



## News Release – East Midlands

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### **Latest measles cases published as part of national catch-up programme**

The first monthly confirmed measles case data for Public Health England, East Midlands Centre is published today, as part of the national MMR catch –up programme. The figures show a further 14 confirmed cases in April of the preventable, infectious disease, on top of 16 cases from January to March this year.

In England there were 288 cases in April, bringing the total number so far in 2013 to 962. This continues the trend seen since early 2012 with monthly totals around the highest recorded levels seen since 1994. The regions most affected continue to be the North West and North East where there have been outbreaks of the infection.

In line with trends across the country, the number of cases of measles has continued to rise in the East Midlands. Up to the end of April, 30 cases were confirmed, following a total of 54 cases in 2012. **(See notes in editors for breakdown by local authority).**

The national catch-up programme to increase MMR vaccination uptake in children and teenagers has so far resulted in more than 95 per cent of GP practices across England ordering extra doses of the vaccine – over 200,000 extra in total.

The catch-up programme aims ensure that at least 95 per cent of 10-16 year olds have received at least one dose of MMR. This is estimated to be around 300,000 children (eight per cent). The programme is also keen to reach another third of a million in this age group who need a second dose of MMR to give them full protection, and a further third of a million children below and above this age band who need another dose.

This age group are most at risk of measles due to the fall in coverage of MMR that occurred in the late 1990s and early 2000s when concern around the discredited link between autism and the vaccine was widespread.

During this period, vaccination uptake fell to as low as 80 per cent in 2005, with lower rates in some parts of the country. Today MMR coverage among five year olds in England is at its highest recorded levels, with 94 per cent receiving one dose and 90 per cent receiving two doses.

Dr Fu Meng-Khaw, Centre Director at PHE East Midlands Centre, said: "Our ambition is to vaccinate 95 per cent of 10-16 year olds at risk in time for the next school year and the number of extra doses ordered by so many GP practices is very encouraging. The message to parents who think their child may not be fully immunised is to check today and book an appointment with your GP. The vaccine is there waiting to be used and could save your child's life. Measles is a serious illness and can lead to serious complications, including hospitalisation in more than one in five cases among teens this year.

"We are getting regular feedback from the local NHS teams about what is happening on the ground and are encouraged by the very high levels of involvement by GP practices across the East Midlands. We will shortly be getting results from a new monitoring system that will tell us the number of vaccines given to children.

"We are continuing to work closely with NHS partners to ensure we have accurate records of children who have missed vaccination, to help guide effective local decision making about possible additional targeted activity."

In some areas affected by recent local outbreaks, such as the North East and North West, the NHS had already started to run campaigns in schools. In Teesside for example, school based vaccination clinics have been held in 124 schools, vaccinating more than 2,000 primary and secondary school age children, and in Greater Manchester 32 schools have initiated schools based vaccination programmes, reaching 1,200 children.

Dr Fu Meng-Khaw, Centre Director at PHE East Midlands Centre, added: "The best way to beat measles is to protect people before measles catches them. It's encouraging that GPs have taken up the challenge wholeheartedly, so we know they are ready to vaccinate people. The best thing that parents can do, if their children have not had two doses of MMR, is to make an appointment with the GP now."

**ENDS**

#### **Notes to editors**

- 1. Confirmed cases of measles by month and year with a comparison to the previous years by Local Authority for Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire**

Area	Number of confirmed cases				Previous year - total 2012
	April	March	Feb	Jan	
<b>PHE East Midlands Centre</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>54</b>
Derby	0	0	0	0	6
Derbyshire	2	2	1	0	17
Leicester	9	0	0	0	0
Leicestershire	0	0	0	0	14
Lincolnshire	2	0	0	5	8
Nottingham	0	0	0	0	1
Nottinghamshire	1	1	3	4	6
Rutland	0	0	0	0	2

2. The number of extra doses of the vaccine being ordered by GPs across England comes from ImmForm, the vaccine ordering website. It details the number of orders for MMR which have been taken since the catch-up programme was announced, minus the number that would have been ordered for the routine programme.
3. The catch-up programme sets out a national framework within which local teams – led by NHS England Area Teams, working alongside Directors of Public Health in Local Government, and supported by PHE Centres – are producing tailored plans to identify and give MMR to unvaccinated and partially vaccinated 10-16 year olds through GPs and/or school programmes. Local intelligence may reveal the need to expand the focus of the catch-up activity beyond the 10-16 year old age groups and where this is recognised, further local action will be taken.
4. Key resources for healthcare professionals involved in the MMR catch up programme are available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/series/MMR-catch-up-programme-2013>.
5. A table of confirmed cases of Measles, Mumps and Rubella 1996-2012 is available from: [http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb\\_C/1195733833790](http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1195733833790)  
The PHE Health Protection Report articles on measles cases in April 2013 (including cases by region and age group) and measles, mumps and rubella cases for quarter 1 (January-March 2013) are available from the press office under embargo.
6. For more information on measles and MMR, visit: <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/Measles/> or <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Measles/Pages/Introduction.aspx>
7. A Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/getvaccinatedEngland](http://www.facebook.com/getvaccinatedEngland) has also been set up for parents with any questions about the MMR vaccine we are using #getthemmr with partners on Twitter.
8. Public Health England is a new executive agency of the Department of Health that took up its full responsibilities on 1 April, 2013. PHE works with national and local government, industry and the NHS to protect and improve the nation's health and support healthier choices and will be

addressing inequalities by focusing on removing barriers to good health. To find out more visit our website [www.gov.uk/phe](http://www.gov.uk/phe), follow us on Twitter @PHE\_uk.

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