

# MEASLES SEROLOGY TESTING

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019

Available information would indicate that less than 20% of people in Canterbury are non-immune to measles. We do not expect to need to test IgG serology for large numbers of this population.

Currently funded measles serology testing is unavailable for GPs except in specific circumstances. This is due to current demand on MMR vaccine and consequent increased demand on serology testing.

The following priority indications for measles serology are all considered legitimate. However, capacity is limited and we are being asked not to actively promote testing or recall patients, but consider referral for testing on a case by case basis according to current risk of exposure to measles.

A. **Funded** priority groups are:

1. Contacts of confirmed measles if requested by staff at Community and Public Health (C&PH)
2. Health Care workers who have patient contact (including St John) born after 1969 without at least one documented MMR vaccination.
3. Patients for whom live attenuated vaccine is contra-indicated and whose work or lifestyle puts them at high risk of contact with measles cases. This includes:
  - i. Pregnant women without a documented record of at least one MMR vaccination.
  - ii. Patients born after 1969 without at least one documented MMR vaccination whose GP has confirmed that they are sufficiently immune-compromised to be at risk.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/77013/Guidance\\_for\\_measles\\_post-exposure\\_prophylaxis.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/77013/Guidance_for_measles_post-exposure_prophylaxis.pdf) - this link is about post exposure prophylaxis rather than serology but pages 6-9 outline levels of immunocompromise which may be useful in decision making.)
4. Some non-health-care workers who have been exposed to a case (see B.2 below) and who would be at risk of disadvantage due to the cost of non-funded testing may be eligible for funded serology at the discretion of the Medical Officer of Health

B. **Non-funded** priority groups are:

1. Essential workers – Police Officers, Fire Fighters and other essential service workers (as determined by C&PH) born after 1969 and without at least one documented MMR vaccination.
2. Non-health care workers exposed to confirmed cases (serology can help identify whether workers can avoid isolation). The process will be managed by C&PH to ensure equity of access to serology testing.

C. Testing not recommended at this time

1. Those aged 30 years and over who are not in the above priority groups
2. Those who are in the current priority vaccination groups - these people should be vaccinated rather than tested.

Specimen collection

All urgent and/or funded measles serology testing will be carried out by Canterbury Health Laboratories. Canterbury Southern Community Laboratories continue to process non-urgent and non-funded tests

- Blood for serology will be taken at the 24 Hour Surgery for patients requiring infection control precautions (exposed to a confirmed case) only at the request of C&PH or GP - please contact 24HS to arrange this.
- Usual collection sites for at risk but non-exposed patients

Kind regards,

Dr Kim Burgess

Canterbury Primary Response Group

[www.primaryhealthresponse.org.nz](http://www.primaryhealthresponse.org.nz)