

Waikato Public Health Bulletin

Tēnā koutou katoa. We hope you enjoy this edition of the Waikato Public Health Bulletin.

Monkeypox update

Community transmission of Monkeypox (MPX) has been confirmed in Aotearoa New Zealand. As of 26/10/2022 there have been 28 confirmed cases of locally-acquired (19) and internationally-acquired (9) cases, spread across Auckland (20), Wellington (4), and Canterbury (4). One of the Canterbury cases was identified in Waikato.

Internationally, the majority of MPX cases have occurred in men who have sex with men (MSM), a pattern that is holding true in New Zealand. A high index of suspicion should be given to member of this community who develop a compatible rash. Cases are decreasing globally.

Evidence suggests that smallpox vaccination has approximately 85% effectiveness against MPX. The vaccine is not currently available in New Zealand due to supply constraints.

MPX is notifiable to a Medical Officer of Health on suspicion. Contact details for the Waikato Public Health Service can be found at the end of this document. Information that is useful to us include any known source or exposure (or recent travel overseas), [whether they meet clinical and epidemiological criteria](#), and vaccination status (when smallpox vaccines become available in New Zealand).

Cases are required to isolate until lesions have crusted over, fallen off and new skin has

formed underneath. Contacts will not be required to quarantine but may require active monitoring from Public Health depending on the level of risk.

Hepatitis A update

There have now been 21 locally-acquired cases of hepatitis A nationally as of 25/10/2022. Three cases have been identified in Waikato. Nine of these patients have required hospitalisation.

All cases are associated with frozen berry consumption and have the same genome. [Foodstuffs Own Brands Ltd has recalled Pams brand frozen berries](#), which contain raspberries from Serbia, the suspected source. Work to confirm the source is ongoing and current advice is to heat-treat all frozen berries regardless of brand.

Hepatitis A is notifiable to a Medical Officer of Health on suspicion. [It is one of the notifiable diseases for which we would appreciate urgent notification.](#)

Rheumatic fever medication authority

Patients with a history of rheumatic fever usually require monthly intramuscular benzylpenicillin to reduce their chance of recurrence. Patients require a Community Medication Authority to receive the injection which requires annual renewal. In Waikato, District nurses seek completion of a

Community Medication Authority Form from a patient's GP. We ask that GPs prioritise these requests to allow the District Nurses to proceed with administration and ensure there are no delays in care. If you require a copy of the Community Medication Authority Form then please email notifiablediseases@waikatodhb.health.nz. Please also use this request as a prompt to review these patients on an annual basis.

Rickettsia

Two unlinked cases of murine typhus, a type of rickettsial disease, have been notified to the Waikato Public Health Service in recent months. This follows a recent small outbreak in Auckland. As a result, we thought it an apt time to provide a refresher on *Rickettsia*.

Rickettsial diseases are caused by flea-borne intracellular bacteria of the *Rickettsia* genus. Rickettsial diseases are divided into four groups depending on the causative species. Of importance in New Zealand, *R. typhi* causes murine typhus, which is in the typhus group, and *R. felis* causes cat flea rickettsiosis, which is in the spotted fever group.

Typhus, the flea-borne infection caused by *Rickettsia* genus bacteria, is distinct from typhoid fever, the food-borne enteric fever caused by *Salmonella typhi*. However, both are notifiable diseases.

Rickettsial infection most commonly occurs in a rural environment, with exposure to rat or cat fleas. Incidence is highest during winter to spring (April to October), though cases occur at other times.

Typically, rickettsial diseases present with a non-specific febrile illness lasting 7-14 days. An erythematous macular rash may be present. In some cases, an inoculation eschar (ulcer or papule) is present. Incubation is generally between 1-3 weeks.

Laboratory confirmation is via serology or PCR. Treatment is usually with doxycycline.

Rickettsial diseases is notifiable to a Medical Officer of Health on suspicion.

New staff

We have recently welcomed three new staff members into the Waikato Public Health Service whānau. Kat Sung is the new Public Health House Officer, Kathryn Carppe returns to the Public Health Service as a Clinical Nurse Specialist after working in the COVID-19 directorate, and Stephen Stirling joins our admin team.

Notifiable diseases – Trends

Notifiable diseases (Waikato District) - period to: October 2022

*Stats NZ estimated 8.69% of the population resided in Waikato in 2021

Disease name	Waikato cases per month			Cases per month over the last year (mean)		
	August	September	Trend	Waikato	National	% Waikato*
Botulism	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Brucellosis	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Campylobacteriosis	63	64	▲	48.3	482.9	10
COVID-19	10,426	3,945	▼	11,748.8	146,712.7	8
Cryptosporidiosis	22	20	▼	8.6	53.5	16
Decompression sickness	0	0	-	0.0	0.2	0
Dengue fever	0	0	-	0.0	0.7	0
Diphtheria	0	0	-	0.0	0.1	0
Gastroenteritis - unknown cause	0	3	▲	0.4	12.2	3
Gastroenteritis / foodborne intoxication	4	4	-	2.7	11.7	23
Giardiasis	5	9	▲	7.4	55.7	13
Haemophilus influenzae type b	0	0	-	0.0	0.1	0
Hepatitis A	0	2	▲	0.4	2.1	19
Hepatitis B	0	1	▲	0.2	1.1	18
Hepatitis C	0	0	-	0.1	2.6	4
Hepatitis NOS	0	0	-	0.0	0.1	0
Hydatid disease	0	0	-	0.0	0.3	0
Invasive pneumococcal disease	9	5	▼	4.1	46.8	9
Latent tuberculosis infection	0	2	▲	0.6	10.0	6
Lead Poisoning	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Legionellosis	0	1	▲	1.1	18.3	6
Leprosy	0	0	-	0.1	0.4	25
Leptospirosis	0	1	▲	1.8	9.8	18
Listeriosis	0	0	-	0.2	2.3	9
Listeriosis - perinatal	0	0	-	0.0	0.6	0
Malaria	1	0	▼	0.1	0.9	11
Measles	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Meningococcal disease	0	0	-	0.3	5.3	6
Mumps	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Murine Typhus	1	0	▼	0.2	0.5	40
Pertussis	0	1	▲	0.2	1.4	14
Q fever	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Rheumatic fever - initial attack	1	1	-	0.6	6.6	9
Rheumatic fever - recurrent attack	0	1	▲	0.1	0.3	33
Salmonellosis	4	4	-	4.5	57.1	8
Shigellosis	0	2	▲	0.3	3.2	9
Taeniasis	0	0	-	0.0	0.2	0
Tetanus	0	0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Tuberculosis disease - new case	4	4	-	2.5	25.2	10
Tuberculosis disease - relapse or reactivation	0	0	-	0.0	0.3	0
Tuberculosis infection - on preventive treatment	0	0	-	0.0	0.6	0
Typhoid fever	0	0	-	0.2	1.2	17
VTEC/STEC infection	9	12	▲	8.0	83.5	10
Yersiniosis	7	11	▲	7.8	104.0	8

Medical Officers of Health: Felicity Dumble, Richard Wall, Richard Vipond, and Richard Hoskins

After hours:

MOoH: 021 359 650 **HPO:** 021 999 521

If there is no answer, please contact Waikato Hospital's switchboard 07 839 8899 and ask for the on-call MOoH.

During office hours:

Population Health (MOoH or HPO): (07) 838 2569 **Notifications:** 07 838 2569 ext. 22041 or 22020

Notifications outside Hamilton: 0800 800 977 **Fax:** 07 838 2382 **Email:**
notifiablediseases@waikatodhb.health.nz

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