro illness reduction

A message from Campbell Gillam, Wairarapa Health Protection Officer

Thank you to all the early childhood centres and medical centres that provided education and advice to parents recently about reducing gastro illness. The advice provided included effective hand washing and ensuring that sick children stay home until 48 hours after the gastro symptoms have stopped. Such actions have contributed to a significantly lower rate of reported gastroenteritis in our region this year.

Nonetheless, we do expect to see the number of cases of gastroenteritis to increase over the next few months, especially amongst rural children. This is a common springtime occurrence and is linked to calving and lambing.

Please remind parents that, illnesses originating from animals, such as salmonella, giardia, cryptosporidium and campylobacter are usually passed on from the animal and then hand-to-mouth contact by the child.

Children are often more at risk if they are actively involved in raising a pet lamb or calf. It is especially important that children do not handle sick animals, especially scoury animals (animals with diarrhoea). **Hand washing is the key to prevent illness.** Whilst it can be difficult in a farm environment for hand washing to occur regularly, encourage parents to watch children after they have handled animals and ensure they keep their hands away from their face and to wash their hands at the earliest opportunity.

Introducing Liz...

I was born and raised Masterton and have been working at Regional Public Health for five and a half years as the Team Administrator. In my role I am the authorised resource provider for the Wairarapa region. You can order resources online from the HealthEd website www.healthed.govt.nz, and I will send them out to you. Alternatively, we have a small supply and range of resources onsite. Come in and see us!



HealthEd

HealthEd is an online catalogue of **free national public health education resources** brought to you by the Health Promotion Agency (HPA) and the Ministry of Health. At www.healthed.govt.nz you will find trusted information with more than 500 resources, covering a range of topics, from immunisation to tobacco control. **These resources help you to stay well and improve your health.**

HealthEd have recently launched a brand new Facebook page to share updates on new resources and connect with their audience – you! Check them out at www.facebook.com/HealthEd



The wheels are in motion in the Wairarapa

Bikes in Schools is a complete biking package of bikes, helmets, tracks, storage and bike skills training, that is implemented at a school to enable all students to ride a bike on a regular basis. The Bike On NZ Charitable Trust was established in response to the dramatic fall in biking in New Zealand primary school children over the past 20 years. This has resulted in many children not being able to experience “the joy of biking” and the many social, educational and health impacts that result from biking regularly.

Bikes in Schools founder Paul McArdle is delighted “that such a diverse group of local organisations are working together to help get the first Wairarapa Bikes in Schools project funded and implemented at Lakeview School. I believe this will be excellent for the school community and also become a model project for other schools to learn from and replicate.”

Lakeview School have some creative ways of how you can support them in fast tracking the implementation of their Bikes in Schools project. From *Sponsoring a Bike* to *Naming a Road*, you can check out their Facebook page to find how you can help (search ‘Bikes in Schools Wairarapa’). If you would like more information about the Bikes in Schools initiative contact Amanda Taylor at Regional Public Health – Wairarapa, amanda.taylor@wairarapa.dhb.org.nz.



Standing from left: Tessa-Jane Dennes (RPH), Paul McArdle (Bike On NZ), Amanda Taylor (RPH), Ed Hodgkinson (Lakeview School, Principal), Bruce Pauling and Holly McGeorge (WRSC), Rebecca Jamieson (GWRC). Front: Gene Bartlett (Lakeview School, Deputy Principal)

Snippets

Many schools have locked in dates for the **Pedal Ready Bike Skills Training** this summer. If your school is interested in booking these **free** cycle courses contact Holly McGeorge at Wairarapa Road Safety Council at rsc@wairarapa.org.nz. Visit www.pedalready.org.nz for more information.

Check out the new **Youth Reserve website** www.youthreserve.co.nz. This is an online resource developed to **help young people and local services interact** and see what is ‘happening’ in the Wairarapa.

Big congratulations to **Kahutara School** who won the Stafix ‘Powering Your Community’ competition to redevelop their BMX track, what a fantastic outcome for the whole community!

Allergies – hayfever, eczema, asthma

Spring is on the way and with the warmer weather comes a chance to spend more time outdoors. For allergy sufferers, this also means an **increase in mould, pollen and bees which can lead to an increase in seasonal hayfever, eczema and asthma.**

Being prepared

- Be aware of children with allergies in your school or early childhood centre (ECC) by asking for this information from parents at enrolment.
- Inform your public health nurse if you have children with allergies. The public health nurse can work with the parents, school or ECC to develop individual care plans for children with allergic reactions.
- Public health nurses can also provide asthma and anaphylaxis education to staff at the school or ECC.
- Remind parents that it is their responsibility to provide inhalers and check the expiry date regularly.
- For children with chronic asthma, please ask parents to get an asthma plan from their health provider and provide a copy of this to the school or ECC.
- It’s a good time to check policies regarding medication administration in your school or ECC and update them as necessary to ensure safe practice.

Eczema

- Eczema can flare up and become infected. When this happens, it is important for the child to be seen by a health professional. The public health nurse can work with parents and the school to ensure treatment is given in a timely manner.
- When children play in sandpits, it is important to wash the sand off the skin as it can aggravate eczema.
- Dry skin means itchy skin, so it is important to moisturise skin often when eczema is present. Have moisturiser available at school to ensure the child can apply moisturiser during the day or when troubled by itchy skin.

Further information and factsheets are available at www.healthyec.org.nz (these can also be used by schools) or by searching at www.health.govt.nz.

What the team has been up to...

Public Health Nurses Danica Goldsmith and Rosemary Frizzell continue to work on their Certificate in Healthcare Capability. Module Two has involved attending workshops on tikanga and participating in a noho marae. Part of their self directed learning is to look at ways tikanga is applied in their workplace, including participation in pōwhiri, waiata and karakia. **Watch this space for their continued learning!**

Meningococcal disease

We have included information on meningococcal disease as it often occurs at the end of winter, especially if there have been lots of people ill in the community with influenza, and coughs and colds. It is important to know the signs, symptoms and when to get medical attention.

Meningococcal disease is an illness caused by the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis*. It can affect anyone – but is more common in babies, children under the age of five – especially Māori and Pacific children, teenagers, and young adults.

The two common presentations of meningococcal disease are:

- **Meningitis:** infection of the membranes that surround the brain and spinal cord.
- **Septicaemia:** infection of the bloodstream.

If anyone shows signs and symptoms of a meningococcal infection, it is vital to seek medical advice immediately from a doctor or a hospital. *Te Tahumaero Kiriuhi Kakā Me mōhio ki ngā tohumate.* A delay of even hours can be fatal. Meningococcal disease can be treated with antibiotics but **early treatment is very important.**

Signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease

Meningococcal disease can look like influenza (the flu) in its early stages, but quickly gets much worse. The signs and symptoms may not all show up at once, and the illness may develop gradually over one or two days, or much more quickly over a few hours.

People with meningococcal disease may have some or all of the following:

Babies and Children

- Fever
- Crying, unsettled, irritable
- Refusing drinks or feeds
- Vomiting
- Sleepy, floppy, harder to wake
- Stiff neck, dislike of bright lights
- Reluctant to walk
- Rash - purple or red spots or bruises

Adults

- Fever
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Sleepy, confused, delirious, unconscious
- Joint pains, aching muscles
- Stiff neck
- Dislike of bright lights
- Rash - purple or red spots or bruises

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE IS LIFE THREATENING – DON'T WAIT – TAKE ACTION!

If you, or someone in your household is sick with one or more of the symptoms listed:

- Ring a doctor or Healthline (**0800 611 116**) straight away – whatever the time, day or night;
- Say what the symptoms are;
- Insist on immediate action – don't be put off – a life may be at risk;
- Even if a person with these symptoms has been checked by a doctor, watch them carefully;
- Do not leave them alone – they may get worse suddenly and need help urgently, and;
- If they get worse, go straight back to a doctor or ring Healthline again.

Information about meningococcal disease is available in Te Reo Māori, Samoan and Tongan at www.healthed.govt.nz.

Immunisation to prevent meningococcal disease

There are several different groups and strains of meningococcal disease. There is no vaccine that protects against all groups and strains. There is currently no vaccine available for meningococcal B, which is the most common strain in NZ. A vaccine against groups A, C, Y and W135 is funded for high risk people (people without a spleen).

Vaccine against group C is recommended, but not funded, for young people living in hostel accommodation. The main use of meningococcal vaccines is to control outbreaks and epidemics.

None of the vaccines provide long-term protection. Even if you, or your child has been immunised with the MeNZB™ vaccine, or one of the other meningococcal vaccines, you or your child can still get meningococcal disease from other strains of bacteria, so you need to know the signs and symptoms of meningococcal disease.

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you would like more information about what vaccines are available and the cost of being immunised.

For further information:

Ministry of Health:

www.health.govt.nz/yourhealth-topics/diseases-and-illnesses/meningococcal-disease

Immunisation Advisory Centre:

www.immune.org.nz/diseases/meningococcal-disease

Big Latch On



This year's Big Latch On was the biggest yet – 90 mums and babies latched on simultaneously as they celebrated International Breastfeeding Week and the fantastic work they are doing breastfeeding their children. Wairarapa makes the Big Latch On event bigger each year. In spite of only making up 1% of the national population, this year Wairarapa contributed 5% of the national latch total!

Breastfeeding Wairarapa would like to thank all of the sponsors who made this event possible:

Carterton Events Centre, PORSE, Tangible Media, Nurture Your World, MUNCH, Heart Foundation, Greytown Pharmacy, NZME, Mirabelle, Masterton New World, The Sign Factory, Mediaworks, Almo's Books, Take Note Carterton, Handmaidnz, The Villa Beauty Therapy, Milady, Yvonne's Kidswear, Lang's Pharmacy Featherston, Clareville Nursery, Watt's Blooming, Hot Yoga For You, Bodymind Pilates, Istanbul, 10 O'Clock Cookie Company, The Baby Factory, The Warehouse, The Smokefree Network, New World Carterton, Civil Defence Masterton, FMG, Unichem Southend, Dish, Rideshop Cabs, Mitre 10 Martinborough, Lorna Potter Beauty Therapy, The Chemists, Clareville Bakery, Lonestar, Columbus Coffee at Mega, La Fleure Floriste, Lorraine Hall, Pak n' Save, Tranzit, Simply Devine Beauty Therapy, Wairarapa Machinery, Pinehaven Orchards.

Breast friends



Drop in centre for
Mum-to-Mum
breastfeeding support
Wednesdays 10am–12pm
Starts 26 August

1st, 3rd and 5th Wednesdays in Masterton
Te Awhina Cameron Community House

2nd Wednesday in Featherston
Plunket Rooms, 15 Wallace St, Featherston

4th Wednesday in Greytown
Plunket Rooms, 12 McMaster St, Greytown

www.facebook.com/BreastfeedingWairarapa &
breastfeedingwairarapa@gmail.com

What is public health: building healthy public policy

The key document used internationally for health promotion, the Ottawa Charter, states that "good health is a major resource for social, economic and personal development and an important dimension of quality of life. Political, economic, social, cultural, environmental, behavioural and biological factors can all favour health or be harmful to it."

One way Regional Public Health can influence health outcomes in the community, is through **building healthy public policy**. This means putting health and wellbeing on the agenda of policy makers at a local, regional or national level, to make sure they are aware of the health consequences of their decisions. An example of this, is working with local councils to review local liquor licensing policy. We ensure alcohol accessibility will not lead to an increase in harm, or unsafe behaviour. The aim is to make the healthier choice the easy choice for all, including policy makers.

Regional Public Health – Wairarapa works to keep the community healthy by providing services that promote good health practices and prevent disease.

We go where you work, learn, live and play to help you stay healthy; health begins before you need medical care. Our vision is health and well-being for the members of our community most at risk.

The team is available for advice and practical help. If you would like a public health nurse or advisor to come to see you or for more information about public health services in the Wairarapa call (06) 377 9111 or visit www.rph.org.nz.