



# Concerning Our Health

## “Freedom From Smoking” Program launched by Health Department

*Many patients have numerous, unsuccessful quit attempts before finally quitting for good. For patients who have been unable to stop so far, the evidence-based Freedom from Smoking (FFS) Program offers another chance.*

The eight-session cessation program, developed and promoted by the American Lung Association, is now being offered in Putnam County by the health department. Free nicotine replacement products (NRT) were available to participants in the initial series, and will be in upcoming sessions as long as supplies last.

Hundreds of thousands have benefited from the FFS program since it began more than 30 years ago. Led by a certified facilitator, the eight weekly classes comprise a cognitive-behavior treatment with components of self-assessment, individualized action plan development, group support, weight management, stress management and relaxation techniques. NRT use is encouraged, but optional. Each session runs 60 to 90 minutes.

The first FFS program, held in the evening at the Bureau of Emergency Services, 112 Old Route 6 in Carmel, had a full turn-out and future programs are being planned. Pre-registration is required.

*For information or to pre-register:*

**Kristine Boyle, CDN, CPH, CHWC**

845-808-1390, ext.43258  
845-808-1336 fax

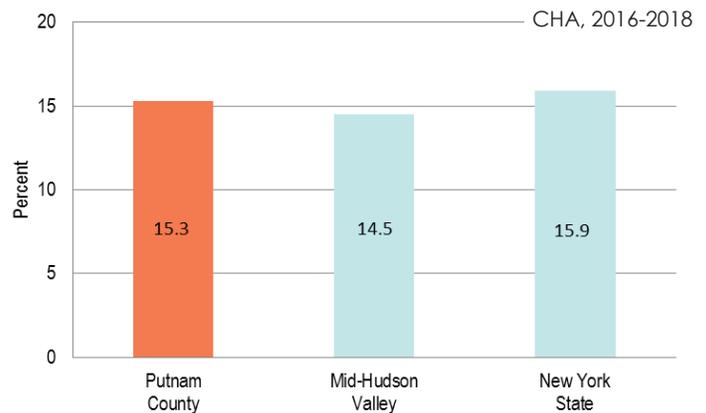
## Physician advice helps patients quit

Combined data from 17 trials compared brief physician advice on smoking cessation to no advice from physicians. Results showed a statistically significant difference in the quitting rate of an additional 1 to 3% success for those who received advice beyond the unassisted quit rate of 2 to 3%.

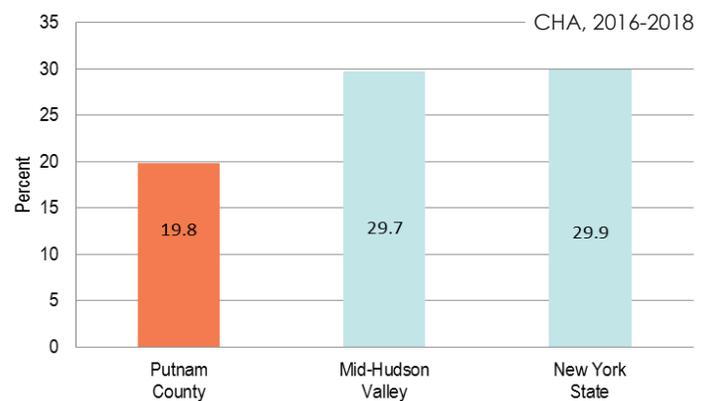
Researchers drew these conclusions from among 42 randomized trials, conducted between 1972 and 2012, that enrolled over 31,000 smokers. Some involved smokers at risk for specific diseases but most were from non-risk-identified populations. Delivery of advice occurred most often in a primary care setting, with cessation evaluated at least six months after advice.

**Source:** Stead LF, Buitrago D, Preciado N, Sanchez G, Hartmann-Boyce J, Lancaster T. Physician advice for smoking cessation. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev*, 2013, May 13 (5).

### Smoking in Putnam, all adults



### Smoking in Putnam, adults reporting poor mental health



TOP: Putnam has similar smoking rates to the mid-Hudson Valley and to the state. These are adults who report smoking at least 100 cigarettes in their lifetime and currently smoke all or most days.

BOTTOM: Smoking rates for residents who report poor mental health are higher when compared to all adults. Of note is that in Putnam the population reporting poor mental health has smoking rates lower than in the region and state.

## Putnam Health Indicators highlighted

Data charts on Putnam County’s public health indicators are featured throughout this issue. These charts are taken from the report submitted to the New York State Health Department, which combined both the *Community Health Assessment (CHA)* and *Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)* for 2016 through 2018. (See related story on page 2.)

The entire report is posted online under “Data and Reports” on the Putnam County Department of Health website at [www.putnamcountyny.com/health](http://www.putnamcountyny.com/health).

## Putnam Health Indicators highlighted in report to NYSDOH:

### Combined Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan Published

A combined *Community Health Assessment (CHA)* and *Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)* for 2016 through 2018, has been published by the Putnam County Department of Health.

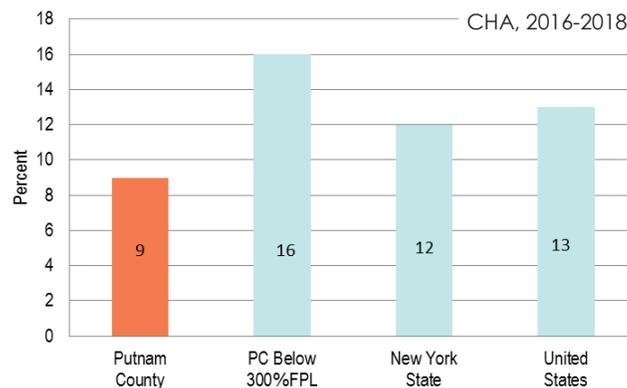
The report, submitted to the state health department, provides a look at a variety of health indicators assessing the community's health status. For example, the percentage of residents without health insurance is lower in Putnam than the state, but high co-pays and other costs remain a deterrent in access-to-care issues, as depicted at right. The data compiled for the CHA comes from a variety of primary and secondary data sources, including the Expanded Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, the US Census, and Putnam's Prevention Needs Assessment Survey.

The CHIP portion lays out the collaborative efforts agencies and community groups will focus on over the next two years. Five community coalitions and 91 community organizations joined the health department in compiling and issuing the report.

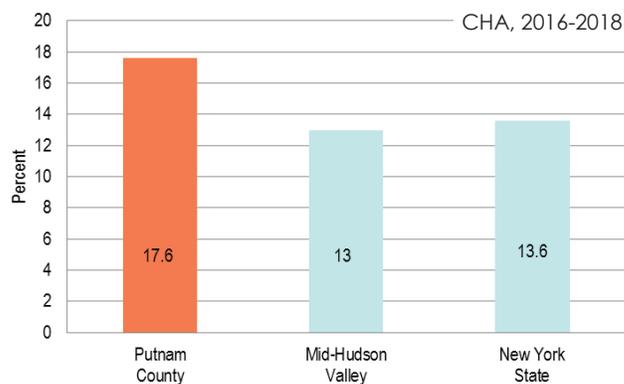
The five coalitions leading this work with the health department are the Mental Health Provider Group, the chronic disease prevention group Live Healthy Putnam Coalition, the Suicide Prevention Task Force, Putnam Hospital Center's Community Health Needs Committee, and the Communities That Care Coalition, which works to reduce the use of drugs and alcohol by adolescents.

The complete statistical report and plan is available on the Putnam County Department of Health website under "Data and Reports," at [www.putnamcountyny.com/health](http://www.putnamcountyny.com/health).

#### POPULATION UNDER AGE 65 WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE



#### DIFFICULTY ACCESSING HEALTH CARE DUE TO COST



## Advising patients on tick bite prevention—the latest research

Given the prediction of the rising incidence of tick-borne illnesses and challenges of diagnosis, advising patients on prevention becomes more essential.

Recent studies on clothing factory-treated with the insecticide permethrin found this method highly effective in deterring tick bites. In a double-blind, randomized-controlled trial, conducted between March 2011 and September 2012, investigators looked at 159 volunteer subjects working outdoors for a state parks department, who were frequently exposed to tick habitats. They compared workers wearing permethrin-treated clothing against a fake treatment, while both sets of subjects continued to engage in their usual tick bite prevention activities. Results showed the permethrin-treated clothing offered marked protection from tick bites for at least one year, as reported on participants' weekly tick bite logs.

Treated clothing, long used in the military, is commercially available and typically marketed as effective through 70 launderings. Permethrin spray can also be purchased and applied to one's own clothing, although the staying power appears reduced when compared to factory-infused items. According to TickEncounter.org at the University of Rhode Island, each at home treatment lasts three to four weeks, with washing. These

methods may be worth considering if much time is spent in risky environments.

If clothes are untreated, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends placing them in a dryer upon returning inside. To kill any ticks, one should set the machine on high and dry for at least ten minutes. Damp clothing may need up to one hour of drying to rid them of ticks—simply washing clothes does not work.

Two tick control methods are now being tested in a five-year neighborhood-based prevention study underway in Dutchess County. The first applies a low dose of fipronil onto mice and chipmunks; the second involves applying a spray on vegetation to eliminate ticks. The spray, developed from a naturally occurring fungus, is safe for people, pets and the environment. Called the "Tick Project," this research may formulate a neighborhood-based plan that can reduce these diseases, since no human vaccine is available. For more information, visit: [www.TickProject.org](http://www.TickProject.org).

**Source:** Vaughn MF, Funkhouser SW, Lin F-C, et al. Long-lasting Permethrin Impregnated Uniforms. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*. 2014;46(5):473-480. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2014.01.008.

# Expedited Partner Therapy for chlamydia offers chance to stem rising rates

The rise in STD numbers continues unabated. Last fall, the Centers for Disease Control rang the alarm again, reporting the total combined cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis in 2015 had reached the highest number ever recorded. For chlamydia alone there were 1.5 million cases nationwide.

Putnam is not immune to this disturbing trend, as reported in our last two issues. Over the past decade, numbers of Putnam cases of chlamydia in the 20- to 29-year-old population has more than quadrupled. From the time periods of 2002 through 2006, to 2012 through 2016, the number of cases rose from approximately 100 cases to over 450 cases, as seen in the chart at the right.

To curtail this dramatic rise, expedited partner therapy (EPT) for chlamydia became public health law in 2009, although it is not being utilized to the fullest extent possible.

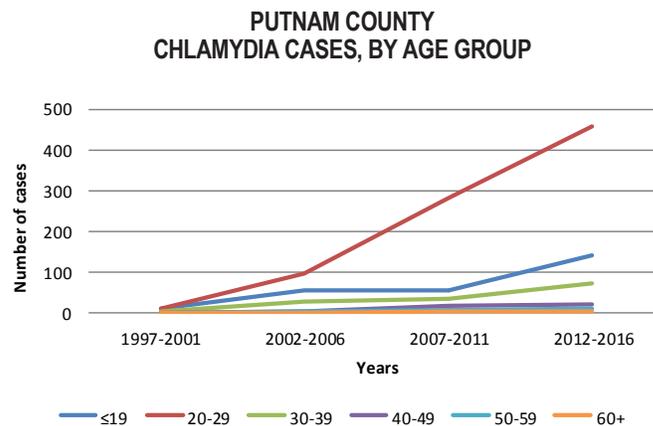
EPT allows physicians to provide their patients multiple antibiotic prescriptions for chlamydia—one directly for the patient and one to take home for their partner(s)—all this without examining or speaking to the partner. This therapy does not apply to other STDs, nor does it apply to patients with

EPT is very much needed to stem the rising cases given the high burden of chlamydia infection and decreasing public health resources to investigate and notify chlamydia-exposed partners.

chlamydia who are co-infected with other STDs. However, EPT is much needed to stem the rising number of chlamydia cases given the high burden of infection and decreasing public health resources to investigate and notify chlamydia-exposed partners.

The first-choice, partner management strategy, would be to bring in the partner and do a complete clinical evaluation, STD and HIV testing, along with counseling and treatment as appropriate. However, this is not always possible, nor realistic. In cases with partners who are unable, unwilling or even unlikely to seek care, providers should use their best judgement and utilize EPT when necessary. Making use of EPT with

good reason does not constitute unprofessional conduct and providers cannot be subject to civil or criminal liability.



Source: Communicable Disease Electronic Surveillance System (CDESS), NYSDOH

## Reporting STDs to the Health Department?

A new streamlined form to report all STDs for a single patient on one form is enclosed in this issue. The form is also available online at the health department's website under "For Physicians" at [www.putnamcountyny.com/health](http://www.putnamcountyny.com/health).

## STD Services Available

Free and sliding scale STD testing and treatment services are available at the health department and the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Open Door Brewster. The PCDOH offers free, confidential and anonymous, HIV and Hepatitis C testing at its main office at 1 Geneva Road. The remaining STD services are provided at Open Door, in the village of Brewster. For further information, please call 845-279-6999.

Putnam County  
Department of Health  
1 Geneva Road  
Brewster

Open Door Brewster  
155 Main Street  
Suite 101  
Village of Brewster

## Opioid-Prescribing Training Deadline Approaches

All physicians, nurse practitioners, medical residents, registered nurses, nurses, physician assistants, dentists and pharmacists with a DEA registration number are required to complete three hours of training in pain management, opioid use, addiction and palliative care by July 1, 2017. After the initial training, subsequent course work must be completed again every three years.

Managing acute pain, screening for addiction, responses to abuse and addiction, as well as NYS and federal requirements for prescribing controlled substances are a few covered topics.

A number of options for training exist. The New York Chapter of the American College of Physicians in conjunction with Boston University offers an online course, entitled "The Scope Of Pain," at their website at [www.nyacp.org](http://www.nyacp.org). The American Society of Addiction Medicine offers "Opioid Prescribing: Safe Practice, Changing Lives," at [www.asam.org/education/resources/Opioid-Prescribing](http://www.asam.org/education/resources/Opioid-Prescribing).

A prescribers' Narcotic Education Attestation Tracker (NEAT) is accessible on the New York State Department of Health's Commerce website at <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us>.



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**INSERT: PCDOH STD Reporting Form**

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## Putnam County Among Healthiest in New York State

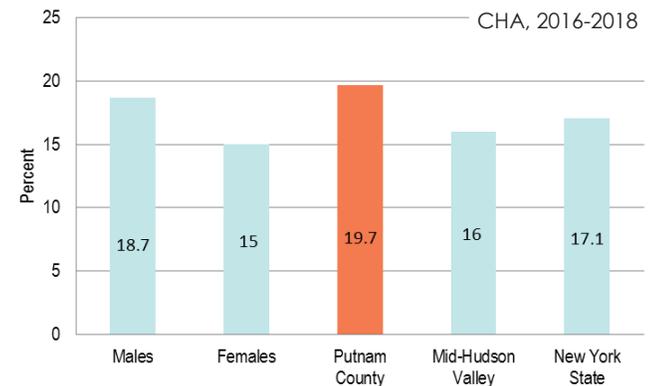
For the seventh consecutive year, Putnam County ranks among the top five counties in New York State for overall health. Putnam is fifth in health outcomes, based on length and quality of life, and second in health factors, the influencers of health. The seventh annual *County Health Rankings* were released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute during National Public Health Week, the first week of April. Last year Putnam was also second in health factors, and fourth in health outcomes, from among the 62 counties in the state.

The county’s move from fourth to fifth place in health outcomes may be of little significance, however there is no lack of clarity about two health challenges the county is currently facing.

The first is the rate of excessive alcohol use in Putnam, which continues to remain higher here than in the rest of New York State, seen in the binge drinking rates charted at the right. The health department works closely with the Putnam chapter of the National Council on Alcoholism and other Drug Dependencies (NCADD) and the Communities That Care (CTC) coalition on this issue. The second health problem relates to the dramatic rise of sexually transmitted diseases. This problem is not limited to Putnam or even New York State. It is a nationwide trend that has all health officials concerned. (A related story on chlamydia and expedited partner therapy (EPT) appears on page 3.)

For more information on the 2017 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, visit <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org>.

### ADULT BINGE DRINKING



### ADOLESCENT BINGE DRINKING

