

---

## COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

To Canterbury General Practitioners and Practice  
Nurses

**Canterbury**

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

4 December 2019

Fax 03 3796484

---

### Message from National Measles Coordination Centre

#### Update for health sector of MMR vaccination eligibility

On 3 December Director General of Health Ashley Bloomfield was interviewed on Radio NZ's Checkpoint programme to provide guidance for people travelling to Samoa and the Pacific.

The question about eligibility for vaccination was raised and Dr Bloomfield confirmed that:

- children under the age of 18 are eligible for vaccination in New Zealand regardless of immigration status
- un-immunised eligible people under the age of 50 travelling from New Zealand to Samoa, Tonga, Philippines and Fiji should get vaccinated at least two weeks prior to travel.

#### **Eligibility criteria and claiming**

The eligibility criteria for publicly funded vaccinations states:

*Regardless of their citizenship or immigration status, children are eligible for publicly funded vaccinations on the Immunisation Schedule, and WellChild/Tamariki Ora services.*

Claiming for vaccinating children who are not New Zealand citizens follows the same process as claiming for those who are citizens. This includes claiming for the vaccine and administration. Information is available in the Immunisation Handbook on page 12:

<https://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/immunisation-handbook-2017-2nd-edition-mar18-v5.pdf>

Those over the age of 18 and who are not residents or citizens are ineligible. Eligibility criteria can be found on the Ministry of Health website: <https://www.health.govt.nz/new-zealand-health-system/eligibility-publicly-funded-health-services/guide-eligibility-publicly-funded-health-services/eligibility-limited-range-publicly-funded-health-services-0/immunisation-and-well-child-tamariki-ora>

#### **Priority groups**

We would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate the current priority groups for vaccination are:

- ensure all children receive their vaccinations on time at 15 months (12 months in Auckland) and four years to maintain the national Childhood Immunisation Schedule.
- susceptible close contacts within 72 hours of first exposure to measles when possible.
- babies aged six months to 11 months who live in Auckland or who are travelling to Auckland or overseas to a country that has an active outbreak of measles.
- children and adolescents aged 15 and under who have not had a single dose of MMR
- in accordance with the National Immunisation Schedule, all children under five who have not received either dose of MMR should be actively recalled. We consider active recall of this group to be in line with the priority groups.
- un-immunised eligible people under the age of 50 travelling from New Zealand to Samoa, Tonga, Philippines and Fiji.

Thank you once again for the excellent work you have been doing to increase the vaccination rates.

If you have any questions please email [nationalmeaslescoordination@health.govt.nz](mailto:nationalmeaslescoordination@health.govt.nz).

Yours sincerely

Dr Ramon Pink  
**Medical Officer of Health**