



The Immune Response



October 2007

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

An increase in mumps calls for vigilance

NSW Health recently issued a health advisory to the community to be alert for the symptoms of mumps amid an increase in the number of cases.

The director of communicable disease for NSW Health, Dr Jeremy McAnulty said there have been 148 reported cases of mumps so far this year* compared to 153 in total for 2006. In 2001, there were just 28 cases reported and only 35 cases in 2003.

Dr McAnulty said initial symptoms of mumps include fever, loss of appetite, tiredness and headache followed by swelling and

tenderness of the salivary glands, especially near the angle of the jaw.

"To prevent the spread of mumps, children and young adults should have had two doses of the MMR vaccine," Dr McAnulty said.

"People diagnosed with mumps should stay at home for nine days after the onset of swelling of the salivary glands.

"Complications from the mumps can include swelling of the testicles in older males, and rarely inflammation of the brain, the lining of the brain and spinal cord, pancreatitis and hearing loss.

"Although very rare, mumps can also cause sterility in males.

"Mumps is spread via respiratory droplets or from person to person via direct contact with infected saliva.

"Symptoms begin two to three weeks after exposure to an infectious person. People are infectious for up to nine days after swelling of the salivary glands begins," Dr McAnulty said.

Dr McAnulty said people born during or after 1966 who have not had two doses of vaccine are more at risk and should be vaccinated with the MMR vaccine.

BRIEFS

Meningococcal update

In NSW so far this year, there have been 87 cases of meningococcal disease reported to NSW Health, which is the same number of cases reported for the same period last year. (There were two deaths within the Far North Coast region).

People who are under 25 years of age and who did not receive the meningococcal C vaccine at school in 2003, 2004 or 2005 can still receive free vaccine from their GP.

"Emergency Management of Anaphylaxis - Info for GPs"

GPs have just been sent a "Emergency Management of Anaphylaxis" factsheet by Australian Prescriber (produced by NPS).

It has updated information on the emergency management of anaphylactic reactions that can occur following vaccination, as well as under other circumstances.

It is complicated and may be useful for GPs/accredited nurse immunisers who have more of an emergency area (like country GPs). It has advice re IV fluids, adrenaline infusions etc, if first line treatment is not working.

The factsheet is also available at www.australianprescriber.com/magazine/30/5/artid/913/

New immunisation factsheets

Two new factsheets are now available on the NCIRS website. One is *Homeopathy and Vaccination* and the other is *Quadrivalent HPV Vaccine, FAQ - Information to assist providers*.

www.ncirs.usyd.edu.au/facts/fact_sheets.html

Data loggers

Could practices please check their vaccine fridges for data loggers and return them to Rachelle at the Northern Rivers General Practice Network via S&N.

Gardasil mailout

By now practices that are able, should have notified eligible females about the availability of Gardasil vaccine. Practices requiring assistance with searching their databases and performing a mailout should contact Rachelle at the division.

Promotional material (poster and flyers)

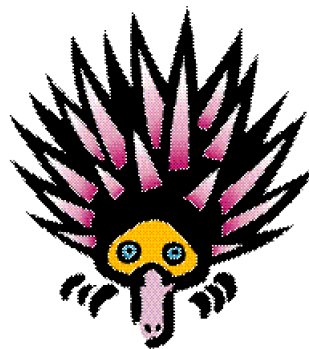
are also available, as well as appointment/dose due reminder cards.

Immunisation update & Christmas dinner

The Christmas immunisation update and PN network meeting will take place at Paupiettes on Tuesday 4 December. There will be a brief talk by Marianne Trent on changes in the 9th edition of the Immunisation Handbook followed by Christmas dinner.

Registration is from 6pm with the talk to start at 6.30pm.

More information on flyer to follow. Register early as this is a highly popular dinner on the annual events calendar.



SPIKE SAYS

"Vax'em."

www.vaccination.org.au

This circular aims to provide a forum for immunisation service providers in the region. Published monthly by the Northern Rivers General Practice Network. For further information, contact Rachelle Deaker at the NRGPN on 6622 4453, or Cheryl Colley at the Tweed Valley Division of General Practice on 6672 5158. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the NRGPN. ©NRGPN 2007.

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