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To: Health Center Directors and/or Chief Health Officers
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Offices of International Students and Scholars
Education Abroad Programs
Executive Education Programs
Massachusetts Colleges and Universities

From: Susan Lett, MD, MPH, Medical Director
Immunization Program

Date: June 2, 2015

Subject: Higher Education Immunization Requirements Apply to International Visitors

As you probably know, measles continues to occur in the U.S. largely due to importation. In 2015 there has been a large outbreak associated with the Disney theme park in California, with 117 confirmed cases, mostly likely initiated by a visitor to the US with measles or a returning traveler who contracted the illness while out of the country.

The recent confirmation of a case of measles in Massachusetts in a visiting unvaccinated exchange student from Western Europe, and associated exposure of over 700 people, highlight the importance of **immunization requirements for students, including students at post-secondary institutions**. The exchange student became infectious with measles very shortly after arriving in the United States. We are cautiously optimistic that there have not been any secondary cases as the result of this imported case. A number of exposed individuals were quarantined for 21 days, resulting in missed days of work, exclusion from daycare, cancellation of plans to attend important events, and stress for those exposed who had pre-existing health concerns. **Please ensure that your institution is aware of these immunization requirements, and work together to make them a formal part of any international exchange program or academic visitation program at your school.**

Massachusetts regulations specify the immunizations required of students before admission to school (105 CMR 220.000: IMMUNIZATION OF STUDENTS BEFORE ADMISSION TO SCHOOL). These regulations (see below and attached) include "any individual from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of a formal academic visitation or exchange program."

Student shall mean any individual attending, or enrolled or registered to attend, a pre-school program as defined in 105 CMR 220.400, kindergarten through 12th grade in a public or private school, or a postsecondary institution, as defined in 105 CMR 220.600, provided the educational program is offered either on or off-site in Massachusetts. The term student shall also include any individual from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of a formal academic visitation or exchange program.

These regulations apply to all such visiting students, even if their program is for a short duration.

For questions about vaccine preventable diseases, please call the Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at 617-983-6800, and ask to speak to an epidemiologist.

- More information about school requirements and vaccination can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/immunization/school-requirements.html>.
- Our most recent Clinical Measles Alert (April 30, 2015) can be found at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/cdc/advisories/mdph-clinical-measles-alert-4-30-2015.pdf>

Please forward this memo to pertinent colleagues in your staff and institution.