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COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY ■ DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ■ DISEASE CONTROL BRANCH

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The San Diego County Health Department has reported that they are experiencing an ongoing measles outbreak. Twelve cases have been diagnosed since the beginning of February 2008. One child was hospitalized; however no deaths have been reported at this time.

Although no confirmed measles cases have been reported in Riverside County this year, it is important for health care providers to be alert to individuals presenting with signs and symptoms suggestive of measles. Our close proximity to San Diego may result in Riverside County residents being exposed.

Prompt identification and isolation of suspect cases is essential to decrease the potential of transmission to susceptible individuals. Patients with suspect measles in healthcare settings should immediately be isolated from other patients. Measles is highly contagious, and is transmitted by coughing, sneezing or other close contact with an infected person. Parents of infants and unimmunized children should be asked upon arrival (or via phone prior to the visit) if the child may have been exposed to measles during the prior three weeks. Exposed unimmunized children should be promptly removed from the waiting room and placed in a private room. If a suspect case is first reported via phone, plans should be in place to isolate the patient upon arrival. Suspect cases should remain in isolation until four days after rash onset. Pregnant contacts should be tested for measles and rubella to determine their immunity if not known.

Persons sharing the same air space in a closed environment with a measles case **or** sharing the same air space during the two hours after the case leaves are considered exposed if immunity to measles cannot be established. Contact information for exposed individuals will be requested by Disease Control. Recommended control measures may include vaccination with MMR, immune globulin, symptom surveillance or social distancing until the 21st day from the last exposure. Exposed healthcare personnel without documented measles immunity should be removed from all patient contact and excluded from the facility from the 4th day after their first exposure until the 21st day from their last exposure, even if they elect to receive post-exposure vaccination.

Healthcare providers are encouraged not to wait for laboratory confirmation to isolate and report suspect cases. Patients with no prior vaccination or disease history who present with unexplained febrile rash illness should immediately be isolated and reported to Disease Control at (951) 358-5107 (evenings/weekends: (951) 782-2974)

Schools are encouraged to review their list of susceptible students so they can be easily identified should we begin to see cases in Riverside County.

Visit our website at www.rivco-diseasecontrol.org for additional information on measles.