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MEMORANDUM

TO: Local Health Departments and Regional Offices of the Illinois Department of Public Health, Hospital Emergency Departments, Infection Control Specialists and Infectious Disease Physicians

FROM: Illinois Department of Public Health
Communicable Disease Control Section

DATE: February 5, 2015

SUBJECT: Measles Cases in Illinois

The Cook County Department of Health has reported a day care center in their jurisdiction is reporting a number of children have developed fever and rash and at least two have tested positive by PCR for measles at the Illinois Department of Public Health's (IDPH) laboratory. One additional child from the same day care is clinically compatible with measles and pending testing. This case meets the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) case definition for a confirmed epidemiologically linked case. At this time, the source of infection for the children is not known.

Given this information, the Communicable Disease Control Section wants to inform health care providers about measles and investigation protocols.

Measles is a highly contagious viral illness that generally starts out with a fever, malaise, cold symptoms, conjunctivitis, and cough, followed by a rash that typically starts on the head and spreads to the rest of the body. In addition to these symptoms, sometimes Koplik spots (tiny white spots with bluish-white center inside the mouth) may be seen. Measles should be considered as a diagnosis in persons with no proof of immunity to measles and presenting with a febrile rash illness as described above. Typically, measles cases have a history of exposure to a confirmed case of measles or travel to or contact with visitors from areas where cases have been reported.

Even though we take measles investigations very seriously, we also want to provide a reminder that other viral illnesses and reactions to antibiotics can cause a rash that may appear similar to measles. A thorough investigation into the case history will provide comprehensive information to help guide local health departments.

If you see a patient you suspect may have measles, please call your local health department as soon as possible (24/7) to report the suspect case and to obtain proper testing instructions.

Your cooperation as always is appreciated.

PROTECTING HEALTH, IMPROVING LIVES