

2 **VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES**

a **An update on measles surveillance —November 2016**

A high index of suspicion should be maintained for new cases countrywide. Since the beginning of 2016, South Africa has had 15 laboratory-confirmed cases. A measles diagnosis requires a serum sample for serological confirmation, as a measles rash can mimic other viral infections. Any patient with fever, maculopapular rash and one of the '3 Cs' (cough, coryza, conjunctivitis) should have a blood sample sent to NICD for measles testing, together with a completed case investigation form. Only 39% of districts in the country have adequately investigated at least one suspected measles case this year, below the target of 80%, according to the World Health Organization October Bulletin for Eastern and Southern Africa.

The South African measles vaccination schedule includes two doses, now given at 6 months and 12 months of age. Any children admitted to hospital should have their road to health cards checked for completeness of measles vaccination. Measles vaccines are safe and highly effective at preventing measles infection in both children and adults. If a dose has been missed, it is never too late to catch up measles vaccination.

Source: Centre for Vaccines and Immunology, NICD-NHLS; (melindas@nicd.ac.za)