

13/04/2018 ADVISORY ON BEHALF OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Notification of measles cases in South Island, potential to spread further

It is important that health practitioners are aware of measles symptoms and make sure people born after 1968 are fully immunised against measles. If a case of measles is suspected, they should be isolated from other patients, and those exposed to the case should receive an MMR vaccine ideally within 72 hours as post-exposure prophylaxis, otherwise as soon as possible, if they are considered as not immune against measles.

There have been five confirmed cases of measles notified in Queenstown, Wanaka, Canterbury and Nelson Marlborough, and other cases are possible, including elsewhere in New Zealand. The cases have visited a number of public places while they were infectious, including supermarkets, restaurants, camp grounds, various recreational facilities, other public places and general practices.

Before they became sick, the cases visited either Queenstown or Christchurch Airport or took flight NZ646 from Queenstown to Christchurch, or flight NZ8848 from Christchurch to Nelson on 22 March which are the likely places where they were infected.

Investigations are continuing and close contacts are being identified for follow up. Nelson Marlborough DHB, Southern DHB and Canterbury DHB Public Health Units are working with affected work places to provide advice to staff.

With the school holidays beginning next week and people moving around the country we have now issued the following media statement to further raise awareness.

For further information on measles symptoms and complications please refer to: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/measles-information-health-professionals>

For further information on case management and investigation please refer to: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/communicable-disease-control-manual/measles>

Dr Caroline McElnay
Director, Public Health
The Ministry of Health