

# MEASLES ALERT – Outbreak risk

Information for NSW General Practitioners

*Please distribute this information to all staff*

1. Three cases of measles have been detected in Sydney in the last two weeks.
2. More cases are likely in the coming weeks.
3. Isolate suspected cases and call the public health unit if you suspect measles

## Measles in NSW

- Three cases of measles have been reported in Sydney since early December.
- Whilst infectious the cases spent considerable time in the Sydney metropolitan area.
- Infants who are too young to be vaccinated (<12 months), children, and adults who have not received two doses of measles containing vaccine are at risk of infection.
- Be alert to travellers who may have been exposed in youth hostels – this population is likely highly mobile.
- Suspect measles in people with fever and rash **irrespective** of travel history

## How does measles present?

- Two to four days of prodromal illness with fever, cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis.
- A maculo-papular rash then typically begins on the face and neck and becomes generalised.
- Measles cases are infectious from the day before the prodrome illness to 4 days after the onset of rash.

## How to manage suspected cases

- **Isolate** - arrange to see suspected cases in their homes or at the end of the day.
- **Notify** - inform your public health unit (PHU) immediately – don't wait for test results before calling. The earlier a PHU knows about a suspected case the more effective containment interventions can be.
- **Test** - collect blood for measles serology, a nose and throat specimen, and a first pass urine sample for nucleic acid testing. Your PHU can assist in expediting testing, if indicated.
- **Continue** to display measles posters and be on the look out for new imports following holiday travel <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/measles/Publications/measlesisabout-gp.pdf>

## Advocate for immunisation

- The best way for people to protect themselves and others is to get vaccinated
- Remember to vaccinate children at 12 and 18 months of age.
- Discuss vaccination with your patients – opportunistic vaccination is important, overseas travel is an opportunity to encourage vaccination.
- Health care workers are at increased risk – ensure that you and your staff are vaccinated.
- Measles containing vaccines (MMR) are safe and available **free** in NSW for those born during or after 1966 who have not previously had two documented doses
- Notify all child and adult doses to the Australian Immunisation Register. Use the Register to identify under-immunised young adults and recall for catch-up MMR

## Further Information:

- Contact your local public health unit on **1300 066 055**
- NSW Measles factsheet:  
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Factsheets/measles.pdf>

Yours sincerely



Dr Vicky Sheppeard  
Director, Communicable Diseases Branch

16 December 2016