



Sherlita Amler, MD, MS, FAAP
Commissioner of Health

Robert J. Bondi
Putnam County Executive

Robert Morris, PE
Director of Environmental Health

Putnam County Department of Health
1 Geneva Road
Brewster, New York 10509

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: May 18, 2010

**Contact: Sherlita Amler, MD, Commissioner of Health, Putnam County
Department of Health, 845-278-6558**

Putnam County Department of Health Holds First Public Health Summit

The Putnam County Health Department sponsored its first Public Health Summit on Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at Putnam Hospital Center. Held in the new Carmada Care Center of the hospital, close to 100 individuals from various agencies throughout the county came together to discuss health priorities. Putnam County Department of Health Commissioner, Dr. Sherlita Amler, and President and CEO of Putnam Hospital Center, Donna McGregor, provided a welcome to summit attendees. Funding for the Summit was provided by a Healthcare Efficiency and Affordability Law (HEAL) grant from the New York State Department of Health.

Various presentations were provided throughout the morning session to offer the audience detailed information regarding the Health Department's Community Health Assessment (CHA) and identified priorities. The CHA is a fundamental tool of public health practice. Its aim is to describe the health of the community by presenting information on health status,

community health needs, resources, and epidemiologic and other studies of current local health problems.

The Community Health Assessment is the basis for all local public health planning, giving the Health Department the opportunity to identify and interact with key community leaders and organizations about health priorities and concerns. The Health Department, Putnam Hospital Center and other community agencies identified four public health priorities to work on over the next three years: Access to Quality Health Care, Chronic Disease Prevention, Emergency Preparedness, and Mental Health/Substance Abuse. These areas were identified after reviewing a number of data sets as well as information from the hospital and area providers. Summit participants participated in breakout sessions in the afternoon where each of the four priorities was discussed and best practice suggestions were made to assist in reaching set goals for each priority.

Feedback and information from the Putnam Summit will be shared with the New York State Department of Health and will be followed up with a seven county Regional HEAL Summit to be held in June.

For further information about HEAL9 or to take the health survey, please visit www.putnamcountyny.com. The Community Health Assessment will also be available on the website in the near future.

##