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PRESS RELEASE – For Immediate Release

Health District Investigating Group Exposed To Measles While Traveling Out of State

(GOODING COUNTY) South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) is investigating nearly 50 people exposed to the measles virus while traveling in Seattle, Washington in April. A team of nurses and epidemiologists inspected all of those patients today and confirmed that currently none of the patients are showing symptoms for the disease.

“The best way to protect yourself and your family against measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases is by immunization,” Cheryle Becker, SCPHD Public Health Division Administrator. “By the time you start showing symptoms it is too late to vaccinate. That’s why we urge families to immunize before an outbreak hits their community.”

SCPHD will continue to monitor the group for symptoms until May 18th to ensure they have not caught the disease. In the meantime, they urge residents to check their immunization records and confirm they are protected against measles with two MMR vaccines. Unvaccinated individuals 1 year and older should receive a measles vaccination to protect themselves and those around them.

“Measles is an acute, highly contagious viral disease. A small number of cases are capable of quickly producing epidemics,” said Becker. “It only takes one infected patient to start an outbreak.”

Symptoms include fever, runny nose, cough, and eye discharge followed by a fever and rash. If you are showing symptoms, and know you’ve been exposed to the disease, it is important you limit your exposure to other people so you don’t spread the disease. Call your health provider immediately and tell them you are showing symptoms and may have been exposed.

Children should receive their first dose of measles vaccine between 12 and 15 months of age; another dose at 4-6 years of age. Measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine is generally first given at 12 months of age in the United States, but is sometimes recommended for children as young as 6 months of age who are traveling outside the United States or could be infected in an outbreak.

For more information on measles, visit phd5.idaho.gov/Disease/MeaslesTraveler.html or www.cdc.gov/measles. To obtain a measles vaccination, call SCPHD or your health care provider to set up an appointment.

For information about presumptive evidence of immunity, see <http://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/index.html#immunity>

For MMR vaccine recommendations, see <https://www.cdc.gov/measles/hcp/index.html#vaccination>