

Update on measles in the Pacific

WHO/UNICEF SECRETARIAT
SUPPORTING MEASLES OUTBREAK
PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN
THE PACIFIC



Brief recap on measles

- Measles is a highly infectious viral illness that can affect all age groups
- Spread through aerosols and contact with infection secretions from coughing and sneezing (even infected surfaces)
- Every case of measles can infect ~12 non-immune contacts so potential for explosive outbreaks
- Measles complications include severe diarrhoea, pneumonia, middle ear infection, blindness and encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) and death
- Significant outbreaks of measles in countries and areas neighbouring the Pacific (AUS, HKG, JPN, KOR, NZ, PHL) since 2017

Preventing measles

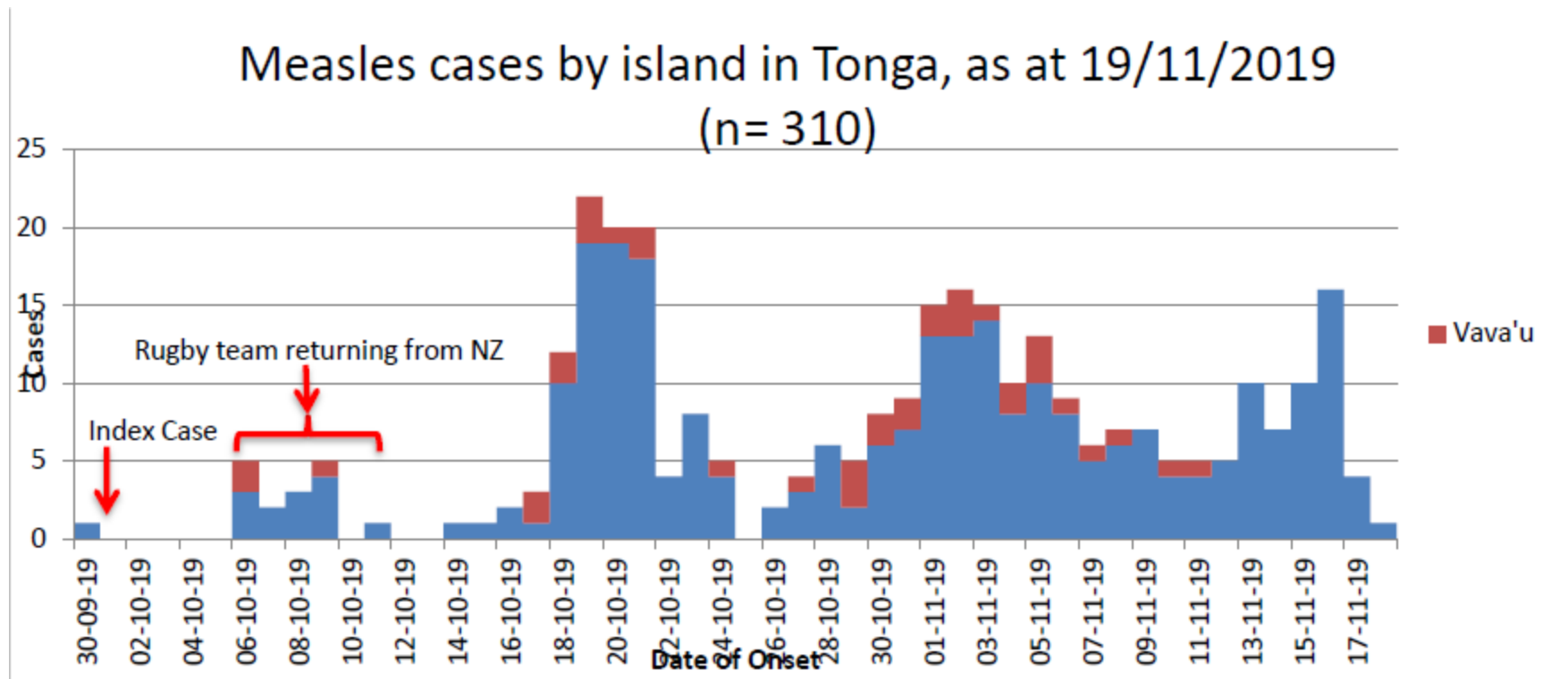
- Achieving and maintaining $\geq 95\%$ coverage with two doses of a measles-containing vaccine
- Highest risk group is children < 5 years
- Herd (population) immunity protects infants too young to be vaccinated and people for whom measles vaccination is medically contraindicated
- Measles containing vaccines (MCVs) are licensed for > 6 months of age
- MR is the vaccine typically used for large scale supplementary immunisation activities
- MR is a UNICEF emergency vaccine enabling rapid procurement

Current outbreaks & likely evolution

Country	Cases*	Deaths*	Genotype	Trend
Samoa	1174	16	D8	↗
Tonga	310	0	D8	↗
Fiji	9	0	ND	↗
American Samoa	2 ex-SAM	0		↔

- High likelihood that we will see new introductions through international travel
- Response aim is to prevent new outbreaks in PICs

Epidemic curve - Tonga



Current outbreaks & likely evolution

- 114 new cases recorded in Samoa in the last 24 hours (Gov. press release 19/11/2019)
- 70 new cases notified in Tonga the last week (Gov. Sitrep 20/11/2019)
- Ascending trend of new cases in the 3 affected countries
- Case counts rapidly changing in Samoa (++) and Tonga (+)
- In Samoa, almost 5 new cases presenting each hour in the last few days

Countries' responses to date



- Preparedness activities & response activities
 - Various **supplementary immunisation activities** (SIAs) in Cook Is, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
 - Zero dose at 6 m (e.g. Fiji, Samoa, Tonga); other PICs have introduced zero dose for infants travelling to outbreak areas
 - Lowering age of MCV1 (Cook Islands with catch up)
 - Mass vaccination of high risk age groups (Kiribati, Solomon Islands, planned for Vanuatu)
 - Whole population coverage (Niue, Tokelau)
 - Vaccination of HCWs, port authorities, outbound travellers, educators (some or all in different countries)
 - Reaching out to diaspora to get vaccinated before travel to the Pacific

Fiji vaccination priority groups

- Current stocks are being reserved for:
 - Residents of Serua/Namosi
 - Children from 6m - 3 y
 - People travelling overseas with proof of imminent travel (ticket)

Countries' responses to date (cont.)

- Measles task forces established in most PICs to coordinate implementation of measles action plans
- Public communications stepped up
- HCW training of clinical triage/measles diagnosis, sample collection, infection prevention and control, immediate notification to public health
- Post-exposure vaccination of identified contacts
- Social distancing measures (e.g. cancelling mass gatherings, games, closing of schools...)
- Control measures at international points of entry

Support provided by WHO/UNICEF

- Ongoing since 2018 as a result of the measles outbreak in the Philippines & following the death of two babies in Samoa
- Intensified since onset of measles outbreak in New Zealand
- Joint WHO/UNICEF RDs' letter to PIC Ministers of Health, Mar 2019
- Discussed at Pacific HoH (Apr), PHMM (Aug) and regularly via PacNET and agency media releases
- Pacific measles advisories on the WHO website
- WHO has activated internal emergency SOPs, IMS/HEOC to facilitate coordination and agency-wide resources

Support provided by WHO/UNICEF

- Measles expert technical support
- Deployment of human resources to Samoa and Tonga to support:
 - Surveillance, epidemiology, risk management
 - Risk communication
 - Vaccinology
- Clinical case management
- Procurement of bundled vaccines and Vit A
- Procurement of PPE, tents, other supplies for emergency response
- Activation of GOARN (Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network) to support HR pipeline

Measles-containing vaccines (MCV)

- Routine MCV stocks delivered to 8 countries
- Emergency stocks delivered to 4 countries
- Orders awaiting for:
 - 5 countries
 - Replenishment of buffer
- Anticipated orders from 2 countries

Measles Vaccine Stocks

MCV Country Stock Update 20 Nov 2019

Country	MCV sent since 01st Oct (doses)	Routine stock incl buffer (VII)	Emergency Supply	Stock on hand at country level as at 20 Nov (doses)		Orders in the pipeline (doses)
Samoa	105,500	5,500	100,000	61,000		50,000
Fiji	135,000	135,000		Low		200,000
Tonga	14,500	2,500	12,000			7,000
Vanuatu	30,000	30,000		17,660		
Cook Islands	500	500				500
FSM	-			-		-
Nauru	1,000	1,000				
Niue	1,000		1,000			
RMI						
Solomon Islands	-			12,500		21,260
Tokelau	1,050	50	1,000			
Tuvalu	1,500	1,500				
Kiribati	-			5,540		
SubTotal	290,050			96,700		278,760
Buffer				5,650		221,240

Totals	290,050	0	0	102,350		500,000
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Way forward

- Sitrep will be shared via email twice weekly (Monday and Thursday)
- WHO/UNICEF weekly coordination meeting
 - **Wednesday at 09:30am** – please let us know if you will join in person or by Zoom, by emailing Measles2019@who.int

Support from other partners/bilateral requests

- **We'd like to hear from you!**