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**PUTNAM COUNTY RANKS NUMBER ONE IN NEW YORK STATE
FOR HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW**

Brewster, NY -On April 3, 2012 the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute released the 2012 County Health Rankings for New York State as well as the rest of the country.

Putnam County ranked number one in New York State for the third consecutive year for having the best overall health outcome rating. This composite score was based on many health-related factors. For example, Putnam is second lowest in premature deaths, fourth lowest in poor health-related quality of life factors and number one in social and economic factors that impact health. The rankings compare counties across multiple factors that influence health and allow residents to see where their county is doing well and where improvement is needed.

“Although ranking systems are only broad measures of health, this study confirms that Putnam is a healthy place to live and most of our people enjoy better health, overall, than those who live in other parts of New York,” said Rebecca Wittenberg, RN, BSN, Public Health Director. “Like every other community, there is always room for improvement,” she said.

Aside from statistics on death and illness, the study also looked at health-related behaviors, such as tobacco and alcohol use, obesity, motor vehicle deaths, and rates of teen births and sexually-transmitted diseases. Putnam County was highly ranked (4th of 62) for Health Factors which include many health behaviors such as physical activity and adult smoking among others. Putnam County Department of Health continues to focus on chronic disease prevention with the *Live Healthy Putnam* initiative.

Other factors incorporated into the rankings include: access to quality health care, levels of education, employment, household income, social support, public safety, and environmental quality. Despite the superior ranking in health outcomes, the report indicates that Putnam is less highly ranked in access to quality health care, 17th of 62, an improvement from the 2011 ranking of 33rd. The Department of Health continues to work with various community organizations to improve access to quality health care.

“Putnam County government works hard to support and improve quality of life for our Putnam residents,” said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. “The county has miles of bike and walking trails, beautiful parks and lakes, and numerous other outdoor activities that all help residents stay active and healthier.”

For more information about the specific measures and Putnam County rankings

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/#app/new-york/2012/putnam/county/1/overall>

For more information about the *Live Healthy Putnam* initiative, please visit

<http://www.putnamcountyny.com/livehealthyputnam>

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