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MEDIA STATEMENT

ECDoH RAMPS UP MEASLES IMMUNISATION

BHISHO — With five other provinces already declared to have a measles outbreak, the Eastern Cape Department of Health is scaling up the immunisation of children aged 6 months to 15 years.

The Eastern Cape has recorded two measles cases — a 14-year-old girl in Nelson Mandela Bay who just returned from Zanzibar and a 4-year-old boy in King Sabata Dalindyebo.

After the two cases were recorded, children aged 6 months to 15 years who live within a 5km radius of the areas where the cases were recorded — were immunised to prevent further spread of the highly infectious disease.

No additional cases have been detected.

Healthcare workers have been hard at work immunising children at health facilities, during outreach programmes and in schools.

Teams have also visited schools to offer the jab. Only learners whose parents or guardians have signed consent forms have been immunised at schools.

From this week, the department will scale up the measles immunisation in an attempt to get as many children as possible protected against measles.

Vitamin A supplementation on children between 6 months to 59 months is done to boost immune system, organ development and growth. This forms part of the immunisation programme.

Deworming is also done on children between 6 months and 12 months. Deworming is beneficial for increasing nutritional intake, prevent anaemia and most importantly reducing worm infections.

Deworming and vitamin A supplementation assist in improving nutritional status of the child thus assisting in preventing and managing infections

MEC for Health Nomakhosazana Meth called on parents and guardians to ensure their children get vaccinated.

The MEC said 162 vehicles have been hired to be used for measles immunisation.

“We have also trained 436 nurses who have been working in communities, vaccinating children and encouraging parents to get their children protected against measles.

“Measles can be spread far easily between people with one person infecting up to 18 people. So, it is important to protect our children by immunising them.

“A fully immunised child should receive two doses of the measles vaccine,” she said.

The main measles symptoms include fever and a rash which is not itchy nor painful. Severe infection can also present with diarrhoea, dehydration and blindness.

Measles is one of the highly contagious diseases and is more easily spread in children under 5 years and children with co-morbidities

Issued by the Eastern Cape Department of Health.

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