

MenW kills NT woman

PHILLIPPA BUTT
LAUREN ROBERTS

Two women diagnosed with deadly disease at RDH

A WOMAN from a remote Top End community near Darwin has died after contracting meningococcal W.

The middle-aged woman, who was living in both Darwin and the remote community, became unwell on July 31 and was flown to Royal Darwin Hospital but passed away on August 2.

A second woman, in her 20s

and living in the urban Darwin area, was also diagnosed with the disease last week but has since recovered and been discharged.

The cases are not believed to be related.

Centre for Disease Control director Vicki Krause said appropriate public health action had been taken in both cases.

"These sporadic cases have

had their contacts traced and given antibiotics and now we'll give them the vaccine," Dr Krause said.

"We will now also be looking at these cases that are in the Darwin region to look at the implications of these two cases."

Dr Krause said it was crucial the fast-moving disease was treated quickly but stopped short of saying people in re-

mote communities, far from hospitals, were more at risk.

"Meningococcal is a rare disease and it's something that people have to recognise the signs and symptoms early," she said.

"It's really important to get antibiotics early ... because the disease can progress quickly."

Dr Krause said while the disease moved quickly and

people should always be aware, the CDC did not believe others in Darwin were at risk.

"The disease is actually quite difficult to acquire, it's not easily spread. It's spread by air droplets when people have had intense contact over several days and several hours - close contact," she said.

The meningococcal ACWY vaccination is included in the

immunisation schedule for all children at 12 months and 75 per cent of all children have received the vaccine.

It is also available, free, to young people up until age 19 everywhere except in Darwin.

Symptoms of meningococcal include fever, headache, neck stiffness, an aversion to bright lights, a rash and joint pain. If you notice these symptoms in yourself or a family member, contact your GP immediately.

Teen athlete sports her knowledge over the A to Z of dance

LAUREN ROBERTS

DURING her first dance lesson Rebekah Williams, then just 3, was far more interested in swinging on the bar than moving her feet.

Despite learning very little in her first class, Rebekah's lifelong love of performing was born on the floor on a Darwin dance studio.

Flash forward 12 years, and there's very few styles the teen dancer has left to explore.

"I started with acrobatics and ballet," she said. "I've done jazz and tap and point and contemporary and lyrical and musical theatre and Broadway ... the only thing I haven't tried is ballroom."

Today, Rebekah teaches dance to children aged 4-14 and said the sport was about so much more than movement.

Rebekah has represented Darwin Performance Academy in local, interstate and national competitions. In recognition of her contribution to the Darwin dance scene, Rebekah has been nominated as a local sports star in the "individual" category.

It's an accolade given to Australian athletes 18 or under, who demonstrate the greatest achievement, dedication, fairness and sportsmanship.

To nominate a local sports star visit ntnews.com.au/sport/localssportsstars



Rebekah Williams, 15, has been nominated as a junior sports star and has represented her dance academy in local, interstate and national competitions

Picture: PATRINA MALONE

NT urged to settle detention claims Prisoner legs it from Alice hospital

LAWYERS leading a class action against the Northern Territory over the abuse of young people in juvenile detention have called on the government to settle the case.

Ben Slade, representing the two teenage boys who are the lead applicants, said the 20-month legal stoush and delays in bringing the matter to trial

were denying his clients justice. The class action has been brought by two teenage boys who were held at the Don Dale detention centre in Darwin.

While there it's alleged they were subjected to abusive treatment. The action has been joined by more than 30 other youths but is also seeking compensation for all 1300 detained

at various times over a period of 12 years. In court, counsel for the NT government, David McClure asked for some sections of the claim to be struck out, telling the court that the Territory remained unclear exactly what it was being asked to defend.

Justice Richard White has reserved his decision.

EIGHT people escaped while under guard at various locations around the Territory on Friday night and yesterday morning.

NT Police were late yesterday still searching for a prisoner who ran away from the Alice Springs Hospital while seven youths also absconded from the Alice Springs Bush-

Mob program. Four of the youths were found by police while the other three returned to the facility early yesterday.

The prisoner who escaped from the hospital is Rodney Turner, 20. He is believed to have run into the Todd River.

Turner is described as indigenous with curly dark hair, 170cm tall and about 80kg.

He was last seen wearing blue prison-issue shoes, blue shorts, a blue bucket hat, and a blue, white and red AFL jersey.

He also has his left arm in a sling.

He is not believed to be dangerous.

Anyone with information is asked to call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.