

Welcome

Welcome to Issue 2 of the MeNZB™ Vaccine Newsletter. Consultation and planning is in full swing with our partners in health as we await regulatory approval. We need to be absolutely ready to move into top gear, given regulatory approval. Once confirmed, this massive project will be a reality and we will immediately begin the public education and school consenting process.

Other Studies

While the rollout is happening other studies will be carried out. These include the school-based 'carriage' study which will determine incidence rates of Meningococcal B in the throats of children and the 'interference' study, in which the Meningococcal B Vaccine is given to babies at the same time as the current baby vaccines. Because licensure is granted based on the safety and immunogenicity information from different age cohorts, the rollout to over 6 months - 20 years can proceed.

From the Project Sponsor

Counties Manukau District Health Board (CMDHB) has an agreement with the Ministry of Health to provide the planning, preparation and project management Auckland-wide throughout the implementation of the Meningococcal B Immunisation Campaign.

The planning phase for CMDHB and the Eastern Corridor has been completed and we are well on the way with the preparation to make the vaccine available to the population, pending regulatory approval.

The CMDHB Project Team has recently begun the planning phase along with the other DHBs in the Auckland region - Waitemata and Auckland. This process will build on the activities and planning that has already been completed and allow for local input into the campaign delivery models to ensure they will support the needs of the population. Local communication plans will also be developed also as a part of this process.

To enable us to work in partnership across the region many people have committed their time and expertise to the project. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the other District Health Boards and the Regional Public Health Unit for supporting the CMDHB Project Team and helping to make the overall campaign a success.

Nettie Knetsch, General Manager Kidz First & Women's Health/Project Sponsor MVS, NIR.

Advertising Update

Meningococcal B - be wise, immunise

Advertising to promote the Meningococcal B immunisation campaign is due to start in May, when the first TV and radio advertisements start in the Auckland region. The advertisements feature children's TV star Jason Fa'aoi. He'll also feature on posters that will appear on bus shelters. Other advertising will be plastered in the insides, outsides and backs of buses travelling on routes through Counties Manukau. All of this advertising is targeted at getting parents and guardians to sign consent forms and kids to return them to schools.

Another flight of advertising will start on

radio and TV in mid-July, along with big-screen advertisements in cinemas in Counties Manukau and further bus shelter and bus advertising. This lot of advertising will be targeted at teens and people who have left school and aims to get them to visit a nurse or doctor for immunisation.

Although the initial lot of advertising is designed to encourage school-based vaccinations, it will inevitably prompt a few people will to ask GPs, nurses, and other health professionals about both the immunisation programme and about meningococcal disease. The Ministry of Health will be sending out information to the primary healthcare sector before the first advertisements appear.

Outreach Update

To support both the primary care and the school campaign, the Ministry of Health is funding DHBs to provide an outreach service. Outreach will target hard-to-reach youth and under fives.

The CMDHB Project Team is working in partnership with Maori and Pacific and existing Outreach Providers to implement a model of service delivery that will support the mainstream campaigns.

The Outreach Service is a vital component of the campaign and supports the targets and objectives set in the Meningococcal Vaccination Strategy, which is to vaccinate 90% of New Zealander under 19 years, with particular emphasis on Maori and Pacific populations, who are most vulnerable to this disease.

The service needs to provide family-specific solutions to meet the needs of Maori and Pacific peoples. It is

anticipated that the Outreach Team will comprise Community Health Workers and vaccinators. CMDHB is working with existing outreach providers to support their participation in the outreach team and therefore build on the existing networks and relationships that the outreach providers and Community Health Workers have already.

This is an exciting opportunity for providers to work together to support the needs of our communities.

The National Immunisation Register

The National Immunisation Register (NIR), a computerised information system that has been developed to hold immunisation details of New Zealand children, will be a reality in New Zealand in 2004.

The National Immunisation Register (NIR) is an essential support tool for the proposed Meningococcal B immunisation programme both in primary care and for the school-based programme, as it will help in monitoring the safety and effectiveness of the new vaccine, as well as measuring how many children are vaccinated.

The Ministry of Health NIR DHB implementation team is focusing on preparation for 'Go Live' in the three Auckland DHBs. Implementation of the NIR in other DHBs will be undertaken on a staged basis, working from north to south, to support the proposed Meningococcal B immunisation programme.

The NIR will allow for accurate coverage data to be obtained for those vaccinated under the National general immunisation Schedule and also as part of the proposed Meningococcal B immunisation programme. This will enable better programme planning to target populations with the lowest immunisation rates.

The NIR is a key tool that will assist New Zealand to improve its immunisation rates. Improved immunisation coverage will offer individual protection against vaccine-preventable diseases and protection for the community against recurring epidemics.

The NIR will enable authorised health professionals to quickly and easily find out what vaccines a child has been given (this will include children whose family has shifted to another area or changed healthcare providers). This will help to make sure immunisations are given at the appropriate time.

Further information about the NIR can be accessed on the Ministry of Health website at www.moh.govt.nz/nir.

To subscribe to the National Immunisation Programme newsletter please contact Susan Calvert Communications Advisor at immunisation@moh.govt.nz.

School Update

Significant planning and implementation of the School Based Vaccination System (SBVS) has continued over the past month. The installation of this new software package to manage the significant number of School Based vaccinations during the MeNZB Campaign has been an exciting phase! This software package has immense capabilities to ensure smooth vaccine delivery and monitoring of all our school age children.

In addition, the majority of our schools have now received upgrades to their own school roll systems that will enable a '1' button push to produce the required roll extracts for the upcoming campaign.

Contact Us

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