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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

National Immunisation Office  
Units 8/9 Manor Street Business Park  
Manor Street  
Dublin 7

Tel. 01 8676108  
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13<sup>th</sup> August 2008

Professor James Brown  
President  
National University of Ireland, Galway  
Galway

**RE: MUMPS IN THIRD LEVEL STUDENTS**

Dear Prof Brown,

As you know from my letter of April 2008, there have been a number of outbreaks of mumps, particularly among college students over the past few years. These outbreaks are occurring because many young adults aged 18-25 years have not received two doses of mumps (MMR) vaccine and thus third level colleges have large numbers of susceptible individuals facilitating ongoing transmission of mumps infection.

Mumps is an acute viral illness that causes fever, headache and characteristically painful swollen salivary glands. Complications can include meningitis, deafness, and inflammation of the testicles in adult males. Mumps is infectious from about 6 days before to the 10 days after onset of symptoms. This illness has the potential to disrupt the education of a large number of students.

The National Immunisation Office has contacted the Central Applications Office to alert prospective students through a web link to the NIO website <http://www.immunisation.ie/en/3rdLevelStudents/Mumps/> to the recommendation that they have two doses of MMR vaccine to provide protection against mumps.

I would ask that you inform your student health services of this recommendation for two doses of MMR which is available free from General Practitioners. It would also be helpful to provide a link to the NIO website for students through your college website or in e-mail circulars to students re any health matters.

Thank you for your assistance in preventing further outbreaks of mumps in this academic year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Kelleher', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Kevin Kelleher  
Assistant National Director  
Population Health – Health Protection

