CANTERBURY PRIMARY RESPONSE GROUP **MEASLES** UPDATE

Thursday 14 March 2019 1500

Important information for all GP teams, Community Pharmacists, Community Nursing and Aged Care Facilities – Please share this with everyone in your team

- 27,000 doses of the MMR vaccine have been sent to ProPharma in Christchurch this week. To manage this, ProPharma has taken on additional staff to distribute vaccines to practices as quickly as possible. All practices who have ordered the vaccine will be receiving stock on Thursday and Friday this week. We appreciate that there is concern about the supply of vaccines, however, ProPharma is working incredibly hard to get these to all practices as fast as they can. If you have not received stock by Monday, please let PHARMAC know by emailing enquiry@pharmac.govt.nz or 0800 660 505.
- Further to yesterday's communication on Priority 1 and 2, CDHB anticipate we can cover another three priority groups (Priority 3 – 5 below) with MMR available over the next two weeks.

Please focus on vaccinating in this priority order in Canterbury (recalling patients where relevant):
Priority 1: Children aged 12 months to 13 years who have never been vaccinated
Priority 2: Children and adults aged 14 years to 28 years who have never been vaccinated
Priority 3: Ring-fencing children who cannot be vaccinated, such as the very young or for whom vaccination is contra-indicated[1]
Priority 4: Continue with the routine immunisation programme (15 months and 4 years)
Priority 5: Occupational groups who have frequent contact with children such as EEC, primary and secondary school teachers; residential care managers, healthcare workers etc., who have never been vaccinated.

- National Immunisation Register (NIR) data is being used to measure the uptake of MMR and for planning future vaccine requirements. Please be sure to enter details of all patients into the NIR at the same time as generating an immunisation claim.
- Routine scheduled immunisation should continue as normal.
- One dose of MMR protects 95% of people from developing measles. The reason we give a second dose is to capture the 5% who need this second vaccine to develop immunity. The majority of people who have had one dose of MMR in the past and people who have had a single measles vaccine have a good level of protection.
- We recognise that reviewing the sequencing, reorganising clinics, and communicating the changes to patients will be time consuming, difficult and potentially distressing for practice staff. CDHB are working closely with the Ministry and others to provide consistent public messaging to support us.
- All three urgent care centres are seeing unwell patients but are not providing routine MMR vaccinations via a drop-in service. Riccarton Clinic and Moorhouse Medical Centre are providing vaccinations during normal hours, but for their enrolled patients only.

Management

- Please review your infection prevention and control processes so that potential measles cases are not putting your other patients at risk. Ensure your messaging asks patients to ring before arriving. Consider asking them to remain in their cars until they can be seen.
- Isolation and vaccination are our most important tools for infection control.
- See HealthPathways for diagnosis, management and notification.
- Please remember, if you are taking swabs for measles, complete the Community and Public Health measles notification form: https://canterbury.communityhealthpathways.org/files/referral/NOTIFICATIONMeaslesFaxForm090803-122852.pdf
- Continue to do PCR testing on potential cases at present but there may be a point at which we will be relying on clinical diagnosis and will no longer be testing each case – we will advise further. Please see the enclosed instructions from Canterbury Health Labs.

Kind regards,

Drs Phil Schroeder and Kim Burgess
Canterbury Primary Response Group
www.primaryhealthresponse.org.nz

1. This means caregivers and close contacts of children aged less than 12 months or those who cannot be vaccinated. This needs to be determined on a case by case basis. This should include ensuring 2 doses of MMR have been given as we need very high levels of protection for these very vulnerable children. Refer to the Immunisation Handbook for additional advice.

Canterbury Health Laboratories
www.chl.co.nz | 0800THELAB

Canterbury District Health Board
Te Poari Hauora ō Waitaha

Measles and Respiratory Virus PCR Testing

13 March 2019

Valued Clients,

With both Measles and Influenza circulating in our community, Canterbury Health Laboratories wishes to remind practices around testing requirements.

Acceptable Specimens:
Only Nasopharyngeal Swabs, collected and immediately placed in UTM (universal transport medium) are acceptable for diagnostic PCR for the Measles and Respiratory Viruses. These are provided as a kit and instructions for collection can be found on Health Pathways.

Nasophyarygeal swab in Viral Transport Media

For replacement kits contact labinfo@cdhb.health.nz or call 364 0484.

Holding too many kits on site results in wastage of precious resources, as UTM expires. Laboratories are liaising closely with Community and Public Health to ensure we best utilise and distribute kits.

Who should you request Measles PCR on?
It is critical that clinical presentation is noted on any requests for diagnostic testing, as this testing is appropriate for clinically symptomatic patients who are known to be non-immune, who have not been vaccinated or whose vaccination history is unknown.

If a patient has had a potential exposure but is not clinically symptomatic, then this testing is not appropriate.

Specimens can be sent via your usual collection service.

For any enquiries please contact:

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