

Midwifery Measles Immunisation Strategic Communication

October 2025

1. Protection for the midwifery sector

- New Zealand is at a very high risk of a large measles outbreak. Population immunity is well below the 95% required to prevent outbreak, and there have been three separate measles incursions in recent weeks, with cases in several locations across Aotearoa.
- Check you and your team are fully protected against measles – this means having had two doses of measles-containing vaccine after the age of 12 months.
- People born between 1969 and 2004 may not have received two measles vaccinations and could be at risk of measles
- Non-immune health professional may be excluded from work (i.e. high-risk setting) from as early as day 5 from first exposure, and in quarantine from day 7 to day 14, with a further 7 days exclusion from work on release from quarantine.

2. Messages for whānau

- If you are planning a pregnancy, it is important to check you are fully protected against measles as you can not have the MMR vaccine while pregnant. If your first antenatal blood test indicated you are not immune to rubella, it is likely you are not immune to measles either.
- If you are not immune to measles, you can have the MMR vaccine at any time after your baby is born – it is recommended to do this soon after giving birth. It is safe to have the vaccine when breastfeeding.
- During pregnancy, it's a great time to check that whānau are up to date with their immunisations, especially measles. This will help protect wāhine hapū and pēpē, during pregnancy and once they are born.
- Getting sick with measles during pregnancy increases the risk of miscarriage and preterm birth.

3. Vaccine status

- Midwives can check pregnant women's measles vaccination status in the Aotearoa Immunisation Register (AIR). All midwives can sign up for 'view only' access to AIR. [Click here](#) for more information or call 0800 855 066 (press 2, then 1).
- Whānau can also call Vaccination Helpline 0800 28 29 26. The Helpline is available from 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (except for public holidays) and translators are available.

- Vaccine records may also be found on www.my.health.nz or through your GP health online portal (e.g. Manage My Health)

4. Overseas childhood vaccines

- Some countries offer the first measles vaccine to children under 12 months of age. These people should be recommended to have 2 additional doses to be fully protected.
- If vaccination status is unknown, extra doses are safe to administer when there is no contradiction to MMR vaccination.

5. Where to get MMR vaccine

- MMR vaccine is free for everyone under 18 years old, no matter what their eligibility for NZ health care. It is free for those aged over 18 years who are eligible for NZ healthcare.
- Bookings can be made online, or some community pharmacies may offer vaccines without an appointment.

6. Share information clearly e.g. BERT communication guide

- **Benefits** – lead with a positive benefit e.g. as well protecting against measles infection, when whānau are immunised, they will not need to stay in quarantine if they are exposed to measles. This may be an unexpected benefit they had not thought of.
- **Evidence** – the MMR vaccine is safe and effective. The MMR vaccine has an excellent safety record and has been used in New Zealand since 1990. Mild reactions such as fever or pain/redness at the injection site are normal and show that your immune system is responding to the vaccine.
- **Recommend** – tell whānau you recommend the MMR vaccine. Hearing this from a trusted professional make a difference.
- **Think** – give people autonomy and time to make decisions; let them go away, think and discuss with whānau. Let them know they are always welcome to come back and talk about it more.

7. Other information

- More information can be found by scanning the below QR codes
- Left hand side QR – [IMAC General fact sheet](#)
- Right hand side QR – [IMAC Midwives page](#)

