

ALLEN BEALS, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner of Health



MARYELLEN ODELL
County Executive

ROBERT MORRIS, P.E., M.P.H.
Director of Environmental Health

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1 Geneva Road, Brewster, New York 10509

Phone # (845) 808-1390

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: April 16, 2014

Contact: Barbara Iardi, Public Information Officer, (845) 808-1390

PUTNAM AND SURROUNDING COUNTIES SEE FLU CASES SPIKE

Brewster, NY— It's April and the weather is finally improving, but flu season is not over yet. In fact Putnam County and surrounding areas in New York State are experiencing a spike in influenza cases. It is not too late to receive a flu shot.

“The flu season doesn't end until late Spring,” explains Allen Beals, MD, Commissioner of Health for Putnam County, “so this is not entirely unusual. What's interesting is that earlier in the season we saw mostly Type A influenza, and this current spike is mostly in Type B.”

Each year the vaccine is reformulated to be most protective against the dominant strains. This scientific endeavor is played out in university research departments and pharmaceutical laboratories around the U.S. This year most vaccine was a trivalent variety, meaning it would immunize a patient against 3 strains—two As and one B. A newer quadrivalent vaccine, available in limited quantities and at higher cost this year, was engineered to protect against two As and two Bs.

“The good news,” reports Dr. Beals, “is that next year, more quadrivalent vaccine will be available and we plan to purchase it in greater quantities; and it looks like the Putnam County government will support and fund this initiative.”

The Health Department's mission is to improve and protect the health of the Putnam

County community, composed of nearly 100,000 residents. Core services include community health assessment, disease surveillance and control, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit our website at www.putnamcountyny.com/health; or visit our social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

###