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Health Department on Alert for Ebola

Brewster, NY - Despite the widespread news coverage of the first diagnosed case of Ebola in the United States, national health officials say the country is not at risk for an epidemic. Nonetheless, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), recognizes that even a single case of Ebola diagnosed in the United States raises concerns. Knowing the possibility exists, medical and public health professionals across the country have been preparing to respond.

The Putnam County Department of Health wants to assure the public that we are working with local medical providers to be on the lookout for Ebola. The local medical community has been alerted to be observant for patients with symptoms of Ebola and to ask any of those with symptoms about their recent travel history. There are specific processes in place if a local hospital or physician identifies a patient they think may have Ebola.

According to the CDC, the symptoms of Ebola include a high fever, severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain and unexplained bleeding or bruising. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure, but the average is 8 to 10 days. Ebola can be spread to others only after symptoms appear.

Ebola is not spread through casual contact. It is spread through direct contact with the bodily fluids of an infected person or indirectly through exposure to objects contaminated by the ill person. For more information regarding Ebola, please visit www.putnamcountyny.com/health.

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, emergency preparedness, environmental health protection, family health promotion and health education. For more information, please visit the PCDOH website at www.putnamcountyny.com/health or visit the social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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