



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Oxiris Barbot, MD
Commissioner

April 29, 2019

Dear Health Facility CEO and CMO:

In light of the ongoing measles outbreak in New York City (NYC), we are sending this communication to stress the key actions your infection control and adult and pediatric medical and administrative staff should take at your health care facility.

Since October 2018, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) has identified 390 cases of measles in NYC. Though the current outbreak is centered in Williamsburg and Borough Park, measles patients have been seen at several hospitals and facilities throughout NYC. Despite heightened awareness about the outbreak, there continue to be exposures occurring in medical settings, particularly in emergency departments and inpatient settings. To date, there have been >13,000 persons who have been exposed to measles virus.

We are therefore asking you to ensure that your health facility immediately takes the following steps:

- All healthcare facility staff are required by New York State regulations to have proof of immunity to measles. Ensure all staff are in compliance.
- Ensure adequate staff at facility entrances to screen patients for measles, specifically to ask about rash with fever.
- Educate medical staff about the clinical presentation of measles and the infection control steps they should take to prevent exposures. DOHMH has a measles clinician alert poster available that can be placed in locations where clinical staff work.
- Ensure adequate signage instructing patients to notify staff immediately if they have a fever and rash. Post the signage in places such as patient waiting rooms. DOHMH has such signage in English, Yiddish, Spanish, Creole and Chinese; these posters can be found on our website.
- All patients should be screened for measles at triage and registration by asking about rash with fever.
- Measles transmission is through the airborne and droplet routes. All patients with signs and symptoms suspicious for measles must be placed in a negative pressure room immediately. If a negative pressure room is not available, mask the patient and place them in a private room and do not use that room for 2 hours after the patient has left. However, not placing the patient in a negative pressure room, may still result in exposures.

A sample of the above posters is enclosed. The posters as well as other materials and resources, are available [here](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/health-topics/measles.page) (<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/providers/health-topics/measles.page>). Printed posters can also be obtained by calling the Provider Access Line at 866-692-3641 between 9 am and 5 pm.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Oxiris Barbot, MD". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Oxiris Barbot, MD

Commissioner