



February 2019

PUBLIC HEALTH BULLETIN

Measles outbreak again!

At the time of writing Waikato has 12 confirmed cases of measles so far in 2019. All are unimmunised young people.

Two cases are secondary to a Tauranga case, the first was infected in a local GP waiting room where they were one of nearly 90 people recorded as attending during the long time the infectious person was in the rooms. Their unimmunised sibling is the second case in this transmission chain.

The other ten cases in three families all have the same genotype but between the families there are no links we've been able to find, nor links to an Auckland case of same genotype from last November. The first case (the "index case") in each of the three families was not suspected or notified, rather it was the next case(s) in each family that were notified. Disappointingly some of these notifications were via the lab rather than by the health practitioner on suspicion. So case isolation and contact quarantine started late for all.

These factors:

- the missed first case in each family
- not notifying on suspicion
- and unknown links to one another and to the presumed first NZ case in Auckland,

combine to make it highly unlikely that traditional public health action (case isolation, susceptible contact tracing, prophylaxis and quarantine) can stop further cases. So this outbreak could well already have further spread and will likely cease only when it can no longer find susceptible people.

Our approach since 17/1/19 has been to contact trace and manage household contacts, to ensure information is provided to waiting room contacts, and to use media and communications to urge people to catch up MMR and to self-isolate and phone ahead if they become symptomatic.

Examples of measles transmission

Additional to the waiting room spread, we also have recent examples where a contact

suspected measles and informed the practice or ED immediately so were able to be managed with respiratory precautions.

In the families already involved in these outbreaks all the unimmunised household members have contracted measles once one person has it.

The "Immunity Gap"

Despite NZ's current positive measles elimination status, the large "immunity gap" in people aged from their mid-teens to mid-30s means outbreaks like those in recent years (600 people nationwide in 2011/12 and more than 50 in the Waikato two years ago) are likely to continue to occur. If we are to avoid these outbreaks modelling has shown we will need to significantly reduce this immunity gap.

GPs and Practice Nurses are encouraged to check the immunisation status of their enrolled 15-35 year olds, and if in doubt, offer immunisation catch up. There will now be young adults whose parents decided against immunisation who ought to be encouraged to decide for themselves.

Salmonella typhimurium Outbreak

There is currently a nationwide outbreak of Salmonella typhimurium, of a molecular type rarely seen in New Zealand previously. Cases have occurred predominantly in adults in the North Island. 1 in 4 cases have been hospitalised.

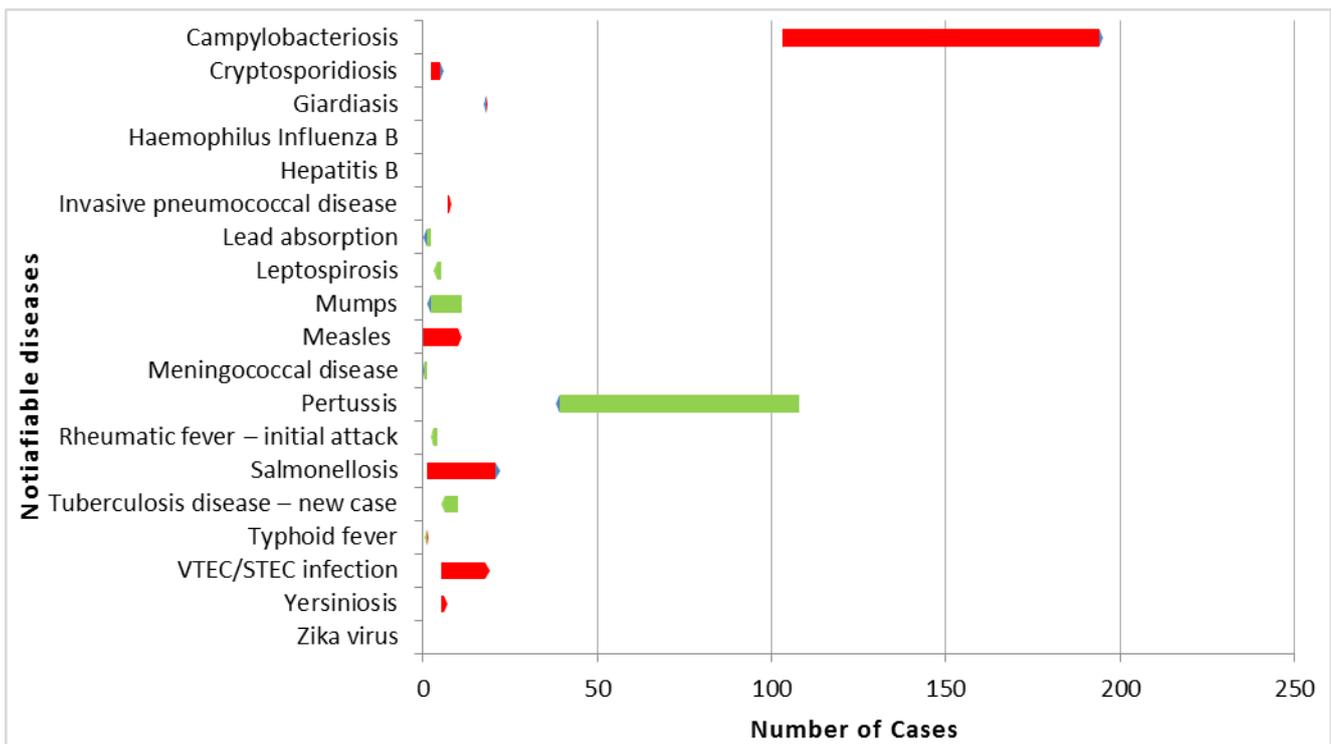
To date there have been 3 confirmed cases and 1 probable case in the Waikato region. An investigation is underway (led by ESR and the Ministry of Health, assisted by Public Health Units and MPI) into a potential source of infection.

Pathlab are currently performing culture on any positive salmonella PCR samples to identify salmonella subspecies.

Communicable diseases notified December 2018 and January 2019

Disease name	Dec17 /Jan18	Dec18 /Jan19	Disease name	Dec 17/ Jan 18	Dec18 Jan 19
Campylobacteriosis	103	195	Leptospirosis	5	3
Cryptosporidiosis	2	6	Measles	0	11
Dengue fever	8	2	Meningococcal disease	1	0
Gastroenteritis – foodborne intoxication	0	18	Mumps	11	1
Gastroenteritis – Unknown cause	0	3	Pertussis	108	38
Giardiasis	18	18	Rheumatic fever - initial attack	4	2
Hepatitis A	2	1	Salmonellosis	1	22
Invasive pneumococcal disease	7	8	VTEC/STEC infection	5	19
Latent tuberculosis infection	7	1	Shigellosis	3	5
Tuberculosis disease - new case	10	5	Typhoid fever	1	1
Lead absorption	2	0	Yersiniosis	5	7
Legionellosis	1	0	Tuberculosis disease – relapse or reactivation	0	1

Figure 1: Notifiable diseases (selected), December 2018 & January 2019 compared to December 2017 & January 2018, Waikato DHB



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After hours:

MOoH 021 359 650

HPO 021 999 521

If there is no answer, please contact Waikato Hospital's switchboard 07 839 8899 and ask for the on-call MOoH.

During office hours:

Population Health (MOoH or HPO) (07) 838 2569

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Notifications outside Hamilton: 0800 800 977

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