To all Acute Trust Medical Directors in Yorkshire and the Humber

2 June 2023

Dear Colleague

**RE: Measles**

UKHSA Yorkshire and Humber Health Protection Team has recently been notified of a very small number of confirmed measles cases in our area following an increase in cases being notified around the country. We are continuing to monitor this and will work with partners to respond to the situation. We appreciate your continued assistance, in ensuring staff remain vigilant for possible cases, ensure anyone who presents at a health care setting is isolated appropriately at the earliest opportunity and MMR vaccination is arranged when appropriate.

As you’ll be aware, measles is one of the most highly infectious communicable diseases. Spending 15 minutes or more in direct contact with someone infected with measles is considered a significant exposure. Immunocompromised patients, pregnant women and unvaccinated infants are at increased risk of severe disease. Vaccination rates across the region vary and some sections of the population remain vulnerable, including recent new entrants who may not be up to date with MMR.

**Measles case vigilance and management:**

Suspected measles cases should be isolated immediately to protect other patients and the case should be excluded from school, nursery or work for 4 days after the onset of rash.

[Measles - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/). To confirm infection take a buccal swab and send for Measles PCR using a COPAN E-swab (green top). Please note that specimens must not be sent in charcoal medium as this interferes with the PCR test. Where COPAN E-swabs are not available please submit a dry swab in a plain universal sample pot.

**Notification of measles cases to the Health Protection Team**

While case numbers in Yorkshire and Humber remain low, all suspected measles cases should be promptly notified to the local Health Protection Team (HPT) on **0113 386 0300** to facilitate timely public health action, including urgent risk assessment of any vulnerable contacts.

UKHSA National Measles Guidelines are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-measles-guidelines>

**Infection prevention and control**

Please ensure that appropriate triage and isolation procedures are in place so that those presenting with a fever and rash can be isolated immediately, to avoid exposing others (including staff). Measles posters and leaflets in a variety of languages are available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measles-outbreak> [*https://www.healthpublications.gov.uk/ViewArticle.html?sp=Smeaslespullupbannerartwork*](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.healthpublications.gov.uk%2FViewArticle.html%3Fsp%3DSmeaslespullupbannerartwork&data=05%7C01%7CSimon.Padfield%40ukhsa.gov.uk%7C4f079714778140f606e108db61b8715c%7Cee4e14994a354b2ead475f3cf9de8666%7C0%7C0%7C638211217016290074%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Z%2FjbPhqGJm5hQOwig%2BYD9%2B6cqOAhaebsvK75hOIpqvQ%3D&reserved=0).

Please note that unvaccinated exposed staff contacts (face to face contact of more than 15 minutes in a confined area e.g. in the same clinical room) **should be excluded from work from the 5th day after the first exposure to 21 days after the final exposure unless they have satisfactory evidence of protection (measles IgG or two doses of a measles containing vaccine).** Please make sure all health professionals and reception staff are fully protected against measles, mumps and rubella to protect staff and patients and to avoid lengthy exclusion periods applying.

Please ensure that all staff, including reception, are aware of measles symptoms and infection control measures.

To help us to prevent transmission of measles, please could I ask that you cascade this letter and associated material to Microbiologists, Infection Control Teams, Emergency Departments, Paediatricians, Infectious Diseases Departments and Occupational Health Teams within your trust.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Simon Padfield

Acting Regional Deputy Director

UKHSA Yorkshire and Humber