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MEASLES OUTBREAK: VACCINATION KEY TO PROTECTING THE COMMUNITY

Australia's most recent measles outbreak has once again highlighted the importance of vaccination, following at least 14 confirmed cases in Brunswick, Victoria.

The Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control (ACIPC) says vaccination is essential for keeping individuals and the community safe.

ACIPC President, Professor Ramon Shaban said, "Measles is a highly contagious disease that can have serious health consequences including pneumonia, encephalitis, and permanent brain damage."

"Everyone needs to be immunised and anyone concerned about the vaccine should know there is clear scientific evidence demonstrating it is safe and effective."

"The side effects associated with the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine are generally mild whereas approximately 1 in 70 people who contract measles require hospitalisation. A number of case control studies demonstrate no causative association between MMR vaccine and particular conditions that some individuals and groups attribute to the vaccine."

"This outbreak has particularly highlighted the importance for adults, as well as children, to have been fully vaccinated, with 12 of the 14 cases being adults aged in their 20s to 40s."

"It is critical that everyone is aware of their immune status to vaccine preventable diseases, in this particular case measles. If you are unsure of your immune status you should consult your medical practitioner. Parents and guardians should ensure that children are vaccinated. Vaccination affords both individuals and the wider community the greatest protective measure against infection, that being prevention."

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For interviews please contact Professor Ramon Shaban 0478 312 668.

About ACIPC

The ACIPC is the peak body for Infection Prevention and Control in the Australasian region. The College supports infection prevention and control professionals by providing them with support, networking, knowledge and up to date information relevant to their area of practice. This media release has been prepared and approved by the College's Board of Directors, known as the ACIPC Executive Council. www.acipc.org.au