

April 5, 2019

Dear Parents, Guardians or Representatives,

RE: BC Government's Measles Immunization Catch-Up Program for School-Aged Children (K-12) from April to June 2019

As you may have heard, the BC Government has announced an initiative to catch up all school-age children (K-12) with measles vaccines. This is an opportunity for unimmunized and under-immunized children to catch-up on their measles vaccinations. At this time, there is no measles outbreak within our Northern Health region; however, we are working with the province, our health-care partners and school districts to increase immunity amongst B.C.'s school-age children.

Most people in Canada are protected against measles infection through immunizations. Two doses of either measles, mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR) or measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella vaccine (MMRV) is 99 per cent effective at preventing measles. Further booster doses are unnecessary and do not increase immunity. Children typically receive one dose of MMR at 12 months of age followed by one dose of MMRV starting at four years of age. For more information on measles and measles containing vaccine, please visit: Health Link BC - Measles at <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/measles>

Starting in April, Northern Health will be distributing immunization consent packages, through schools, directly to students in kindergarten through Grade 12 who are not up to date with their vaccinations. Please return the completed package to your school within one week of receiving it.

Students who are unimmunized or under-immunized with respect to MMR or MMRV vaccine based on public health immunization records, will receive an immunization consent package.

The consent package will include a letter which provides instructions on how to complete the immunization consent form. If your child received an immunization consent package, but has documented measles vaccine elsewhere, please include this information on the immunization consent form in the space provided. If your child is fully vaccinated with two doses, they will not require further booster vaccinations.

Students who are considered to be up-to-date according to Northern Health's immunization records will receive a package containing information only.

If you do not receive a consent and/or information package for your child/children by May 2019 and believe that they are not up-to-date with their immunizations, please contact your local health unit listed below.

Arrangements for the provision of immunizations are being coordinated within each Northern Health community. More information is forthcoming that will outline school specific plans and/or clinics where you can have your child/children immunized in your community.

Thank you for your attention to this information. We look forward to working together to ensure the measles immunization catch-up program for school-age children is successful.

Sincerely,



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Chief Medical Health Officer
Northern Health



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Dr. Jong Kim, MSc, FRCPC
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Northern Health

Northeast Health Units

Fort St John.....250-263-6000
Chetwynd.....250-788-7300

Dawson Creek.....250-719-6500
Hudson's Hope.....250-783-9991

Fort Nelson..... 250-774-7092
Tumbler Ridge...250-242-5271

Northwest Health Units

Houston.....250-845-2294
Atlin Health Centre 250-651-7677
Hazelton.....250-842-4640
Smithers.....250-847-6400

Dease Lake.....250-771-4444
Kitimat.....250-632-3181
Masset.....250-626-4725
Stewart.....250-636-2221

Prince Rupert.....250-622-6380
Queen Charlotte..250-559-4933
Sandspit.....250-637-5403
Terrace.....250-631-4200

Northern Interior Health Units

Mackenzie.....250-997-8517
Quesnel.....250-991-7571
Burns Lake.....250-692-2460

Fort St. James.....250-996-7178
McBride.....250-569-2251 ext 2026
Valemount..250-566-9138 ext 2000

Fraser Lake.....250-699-8960
Prince George.....250-565-7478
Vanderhoof.....250-567-6900