Letter to the Editor

Guidelines for the control of measles outbreaks in Australia

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To the Editor: In response to Dr Christine Selvey’s letter to the Editor the Measles Elimination Advisory Committee (MEAC) would like to provide the following comment.

The definition of a susceptible person that was published in the Guidelines for the Control of Measles Outbreaks in Australia (2000) could be interpreted to be inconsistent in the situation proposed by Dr Selvey. Therefore, MEAC agrees that practitioners should consider offering infants under 6 months of age immunoglobulin if:

- the exposure was to a confirmed case of measles, as defined in section 2.1 of the Guidelines; and
- the mother is retrospectively assessed to have been susceptible to measles at the infant’s time of birth.

Such a situation is rare at present but might become more common in future.

Guidelines such as Guidelines for the Control of Measles Outbreaks in Australia cannot provide recommendations to cover every situation. Therefore, it is important for public health practitioners to consider recommendations in light of the clinical context and to be prepared to exercise a degree of clinical judgement in their implementation (refer to page xvii of the Guidelines).