



May 2, 2017

For immediate release

Keeping families safe with up-to-date immunisations

Waitemata District Health Board (DHB) is encouraging parents and caregivers to ensure their teens and younger children are up-to-date with their immunisations.

Waitemata DHB Chief Executive Dr Dale Bramley says most children in the Waitemata district are immunised against diseases such as measles, mumps, and rubella [MMR]. However there is concern for those who are not protected or who have missed their MMR immunisations as young children.

Ninety-two per cent of 8-month-old babies living in Waitemata are fully vaccinated but there are still more than 600 who are not," Dr Bramley says. "There are another 600 who haven't had all their immunisations by 2-years-old and more than a thousand are missing their immunisations at 4-years-old."

"The only way to protect your children from needless suffering from preventable illnesses, and the risk of potential hospitalisation, is to ensure they are immunised. With 62 cases of mumps confirmed in the Auckland region we are asking parents to make up-to-date immunisation a priority."

Babies should receive scheduled immunisations at the ages of six weeks, three months and five months - vaccinating against a raft of serious diseases including rotavirus, pneumococcal, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio and hepatitis B. Measles vaccinations occur at the age of 15 months and at four years.

Parents and caregivers are also reminded to make sure their teenage children are up-to-date with all their immunisations. Many teenagers may have missed out on measles, mumps and rubella immunisations as young children and need protection now against outbreaks.

"The only way to protect your children from needless suffering and the risk of potential hospitalisation is to ensure they are immunised," Dr Bramley says. "We ask parents to make up-to-date immunisation a priority."

All immunisations offered under the National Immunisation Schedule are free for children aged under 18. Young adults may also be eligible for free MMR or HPV immunisations. Talk to your family doctor or practise nurse to learn more.

Immunisation Week at Waitemata DHB starts on May 1st. Parents and caregivers can seek more information on the vaccine from their GP or practice nurse; by phoning the Immunisation Advisory Centre information line 0800 IMMUNE (466 863) or by visiting www.immune.org.nz

Ends

For further information contact:

Waitemata DHB Media Line

(09) 487 1276