



Dear Doctor

Measles outbreak in the ACT

Last week I wrote to you about two cases of measles in students of the Orana Steiner School in Weston. The outbreak of measles has progressed and to date 12 cases have been notified, eight in Orana students and four from the community, including one case in a medical practice staff member. More cases of measles are likely in the ACT and I urge you to encourage those susceptible to measles to have MMR vaccine.

MMR Immunisation:

MMR vaccine is provided free for all age groups. **Two doses of MMR vaccine (at least 4 weeks apart) are required for optimal protection** and are recommended for:

- All adolescents and adults born after 1965 who do not have documented evidence of receiving two doses of measles containing vaccine or serological evidence of measles immunity;
- Children 12 months of age or older.
 - As per the National Immunisation Program Schedule: First dose at 12 months and second dose at 3 ½ to 4 years.
 - Non-immunised children 12 months to 3 ½ years: one dose MMR, second dose at 3 ½ to 4 years (at least 4 weeks apart).
 - Non-immunised children 3 ½ and over: 2 doses MMR vaccine 4 weeks apart.
- Adults born before 1966 - MMR vaccine not required unless serological evidence suggests otherwise.

Urgent assessment and notification of suspected measles cases:

- **If patients present with symptoms and/or signs consistent with measles please obtain serology and a throat swab to confirm or exclude the diagnosis.**
- **Clinical diagnoses of measles must be notified by telephone to the Health Protection Service. This enables rapid identification of potential contacts who may benefit from post-exposure prophylaxis to reduce further transmission of this illness.**
- **Advise people with measles symptoms to stay isolated at home until four days after the rash appears.**

To notify a case of measles or seek advice in relation to measles, please contact Health Protection Service on 6205 2155 or page the public health officer on call on 99624155 after hours.

Yours sincerely

Dr Paul Kelly
Chief Health Officer
29 November 2011