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To: General Practitioners, Practice Nurses and Health Professionals
From: Dr Greg Simmons, Chief Advisor, Population Health Directorate
Subject: **MEASLES**

Dear colleague

Measles is now circulating in New Zealand, with laboratory confirmed cases in the Northland, Auckland, Waitemata, and Canterbury DHBs in August 2009.

Targeted recall of children for MMR vaccination

Further to our faxed advice of 31 July, for practices to undertake active recall, please target MMR vaccination to:

- all children aged 12 months to 12 years who have not yet received their first dose of MMR
- children due to receive their second MMR vaccination according to the immunisation schedule (age 4)

Please continue with opportunistic vaccination for all children who have not received two doses of MMR vaccine. Unimmunised adults (including those where there is no clear documented history of measles immunisation) born after 1969 should receive a dose of MMR vaccine.

This strategy may vary on the advice of the local Medical Officer of Health in areas where there are high case numbers (eg Canterbury DHB).

Contacts of cases

For infants aged between 6 and 12 months who are contacts of measles cases, practices should consider giving a dose of MMR. Please discuss with the local Medical Officer of Health.

Case notification

Please notify any *suspected* measles cases *immediately* to the local Medical Officer of Health and discuss the process for laboratory confirmation of the diagnosis. Early notification is crucial to enable the public health service to identify and manage close contacts of cases.

Claiming immunisation benefit subsidy (IBS) for MMR

The electronic claiming system can be used for first and second doses given to children and adults. But the system may not work for doses given to infants between 6 months and 12 months old and has not been fully tested with all the different Practice Management Systems. We advise:

- For children over one year and adults receiving their **first dose** use the indicator of 15m (MMR1) and electronically claim the IBS as usual.
- For children and adults receiving their **second dose**, which can be given any time after one month after the first dose, use the indicator of 4y (MMR2) and electronically claim the IBS as usual.
- Any MMRs given to those under 1 year (MMR0) can be manually recorded on both the NIR3 and on an IBS claim form.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Greg Simmons'.

Dr Greg Simmons
Chief Advisor
Population Health Directorate