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For More Information, Contact:

Tim Wiedrich, Section Chief  
Emergency Preparedness & Response  
Phone: 701.328.2270  
Email: [twiedric@nd.gov](mailto:twiedric@nd.gov)

**North Dakota Department of Health response team to assist Washington in measles outbreak**

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) Emergency Preparedness and Response section will deploy a five-member response team this week to assist in an escalating measles outbreak in Vancouver, Wash. They will relieve existing members of the Washington state response team. Washington requested the specialized team through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC).

Washington governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency on Jan. 25 in response to the measles outbreak. Since Jan. 1, Washington public health has confirmed 36 cases and 12 suspect cases in two counties. Twenty-five patients are between the ages of 1 to 10 years old. Thirty-two of the patients were not immunized, and the immunization status of the remaining four cases is unverified.

All children are recommended to be vaccinated against measles at ages 12 to 15 months and 4 to 6 years. Measles is included in a combination vaccine with mumps and rubella (known as MMR vaccine). All adults born in 1957 or later should have at least one dose of MMR vaccine. All health care workers should have two doses of MMR vaccine. Currently, North Dakota's rate for MMR vaccination of infants is 95.7 percent, compared to the United States average of 91.1 percent. North Dakota's rates for MMR vaccination for kindergarten entry for the 2018-2019 school year was 93.83 percent. The goal is at least 95 percent.

"We are pleased to assist with this serious public health emergency, " said Tim Wiedrich, Emergency Preparedness & Response Section Chief. "Our participation not only assists Washington but also strengthens our North Dakota response capabilities."

EMAC enables a disaster-impacted state to request and receive assistance from other member states quickly and efficiently. The federal government has ratified EMAC in all 50 states, including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Washington will reimburse North Dakota's costs as delineated in the EMAC request.

For more information on the Emergency Management Assistance Compact visit [www.emacweb.org](http://www.emacweb.org).

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