**Information letter for employers of labour migrants**

Subject: Prevent the spread of measles among labour migrants

Dear employer,

This letter is about preventing and dealing with measles among labour migrants.

**Measles in Europe and in the Netherlands**

There have been measles outbreaks in various European countries, including Eastern Europe, since autumn 2023. Since early 2024, there have also been reported cases of measles in the Netherlands, also among labour migrants from Eastern Europe. Vaccination coverage in Eastern European countries is usually lower than in the Netherlands. There are some regions in the Netherlands that also have lower vaccination coverage. The risk of a measles outbreak is higher if more people are not protected against the disease.

**Labour migrants**

Your organisation employs labour migrants. They often have close contact with many people in their living situation and work environment. As a result, there is a higher risk that they will get an infectious disease such as measles. If they become ill, they can spread the disease quickly. You can help prevent the spread of measles.

**What is measles?**  
Measles is an infectious rash disease caused by a virus. The disease starts with a fever, listlessness, cold symptoms and coughing. A skin rash of red spots emerges after 3 to 7 days. The rash starts behind the ears and then spreads all over the body. People sometimes also get ear infections or pneumonia.

**Contagiousness**

The virus is found in the nose and throat of a person with measles. When a person with measles coughs or sneezes, tiny droplets containing the virus are expelled into the air. If other people inhale the droplets, they could also get measles. The measles virus is very contagious. A person with measles can pass it on to others from 4 days before the rash first starts until 4 days after the red dots appear. The incubation period between exposure and illness is 7 to 14 days. It usually takes 10 days to start showing symptoms.

More information about measles: [rivm.nl/en/measles](https://www.rivm.nl/en/measles).

**What can you do?**

It is important that your employees have safe and healthy working conditions. A healthy employee can do the work as planned. An employee who has measles can infect their co-workers and may not be able to work if they become ill (sick leave or disability). Vaccination offers the best protection against measles. You can help by telling your employees about measles. Labour migrants often do not know how to get a vaccination.

**Vaccination against measles (MMR)**

There are various things that you can do for your employees:

* You can arrange preventive vaccination for your employees and cover the costs. Ask your job health and safety (ARBO) service about the options and costs.
* You can refer your employees to the Municipal Public Health Services (GGDs). Your employees can contact the local GGD to make an appointment for vaccination. This vaccination costs money. For more information, see [vaccinatiesopmaat.nl](https://www.vaccinatiesopmaat.nl/vaccinatie/bof-mazelen-rode-hond-bmr) (in Dutch).
* You can refer your employees to the GP. This vaccination costs money.

**Do you have questions about measles?**

General information: <https://www.rivm.nl/en/measles>

Municipal Public Health Service (GGD) by phone: [...]

Please feel free to contact the GGD if you have questions.