

本署檔號    Our Ref.    : (3) in DH CDB/8/35/1 Pt.4

29 February 2024

To Person-in-charge  
Employment agencies

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Vaccination of foreign domestic helpers against measles**

We would like to enlist your help to promote measles vaccination among foreign domestic helpers (FDH) for protecting them and the local community against measles.

Measles is a vaccine preventable disease that remains common in many parts of the world. Although the vaccination coverage in the local population is very high and the risk of large-scale outbreak locally is considered to be low at present, many countries worldwide (including some countries in Europe, Central Asia and Southeast Asia) are facing a resurgence of measles associated with a drop in immunisation coverage rates during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, in the Philippines and Indonesia, there were nearly 5- and 2-fold increases in measles cases respectively in 2023 when compared to 2022. With that, it is possible for some FDH who are not immune to measles to get infected in their home country and transmit the infection to susceptible people upon arrival in Hong Kong.

To prevent measles in the community, we would like to enlist your help to inform potential employers of FDH as well as FDH who are prepared to work in Hong Kong of the risk of measles and advise non-immune FDH to get vaccinated before they arrive in Hong Kong. All FDH who are non-immune to measles should receive two doses of measles-containing vaccine before they come to Hong Kong, and you are advised to request FDH to produce documented evidence of immunity against measles or proof of receipt of two doses of measles-containing vaccine.

We are aware that some employment agencies may arrange pre-employment medical check-up for FDH. If your agency is also offering this service for FDH, we would be most grateful if you could consider the addition of assessment of the immune status against measles of FDH and MMR vaccination for non-immune FDH



in the medical check-up package.

In general, people can be considered as non-immune to measles if they (i) did not have the infection confirmed by laboratory test before, and (ii) had not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines in the past, or have unknown vaccination status or unknown immunity against measles.

Please routinely distribute the attached 2-page letter together with the 2-page information sheet on MMR vaccination to all potential employers who patronise your company for their information, e.g. putting them into the information pack prepared by your company for employers. The softcopies are available on the following CHP webpage: <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/100570.html>. Additionally, if you would like to request copies of measles pamphlet to put it in your office for your customers, you can complete the online request form at <https://www2.chp.gov.hk/eform/Notice.aspx?LANG=EN>.

Thank you for your assistance. We hope that you will join us as partners to step up our efforts towards protecting the health of our community against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'SK CHUANG', is positioned above the printed name.

(Dr. SK CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health

## Foreign domestic helpers are advised to receive Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination

Measles infection is a highly infectious and severe viral infection that may affect any person who is not immune to the infection. Rubella may cause anomalies in the developing foetus (“congenital rubella syndrome”) if women are infected during the first three months of pregnancy. Persons infected with measles or rubella may pass the infection to their friends and relatives, their employers and their household members, especially infants who have not yet received vaccination. We are aware that some foreign domestic helpers may not have had measles and rubella immunisation in their home country before they arrive in Hong Kong. Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine to prevent measles, mumps and rubella infections. To protect themselves and others, we urge foreign domestic helpers to receive MMR vaccination.

In general, people can be considered as non-immune to measles/rubella if (i) they did not have the infection confirmed by laboratory test before, and (ii) they had not been fully vaccinated against measles/rubella, or have unknown vaccination status or unknown immunity against measles. **To prevent infection and transmission in the community, we advise all foreign domestic helpers who are non-immune to either measles or rubella to receive MMR vaccine before they arrive in Hong Kong.**

For more information on MMR vaccination, please visit the Family Health Service's website: [http://www.fhs.gov.hk/english/health\\_info/child/486.html](http://www.fhs.gov.hk/english/health_info/child/486.html)

### Measles

Measles is caused by the measles virus and spread by droplet or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. Affected persons will present initially with tiredness, fever, cough, red eyes and white spots inside the mouth. This is followed by a red blotchy skin rash 3-7 days later. The rash usually spreads from the face down to the rest of the body. In severe cases, middle ear, lungs and brain can get involved and lead to serious consequences or even death.



## **Mumps**

Mumps is caused by the Mumps virus which affects the salivary glands and sometimes the nerve tissue. It is spread by droplet and direct contact with the saliva of an infected person. The disease is characterized by painful swelling of the salivary glands, usually at the cheek(s), and fever. Sometimes, there may be complications like deafness, or infection of the brain. Adolescents might develop infection of the testicles or ovaries, which can affect fertility..

## **Rubella**

Rubella, also known as “German Measles”, is caused by Rubella virus. It can be transmitted by contact with secretions from nose and pharynx of infected persons through droplet spread or direct contact with patients. Symptoms are usually mild. Children usually present with fever, headache, diffuse rash and enlargement of lymph nodes behind the ears or in the neck. Sometimes there may be no symptoms at all. Complications include arthritis, thrombocytopenia and encephalitis.

Rubella infection produces anomalies in the developing fetus. Congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) is likely to occur in infants born to women who got infected during the first three months of pregnancy. CRS is characterised by deafness, blindness, heart malformations and mental retardation.

**Centre for Health Protection**

**Department of Health**

**February 2024**