



Circular 066:19

Date: Thursday 5th September 2019

Subject: SLSNZ's Response to Measles Outbreak

Attention: ALL SLSNR MEMBERS

Action: Urgent Information Sharing

Circulars are available at: <http://lifesaving.org.nz/lifesaving/lifesaving-operations-circulars/>

Due to the rapidly increasing incident of measles, particularly in the Auckland region, please take note of the below Health, Safety and Welfare Bulletin requesting that members that are not yet vaccinated or immune to measles, do not attend SLSNZ events.

From the Medical Director for SLSNZ:

There have been over 700 cases of measles so far this year in New Zealand, with a third of those patients ending up hospitalised. In my own emergency department, I've personally treated patients with pneumonia (which affects 1 in 20 patients with measles) and seizures due to brain swelling (which affects 1 in 1000 patients with measles). The unimmunised are at greatest risk, especially infants and people under treatment for cancer. Fortunately, the MMR vaccine is 99% effective if you've had two doses, typically given at 12-15 months and 4 years of age. Take a minute to check your immunisation record. Thank you for staying healthy, so you can look out for others.

Gary Payinda MD, FACEM

Thank you for your cooperation.

Date: 30 August 2019
To: All SLSNZ Clubs
From: Ross Merrett – Health, Safety, Welfare and Risk Manager
Subject: SLSNZ's Response to Measles Outbreak

Background

There are increasing incidents of measles throughout New Zealand, particularly in Auckland. Measles is highly contagious. Cases of measles are expected to rise in the foreseeable future, particularly in



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Auckland. The SLSNZ 2019 Pool Rescue Championships are scheduled for 11-13 October in Auckland, as well as other SLS events around the country as we start to build into the 2019-20 season.

What is the problem?

Those not immunised against measles are at risk of contracting and spreading measles to others, particularly when gathering indoors, and/or for sports events, where athletes are in close contact with others, such as pool rescue events.

What is being done to address the problem?

SLSNZ requests that members who are not yet immunised do not attend the forthcoming 2019 Rescue Pool Championships unless they have received an MMR vaccination at least 2 weeks prior to the event i.e. by 26 Sept. 2019. Likewise, those not yet immunised are requested not to attend any other SLS events unless they have completed their MMR vaccinations at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled event, until further notice.

What next?

Any person who is suspected of having measles must be sent home until they are seen by a doctor. If measles is confirmed, they must remain at home away from any visitors, unless these visitors are known to be immune.

Those who have not been vaccinated, and who have been in a confined space with a confirmed case of measles should stay at home if they are not immune, and check for symptoms until the end of the quarantine period. This might be one to two weeks depending on when they were exposed to measles.

What are the symptoms of measles?

Measles symptoms include a high fever, runny nose, cough and sore red eyes, followed several days later by a rash starting on the face and neck before spreading to the rest of the body. Someone with measles can spread it to others from five days before the rash appears until five days after.

If somebody is confirmed as having measles, they will need to stay at home in isolation until five days after their rash first appeared.

It's important to check you are up to date with your immunisations, especially if you're travelling overseas. For more information, please seek advice from the Ministry of Health web site.