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29 May 2018

Dear Colleague,

Measles Outbreaks

Since the beginning of 2018, there have been over 400 laboratory confirmed cases of measles in England, and two recently confirmed cases in Cumbria. The increase in cases is mainly associated with importations from Europe that have led to some limited spread in local populations, particularly young people and adults who missed out on MMR vaccine when they were younger and under vaccinated communities such as travellers, migrant populations and the anthroposophic (Steiner) community.

Implications for practice:

- We would be grateful if you could maximise all opportunities to ensure children and young adults are fully immunised with MMR.
- All suspected cases should be excluded from school, nursery or work for 5 days after the onset of rash.
- Please display and use the leaflets and posters from the link below to promote MMR vaccination and to raise awareness of measles. These can be ordered in a range of languages including Romanian, Arabic, Czech and Spanish, and a “Think Measles” leaflet aimed at young people.

Link to posters for displaying:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-outbreak>

Message for clients

You may wish to communicate the message below to your clients:

There are currently outbreaks of measles in several areas of the UK affecting unimmunised children and young adults, including 2 recent cases in Cumbria. There are also large outbreaks in several countries across Europe, including holiday destinations. Measles is highly infectious. It can cause serious illness and can

sometimes be fatal. Vaccination with 2 doses of MMR is the safest way to protect children and young people.

*The first MMR vaccine is given to toddlers at the age of 13 months and the second vaccine at around 3 years and 4 months before your child goes to school. MMR can be given to older children, teenagers and young adults if they missed their injections when they were younger. **Contact your GP practice if you or your child needs an MMR vaccine.** The vaccine is free. If you are not sure if you or your child needs an MMR vaccine, you can contact the GP practice to ask.*

Measles is not just a young children's illness. Teenagers, young adults and anyone who has missed their MMR vaccination can get measles. The first signs of measles are fever, cough, runny nose and red sore eyes. After a few days, a spotty rash will appear. It starts on the face and neck before spreading to the rest of the body.

If you think you or your child has measles:

- *Ring your GP practice for advice*
- *Please don't turn up to the surgery, walk in centre or to accident and emergency without calling ahead. The doctor will make special arrangements to see your child so that if your child has got measles they won't pass it on to others.*
- *Keep people with symptoms of measles away from others to avoid spreading measles, and stay away from school, nursery or work for 5 days after the onset of rash.*

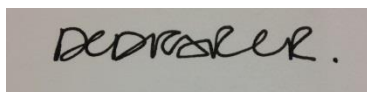
Given the current situation, health and social care workers are at increased risk of coming into contact with patients with suspected measles. We would therefore encourage all staff to ensure they are fully immunised against measles. Health care workers should be offered this vaccination by their employers occupational health provision however individuals of any age can request vaccination from their GP.

Guidance of the MMR vaccine recommendations can be found in the online Green Book chapter 21:-<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-the-green-book-chapter-21>

Yours Sincerely



Tricia Spedding
Head of Public Health



Dianne Draper
Screening and Immunisation Lead

National guidelines

- PHE National Measles Guidelines. Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-measles-guidelines>
- PHE Guidance for measles post-exposure prophylaxis. Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-post-exposure-prophylaxis>
- Measles self-identify poster for GP surgeries/walk-in centres
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-outbreak>
- Free copies of **PHE leaflets and posters** can be ordered through the Health and Social Care Order line:
https://www.orderline.dh.gov.uk/ecom_dh/public/contact.jsf alternatively, you can call **0300 123 1003**.
- Think measles leaflet - product code 3205760
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-measles-patient-leaflet-for-young-people>
- Think measles poster - product code 3205852
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-measles-poster-about-measles-in-young-people>
- Call ahead measles poster – product code 3207737
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/think-measles-poster-for-young-people>
- Pregnancy leaflet – product code 2903655
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pregnancy-how-to-help-protect-you-and-your-baby>
- Have you had your MMR flyer (for mums who have just given birth) Product code: 3325595 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mmr-vaccination-have-you-had-your-mmr>
- MMR leaflet – product code: 3219250
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mmr-for-all-general-leaflet>
- Measles EIW poster – product code: 2900430
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-dont-let-your-child-catch-it-poster>
- PHE Measles guidance on international travel and travel by air, available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-public-health-response-to-infectious-cases-travelling-by-air>