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Your No. )

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திகதி )  
Date )

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சுகாதார அமைச்சு  
**Ministry of Health**

Provincial Directors of Health Services,  
Regional Directors of Health Services,  
Heads/ Directors of Institutions,  
Provincial Consultant Community Physicians,  
Directors of National Hospital/Teaching Hospitals/Provincial & District  
General Hospitals, Base Hospitals,  
All Medical Superintendents of other Hospitals,  
Medical Officers/Port Health Office,  
Medical Officers-Medical centres/Airports , harbours  
All Regional Epidemiologists/ Medical Officers (Maternal and Child Health),  
All Medical Officers of Health,

**Polio vaccination guidelines for travellers**

South East Asia Region has been declared Polio free in March 2014 but until the declaration of Global Polio Eradication, the risk of transmission to polio free countries will remain. Enhanced activities to mitigate the risk of importation from polio infected countries to polio free countries is a current vital requirement.

- On 5th May 2014, World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the international spread of wild poliovirus as a Public Health Emergency of International Concerns (PHEIC) under the International Health Regulation (IHR).
- The International Travel and Health (ITH) 2013 guidelines of World Health Organization describes recommendations for travellers across all age groups visiting polio-infected countries to have completed the age-appropriate polio vaccine doses recommended in the national immunization schedule or else an additional polio vaccination dose.
- National Advisory Committee on Communicable Disease (NACCD) held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014 discussed the issue and took a decision of mandatory vaccination of travellers to polio affected countries.

- Recommendation of essential polio vaccination of travellers from Afghanistan, Pakistan , Nigeria Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Syrian Arab Republic, Ethiopia, Iraq, Israel, and Somalia will be implemented as visa requirement in entry to Sri Lanka in due course as requested by the Ministry of Health, considering World Health Organization recommendations of high risk of polio transmission from travelers. [Updates on countries which are considered to be polio infected globally will be found at [www.polioeradication.org/casecount.asp](http://www.polioeradication.org/casecount.asp) ]
- Travellers **to** above mentioned countries should receive Polio vaccination (OPV) as mentioned below.
- Travellers should be provided with an International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis in the form specified in Annex 6 of the International Health Regulations (2005) with proper documentation of polio vaccination status as a proof of Polio vaccination.

#### **Recommendations and guidelines for Polio vaccination to travellers**

- Port Health Offices of Colombo and Galle will be the authorized medical facility for issuing the International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis in the form specified in Annex 6 of the International Health Regulations (2005) for polio vaccination. Oral Polio vaccination for travelers should be provided from these Port Health Offices.
- In an adult :
  - Polio vaccination [one dose of Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV)/ or Inactivated Polio Vaccine (IPV)] should be given at least 4 weeks before international travel and maximum within 1 year.
  - If received last polio vaccine dose more than 1 year of the international travel, need to re-vaccinate for polio.
  - If undertaking an urgent travel (i.e. within 4 weeks) and not received polio vaccination within 1 year, recommend to polio vaccination (OPV or IPV) at least by the time of departure.

- In a child:
  - All children travelling to polio-infected countries should have completed their age appropriate polio vaccination according to the national immunization schedule.
  - Infants too young to receive 3 doses of a polio vaccine should be vaccinated according to the national immunization schedule to the age.
  - Any child who has not received any polio vaccination previously should complete the polio vaccination of the national schedule before departure by the relevant Medical Officer of Health (MOH) in keeping minimum of 1 month intervals in each dose and complete at least 4 weeks before departure.
  - Children who have received at least 3 doses but not completed the age appropriate national schedule an additional polio vaccination dose is recommended at least 4 weeks before departure.
- Any emergency travels, when 4 weeks' time period is not available, still should vaccinate with additional one dose of OPV before departure.
- Long term travellers ( > 4 weeks) to Sri Lanka or in-migrants (if any) from polio infected countries, should inspect for adequate vaccination at first contact of these persons by any Medical Officer and inadequate vaccinations should be attended at immediately and should take measures to re-vaccinate for polio immediately according to their age.
  - Inform to relevant Medical Officer of Health (MOH) of the person's residence/temporary residence with a contact information to be vaccinated as an emergency outbreak preventive measure.
  - MOH should follow all informed cases of migrants/travellers to identify further family members / persons for OPV vaccination.
- Any unvaccinated traveller reported to the Medical Centre at the airport ( voluntarily) or harbour from polio infected country before entry to Sri Lanka or any traveller requests polio vaccination even immediately before departure to polio infected country, polio vaccination dose (OPV/IPV) should be provided at the airport / harbour medical centre.
- Required polio vaccines for travellers should be ordered from the Epidemiology Unit or from Regional Medical Supplies Division (RMSD) in advance and should maintain stocks.

- All vaccination procedure, vaccine management and vaccine safety should be in accordance with National circulars and the National guidelines given in the Immunization Handbook (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition), Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health.

Please bring the content of this to all relevant staff at your institution, district/province and arrange to implement recommendations accordingly.



Dr. P. G. Mahipala  
DGHS

Copy:

- Secretary/Health
- DDG/PHS1 & 11
- DDG/MS 1 & 2
- Chief Epidemiologist
- Director/MCH
- Director/Quarantine
- OIC/RMSD