

**From:** [familycouncil@riversideglen.ca](mailto:familycouncil@riversideglen.ca)

**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2014 11:45 AM

**To:** [Diane Wallace](#)

**Subject:** some questions regarding Measles

Hello Diane,

Over the past week a lot of residents and family members have been expressing concerns about the possibility of measles being introduced into the LTC at VRG.

This is in light of the current outbreaks in other areas and their on-going concerns regarding the "Health Centre".

As Family Council chairperson I felt I should ask a few questions of WDGPH:

1. Are there any diagnosed cases of measles in the WDGPH area? Yes, we have had one confirmed case within our health unit boundaries, though not in the Guelph area. There has been 17 confirmed cases of measles in the province as of last week.
2. If a "Health Centre" patient was diagnosed with measles would this be reported to WDGPH? Measles is a reportable disease, and it carries a special code on the reportable list. All **suspect or confirmed** cases of measles must be reported to the local health unit immediately. (Most other diseases can be reported the next business day).
3. If a case of measles was reported by the "Health Centre" what would be the response by WDGPH? We follow up on any suspect or confirmed case of measles that we receive. We work with the client and physician to ensure proper specimens are collected for diagnosis. We would need to track exposures, as this is an airborne disease, contacts are those who shared the same air space with the case. If a confirmed measles case was seen at the HU, a contact would be anyone in the clinic space 30 mins before and at least 2 hours after the case's visit. Depending on the route to the clinic, we may have to expand the contact list. All clinic staff would be considered exposed and we would need to verify their immunization status.
4. If a case of measles was diagnosed in a resident would this be reported to WDGPH? Any case of suspect or confirmed measles must be reported to the HU. We follow, and if the case ends up being confirmed, a full investigation would be done. The infectious period is considered 4 days before the rash onset, to 4 days after the rash onset.
5. If a case of measles in a resident was reported to WDGPH what would be the response by WDGPH? We would handle this much as we would a case seen in the health centre or any other site. It would be a little more involved, as the resident lives in a home and the list of those exposed would be rather large.

As an airborne disease, most residents of the home would need to be investigated. The good news is, those who were born before 1970 are considered immune. However, anyone who visited the home at the time of the exposure would need to be investigated, including family members, especially those who brought young children. Staff and students of the college would need to be investigated as well, although both of these groups should have documentation of immunity on file.

6. If there was a measles outbreak at VRG how deadly would this be for the residents (ie are they a vulnerable population)? Again, those born before 1970 are considered immune. With a vulnerable population, some may have waning immunity and actually could be at risk. Complications from measles can be severe, and occurs in approximately 10% of reported cases. Measles complications disproportionately affect persons suffering from malnutrition, immunodeficiency and pregnant women.

I plan to share this information with both Family Council and Residents' Council, in an attempt to clarify the situation.

If you feel that you have additional information that might be pertinent, please feel free to include it, in addition to answering my list of questions.

As of the most recent information I have, there were 68 cases of measles in the country, most of which resulted directly or indirectly from travel, ie. imported cases. Our case was an individual who had not been immunized and therefore was non-immune. I think I can say with some certainty, that most of the residents of the home who are elderly, are immune.

Thanks, Siobhan.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Siobhan Bulmer  
Chairperson, Riverside Glen LTC Family Council