

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 05/16/17**

TO: Grant County Healthcare Providers

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT**

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**Measles & MMR Vaccine Utilization**  
**University of Washington & WA DOH**  
**Study MMR Vaccine**

GRANT COUNTY, WA – Grant County Health Officer, Dr. Alexander Brzezny, has requested the following information be shared with the healthcare community about a measles outbreak occurring in the metropolitan area of Minneapolis, Minnesota with a potential connection to Seattle, WA, and a research project published in 2016 on MMR vaccines in Somali children.

**Measles Outbreak Summary**

As of May 16, 2017, 60 cases of measles have been confirmed in metropolitan Minneapolis, MN with additional suspect cases being investigated and tested. At least 11 cases were hospitalized. The majority of the cases are in children with the age range of 0 to 17 years, 57 cases in children and 3 cases in adults. 50 of the cases are from the Somali community in Minnesota, which have a very low rates (<42%) of vaccination for MMR.

Vaccination status of outbreak:

- 57 confirmed to be unvaccinated
- 1 had 1 dose of MMR
- 2 had 2 doses of MMR

The source case is a 20 month-old unvaccinated Somali child who had rash onset on March 30. This child had not traveled and the source of her infection is unknown. The other 59 cases had rash onsets between April 8 and present. At least 7,000 people have been exposed to the virus at child care centers, three schools and about 20 health care settings.

Immune globulin and MMR vaccine are being offered to exposed contacts when appropriate. Exclusions from child care, school, and community settings are recommended for susceptible contacts. MMR's have been recommended to exposed children 6 to 12 months old, and an accelerated two-dose MMR series for children 12 months and older residing in Minnesota. Among others, at least 1600 Somali-Minnesotan community children have been vaccinated.

There is a concern for contacts and travel between the affected community in Minnesota and the Somali community in Seattle, WA and area. Please notify GCHD and WA-DOH Office of Communicable Disease Epidemiology immediately at (206) 418 -5500 for assistance with rapid diagnosis if measles is strongly suspected in a person with fever and rash.



## **University of Washington & WA DOH Study on MMR Vaccine Utilization in Washington's Somali Community**

In light of both reports from Minnesota about low MMR vaccination rates in their Somali community and an understanding that frequent interaction occurs between Somali community members residing Minneapolis, Seattle, and other US cities, DOH CD Epidemiology staff undertook a project in collaboration with epidemiologists at the University of WA School of Public Health and Community Medicine to better understand whether low MMR vaccination coverage was also occurring among children with Somali-born parents living in Washington State.

**DOH determined that children born in Washington to Somali-born parents were less likely to be immunized against measles than those with US-born parents. No such disparity between these groups were observed with other vaccines.** This decrease in measles vaccine uptake among children of Somali parents became more pronounced for those dates of birth later in the cohort considered by this project (i.e., babies born January 1, 2008 – May 1, 2013). Although 99% of babies born in 2008 to Somali parent(s) had received 1 or more doses of measles-containing vaccine between 12-23 months, only 65% of babies born to Somali parent(s) in 2013 had received 1 or more doses of measles-containing vaccine by 23 months of age. The full article, [Parental Country of Birth and Childhood Vaccination Uptake in Washington State](#), originally published in Pediatrics online June 29, 2016.

Health care providers should remain aware of the increased risk for measles in persons with recent travel to or visitors from the Minneapolis, Minnesota area. Attached is a Measles Assessment Quick Sheet for health care providers. Highly suspected measles cases should be reported immediately to Grant County Health District for assistance with rapid confirmatory testing.

Patient immunization status can be checked using the [WA State Immunization Information System](#).

### **Resources**

[Healthcare Provider Vaccine Information](#) | CDC  
[Travelers' Health](#) | CDC

### **Consultation**

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