



**Dear Principal/Service Provider Contact**

## **Measles Imminent, public health advice for early childhood education centres and schools**

With large number of measles cases Waikato Public Health is providing the following advice.

### **Check your immunisation register is up-to-date**

All early learning centres, kōhanga reo, primary schools and kura are required to maintain an immunisation register. Other schools may elect to do so. Up-to-date registers mean assessing the likely impact of a case of infectious measles in your school community and managing quarantine for susceptible children, young people and staff is much easier.

You should consider the implications for running your early learning centres, kōhanga reo, primary schools, kura and other schools should significant numbers of susceptible (not known to be immune) children, young people and staff be in quarantine for several days or weeks at the same time, or should cases of measles be in home isolation. “Quarantine” is when people susceptible to measles are exposed to measles and are required to stay at home for the period when they might become infectious. In education settings it is sometimes referred to as “exclusion”.

We recommend that you:

1. **Check** that your immunisation register is up-to-date and urgently update it if required
2. Record the immunisation status of all your workforce born after 1/1/1969
3. Inform your community that those not known to be immune may be quarantined and excluded should measles occur in your school.
4. Inform parents of children who are under 15 years old and unimmunised that there’s sufficient vaccine available for catch up at your doctor. Refer to our [www.waikatodhb.health.nz/measles](http://www.waikatodhb.health.nz/measles) webpage that is updated with our priority vaccine groups.

### **What will happen if you have measles case(s)?**

There are two ways you may be informed of measles. You may be contacted by us to inform you of a confirmed case or you may be informed by a member of the school community.

If we contact you we will require appropriate action:

- Ensure exclusion of the case while infectious – we will advise on safe return date
- Quarantine/exclude the susceptible contacts – we will advise on exclusion period.

If someone else informs you of measles in your early learning centres, kōhanga reo, primary schools, kura or other school we recommend you ensure that person is isolated at home and then **check with us** before taking any further action. You do not need to undertake any action unless the case is confirmed by Public Health. We are frequently “chasing rumours” of measles (or other notifiable diseases) and would prefer to ensure cases are confirmed (or at least probable) before disrupting your operations and alarming your community. If there is a suspect case (for example, someone calls to say a child is being investigated or has measles), the suspect case will need to stay at home while investigations are underway.

### **Measles resources**



Waikato DHB website: [www.waikatodhb.health.nz/measles](http://www.waikatodhb.health.nz/measles)

Waikato DHB public alerts: [www.waikatodhbnewsroom.co.nz/health-alerts](http://www.waikatodhbnewsroom.co.nz/health-alerts)

**For information on measles see:**

Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/measles>

Health Navigator: <https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/m/measles>

Measles in NZ reports: <https://surv.esr.cri.nz/surveillance/WeeklyMeaslesRpt.php>

**Vaccination for 1 to 50 years**

Measles cannot cause large outbreaks or epidemics when enough people are vaccinated. This is not the current situation in NZ. “On Time” vaccination at 15 months and 4 years of old is best. But “catch up” is recommended for anyone aged 1-50 who cannot show they have had two vaccinations once supply is sufficient. If they are a contact of a case of measles they will need to be isolated as per the advice in our fact sheet. Many adults mistakenly believe that they had a measles-containing vaccine as a child, or that their children are fully vaccinated, so it is important to try to get proof before your school has a case.

Being fully vaccinated, isolating cases, excluding those who have been exposed but are not immune and promoting vaccination to your school community will all help protect others, especially those at risk of complications from the disease.

Thank you for your help in reducing the impact of measles in your community.

You can contact us for further advice if required on 07 838 2569

**Yours sincerely,  
Dr Richard Hoskins  
Medical Officer of Health/Public Health Physician**

**Don't assume you are immune.**