



The Immune Response

May 2002

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CSL

Vaccines

Please copy and distribute to all immunisation providers in your practice or health centre. Thank you.

SBS to air program linking MMR and autism

SBS television will air a British made program on Tuesday 28 May that links MMR vaccine and autism.

The program, called *MMR vaccine: every parent's choice*, will be screened at 8.30pm. It has been made by the BBC's Panorama team.

Immunisation providers should expect additional queries from parents as a result of this program, which calls the MMR vaccine into question.

The drop off in the rate of children having MMR to about 84% is a cause of concern to British health authorities. This is the lowest level since the vaccine was introduced in 1988, and more than 10 per cent below the World Health Organisation minimum to protect against outbreaks.

In the last epidemic in Britain in 1988, there were 86,000 reported cases and 16 deaths. In Ireland, where the MMR rate has also slipped, there

were 1,597 cases of measles and two deaths in 2000, compared to just 148 cases in 1999.

Following the schools-based MMR campaign on Australia in 1998, the rate of children protected against measles, mumps and rubella increased by 10% to 94%. This averted an estimated 17,500 cases of measles. It is important that this increase in protection is maintained.

Please see the patient information leaflet the division has written on this topic: <http://www.nrdgp.org.au/directory/documents/23/MMRCrohnsAutism.pdf> It outlines the research that has been done and emphasises that no evidence shows a link between MMR and autism or Crohn's disease.

The leaflet can be photocopied and given to parents to take away with them. The article, as well as other articles and links can also be viewed on the division's website, www.nrdgp.org.au/resources

BRIEFS

Q fever accreditation

A Q fever accreditation afternoon is proposed for Glen Innes on Saturday 15 June. It is being organised for those doctors wanting to become accredited but who were unable to attend the sessions the division arranged last year. This educational afternoon will only proceed with reasonable registrations. For further

information, contact Dr John Morrison (02) 9391 9356 or Gae McDonald at NRDGP.

New vax schedule released

The childhood immunisation schedule has just one change this year - the addition of pneumococcal vaccine for ATSIC children at two, four and six months.

For further information about anything appearing in The Immune Response call Gae McDonald, Northern Rivers, 6622 4453 Cheryl Colley, Tweed Valley, 6672 5158.

The 3 Rs Tour

Coming soon to a place near you!

All RNs, ENs and interested practice staff are requested to attend *The 3 Rs Tour*:

*R*ecent developments

*R*ates

*R*eminder systems

Speakers: Marianne *R*'Trent

Gae *R*'McDonald

Please note, a new date has been set for Byron Bay.

The sessions are now:

Thursday 13 June - Casino RSM

Tuesday 18 June - Lismore Workers Club

Thursday 20 June - Byron Bowling Club

Wednesday 26 June - Ballina RSL

Sessions start at 5.30 and finish at 9pm. A light dinner will be served. This is a *free* night.

These evenings will inform you of recent and proposed developments to the schedule, as well as the ACIR website and how it can be used as a tool to increase your rates. Reminder systems will also be discussed.

The evening will comply with the requirement of the yearly immunisation updates to maintain your immunisation accreditation. It will also help practices comply with the Standards of General Practice criteria 1.6.1, 1.6.2, 1.6.3, and 1.6.4.

If you are unable to attend the session nearest you on the day, please feel free to join us in another centre.