

Mark Drakeford AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Minister for Health and Social Services



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: SF/MD/2110/13

David Rees AM
Chair
Health and Social Care Committee
National Assembly for Wales

8 August 2013

Dear David,

I am writing to provide clarification on two points about the measles outbreak raised by Kirsty Williams AM during the Committee meeting held on 10 July 2013.

The points raised were as follows:

Can you account for the difference in the figures [provided by Public Health Wales and the Welsh Government] for the number of children who were immunised during the MMR campaign in 2005/2006?

The MMR catch up campaign between October 2005 and May 2006 was undertaken in secondary schools, colleges and universities in Wales. Those not in education were offered MMR through their local general practice.

A total of 126,657 secondary school pupils in 293 schools were identified who had missed either one or both doses of MMR. Of these 53,708 received one or more doses of MMR. In addition, a total of 7,112 students in colleges and universities were also given MMR. Overall, during the campaign a total of 60,820 children and students were immunised with one or more doses of MMR.

The statement provided by Public Health Wales referred to the 53,708 school children who received one or more doses of MMR; my evidence paper referred to the figure of just over 60,800 children and young people in the wider age range of 11 – 25 years who were vaccinated as part of the campaign.

Both figures were accurate but were illustrating outcomes in different age groups.

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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Was the correspondence issued by the Welsh Government following the audit of circular WHC(2005)081, generic i.e. the same going to each health board or did the Welsh Government write to each health board individually about their own plans?

Through circular WHC(2005)081, policy was put in place to reduce the health risks to children reaching school age, entering secondary school and entering adult life without protection against measles, mumps or rubella. The circular set out a number of specific, permanent steps (gateways) for follow up at certain key times for children who had not received MMR vaccination according to the national schedule.

The audit carried out in June 2008 had found that the requirements of WHC (2005) 081 had been incompletely implemented in all 22 health boards except one, and five HBs had implemented less than half of the requirements of the policy .

Following the audit, the Chief Medical Officer wrote separately to chief executives of health boards to indicate whether the measures contained in the circular had been fully implemented within their area. It was not a generic letter. Statistics were provided to show the number of children within each health board who had missed one vaccination and the number who had received no vaccinations. Health boards were asked to review the findings of the audit and to advise as a matter of priority how full implementation would be completed where this had not been achieved.

The audit for the emerging Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Health Board area had found that implementation of the circular was largely incomplete at that time. In response, ABMU identified specific issues to be addressed within its three local health boards areas and drew up a single action plan as part of its primary and community care local delivery plan. Progress on implementing these actions were reviewed by the Welsh Government as part of the NHS Wales Annual Operating Framework (AOF) for 2009/10.

I hope this provides the clarification that was not possible during the meeting.

Best wishes

Mark

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