



MaryEllen Odell
County Executive

Department of Health
1 Geneva Road, Brewster, New York 10509
(845) 808-1390



Michael J. Nesheiwat, M.D.
Interim Commissioner of Health

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: March 30, 2017

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

**PUTNAM COUNTY RANKS AMONG TOP FIVE COUNTIES IN NYS,
FOR SEVENTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR**

Brewster, NY—The seventh annual *County Health Rankings* have been released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. For the seventh consecutive year, Putnam County ranks among the top five counties in New York State. Putnam is fifth in health outcomes, based on length and quality of life, and second in health factors, the influencers of health. Last year Putnam was also second in health factors, and fourth in health outcomes, from among the 62 counties in the state.

“Residents in Putnam County are very fortunate. We have a consistent pattern of good health, based on these rankings,” said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. “Putnam is a great place to live, work and prosper, while enjoying a healthy lifestyle. Our health department is nationally accredited and works tirelessly, along with other county agencies and dozens of other community organizations to protect and promote residents’ health.”

“These rankings provide a snapshot of our county’s health,” said Michael Nesheiwat M.D., Interim Commissioner of Health. “They form a starting point for discussing ways to improve health and we do this through collaboration with partners, educating the public, and enforcing public health law.”

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 concerns the rate of excessive alcohol use in Putnam, which continues to remain higher here than in the rest of New York State. 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 pressing 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 particularly with the rise in syphilis, which is experiencing a resurgence. Individuals may be infected with syphilis without symptoms for years, leading to tragic results. The PCDOH has been reaching out to physicians to encourage more routine testing for all STDs including syphilis.

For more information on the 2017 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps, visit

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org>

The Department of Health'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.

###