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Dear Doctors,

**World Health Organization  
World Immunisation Week 2015  
Measles elimination is our next target**

The World Immunisation Week 2015 takes place in the last week of April (April 24-30, 2015) to highlight the importance of immunisation and celebrate the achievements of immunisation programmes and their partners in promoting healthy communities. Following the successful global eradication of smallpox and subsequently poliomyelitis in the Western Pacific Region, including Hong Kong, the next target is measles elimination. Hong Kong has been highly committed to reducing measles incidence and mortality for the ultimate goal of measles elimination.

In Hong Kong, increased number of measles cases was recorded in 2014, with a total of 50 cases as compared with 38 cases in 2013. In 2015, as of 19 April, four measles cases were recorded. Recent increase in measles cases has also been observed in neighbouring areas such as Mainland China, Vietnam and the Philippines, as well as other parts of the world including the Americas and Europe.

Among the 123 measles cases recorded from 2010 to 2015 (as of 19 April 2015), 61 (50%) were children below 5 years old, of which 19 (31% of the 61 cases) were born or lived in the Mainland, and of which 9 (15% of the 61 cases) were infants below 1 year old born or lived in the Mainland. 54 (44%) cases were adult cases (aged 20 or above), mostly with unknown vaccination status, of which 35 (65% of the 54 cases) were born outside Hong Kong including 7 foreign domestic helpers.



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轄下執行疾病預防  
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The Centre for Health  
Protection is a  
professional arm of the  
Department of Health for  
disease prevention and  
control

Immunisation against measles is the most effective preventive measure. In Hong Kong, measles vaccine is given in combination with the mumps and rubella vaccines, named as Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) Vaccine, to children at 1 year old and Primary One. However, for children under one who are taken care in Mainland or have frequent visit to Mainland, they are advised to follow Mainland immunisation schedule with first dose of measles vaccination at 8

months and another dose at 18 months. Another dose of MMR vaccine will be given when they enter primary 1 in Hong Kong.

Over 95% of the locally born people in Hong Kong are immune to this infection. However, we are aware that some adults especially for those who were not born in Hong Kong may not have had natural measles and have not received measles containing vaccines before in their home countries. You may consider providing measles vaccination to them. We would also like to seek your assistance to inform potential employers and foreign domestic helpers of the risk of measles and advise foreign domestic helpers to get immunised if they have not done so, preferably before they arrive in Hong Kong or as part of the pre-employment medical checkup.

Thank you very much in advance for your help. We hope that you will join us as partners in working towards measles elimination in Hong Kong.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health