



News Release

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

The first monthly confirmed case data for Yorkshire and the Humber is published today, as part of the national MMR catch-up programme. The figures show a further 6 cases of the preventable, infectious disease during April, on top of 63 cases from January to March this year so far.

In England as a whole, 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.

Although there were only 6 cases in April in Yorkshire and the Humber, the longer term trend is one of increasing cases. (See notes to editors for breakdown by local authority). In 2011, there were 62 cases over the whole year in Yorkshire and the Humber and in 2012 there were 152 cases.

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, run by Public Health England, NHS England, the Department of Health, and local authorities, aims to prevent measles outbreaks by giving MMR to as many unvaccinated and partially vaccinated 10-16 year olds as possible in time for the next school year.

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 Stephen Morton, PHE Yorkshire and the Humber Centre Director, said: “Our ambition is to vaccinate 95 per cent of 10-16 year olds in time for the next school year. Local public health teams have been working hard to encourage uptake with children and teenagers in Yorkshire and the

Humber. 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 ready 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 England. We will shortly be getting results from a new monitoring system that will tell us the number of vaccines given to children."

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. Yorkshire and the Humber measles data:

Local Authority	April 2013 cases	2013 year to date cases
Barnsley	0	0
Bradford	1	5
Calderdale	0	0
Doncaster	0	2
East Riding of Yorkshire	0	9
City of Kingston upon Hull	1	2
Kirklees	0	0
Leeds	0	7
North East Lincs	0	0
North Lincs	0	0
North Yorkshire	3	21
Rotherham	0	0
Sheffield	1	9
Wakefield	0	2
York	0	6
Yorkshire and the Humber	6	63

2. ***The number of vaccinations ordered cannot currently be broken down to a regional / local level.**
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. PHE estimates that there are approximately one third of a million 10-16 year olds (around eight per cent) who are unvaccinated and another third of a million who need at least one further dose of MMR to give them full protection. It is also estimated that there are around another one third of a million children below and above this age band who need at least one

further dose of MMR. The target population for this catch-up programme is therefore of the order of one million doses. MMR vaccination provides 95 per cent protection against measles. A second dose is then needed to provide almost complete protection.

5. For more information on measles and MMR, please visit: <http://www.hpa.org.uk/Topics/InfectiousDiseases/InfectionsAZ/Measles/>
6. Key resources for healthcare professionals involved in the MMR catch up vaccination programme are available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/series/MMR-catch-up-programme-2013>.
7. 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, follow us on Twitter @PHE_uk.

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