



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Dr Frank Atherton
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Chief Medical Officer/Medical Director NHS Wales

TO:

Directors of Workforce and OD
Medical Directors
Directors of Nursing

3 July 2017

Dear colleagues

Preventing the spread of vaccine preventable measles in healthcare settings

I am writing to you to highlight the need to protect staff and patients from the risk of measles infection.

Between 1 January 2016 and 16 June 2017, Romania reported 7,233 measles cases, including 30 deaths. Cases continue to be reported despite ongoing reinforced vaccination activities at a national level. In 2016, several other EU/EEA countries reported measles outbreaks and cases have been reported in 2017 by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Here in Wales we have had a small outbreak with links to Romania.

With schools in Wales closing in the week commencing 17 July it is likely that we will detect some measles cases in unprotected individuals returning from holiday or other nationals holidaying in Wales.

Protection of healthcare workers is especially important in the context of their ability to transmit measles or rubella infections to vulnerable groups. While they may need MMR vaccination for their own benefit, they also should be immune to measles and rubella for the protection of their patients. Satisfactory evidence of protection would include documentation of:

- having received two doses of MMR, or
- positive antibody tests for measles and rubella.

The Association Of National Occupational Health Physicians (ANHOPs) recommends that susceptible healthcare workers (HCW) exposed to measles should receive one dose of MMR and be excluded from work from day 5 after exposure. The HCW can return to work 21 days after the final exposure, or earlier if symptom-free and found to be measles IgG positive at least 14 days after MMR was given.



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

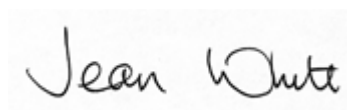
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I should be grateful if you could ensure that frontline staff, and therefore vulnerable patients, are protected from the threat of measles, along with other communicable diseases such as seasonal flu, in the healthcare setting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank Atherton', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

DR FRANK ATHERTON
Chief Medical Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jean White'.

PROFESSOR JEAN WHITE CBE
Chief Nursing Officer