Dear Parent

The North Coast Public Health Unit (Lismore) has been notified of a confirmed case of Pertussis in a child that attends Wyrallah Road Primary School. I am asking that you stay alert for the symptoms of Pertussis for the next three (3) weeks.

The North Coast is still seeing very high levels of whooping cough so if your child has a dry irritable cough that maybe worse at night time, often ending with vomiting, gagging or dry retching, that may or may not be associated with an inspiratory whoop at the end of the cough, please consider whooping cough.

What should people sick with pertussis do?
Whooping cough is a serious illness and can be fatal in babies and small children. People who have been diagnosed with pertussis should not attend work, school or childcare centres until they have completed the first 5 days of a course of the recommended antibiotics. If antibiotics cannot be taken, then they must stay away for 3 weeks after onset of the cough.

How is it prevented?
Vaccination is the most important way of reducing pertussis in our community. It is important to double check that your child is fully up to date with his or her immunisations against pertussis. If in doubt, please ask your doctor to check.

An adult whooping cough vaccine is also now available in Australia for people over the age of 8 years. It is currently free to parents, grandparents that care for babies and anybody that cares for small babies. Please discuss this with your family doctor or community health staff as soon as you can.

While the vaccination against whooping cough gives good protection to young children it does wane with time, therefore older children, adults, and adolescence are susceptible, and, can transmit whooping cough to infants and others in the event of becoming infected.

Please take the time to read the attached fact sheet and if your child develops symptoms as described, avoid other people in particular young babies, stay away from work and school, and see your doctor as soon as possible.

Take this letter with you when you see your doctor.

If you require any further information please call the Public Health Unit on 6620 7585 or you could access the following excellent website

Thank you

Debra van den Berg
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