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PCDOH Schedules Three Fall Flu Clinics

BREWSTER, NY— It's official: the 2016-2017 flu season is here. The Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) has scheduled three fall vaccine clinics and their skilled and experienced nurses are ready to immunize residents. The first clinic is Tuesday, September 20, from 2 to 6:30 p.m. at the Carmel Fire Department, Route 52 and Vink Drive in Carmel. The second is on Wednesday, October 19, from 2 to 6:30 p.m. at the Garrison Fire Department, 1616 Route 9; the third is Monday, October 24 from 2 to 6:30 p.m. at Carmel Fire Department again.

“Getting vaccinated early is best,” says Michael Nesheiwat, MD, Interim Commissioner of Health. “That’s because it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop and provide protection. Getting your flu shot is important for many of reasons. It keeps you healthy, and so saves money on medical and prescription costs. It also provides what’s called ‘herd immunity’ to those who can’t be vaccinated because they are too young, or have a specific medical condition, and is the socially responsible thing to do.

“Certain people should make sure they get vaccinated,” continued Dr. Nesheiwat, “because they can have serious problems if they get the flu.” For example, pregnant women, children 6 months through 18 years of age, people over 50 years of age, and those with chronic (long-lasting) medical conditions and the people who live with them—all these groups may have or cause serious

results if they get the flu. Health care workers are also required to get the flu in order to protect their patients.

The clinic is open to all Putnam County residents 18 years of age and older. The vaccination fee is \$25 for residents under 65 years of age. Those 65 years and older, or with a Medicare card, can receive the vaccine free of charge. High-dose flu vaccine is being offered for seniors, aged 65 years and older, as studies show this vaccine is more effective for this population. However, at the recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the FluMist will not be available. Proof of residency (driver's license) is required. Pneumonia vaccine will also not be available through the Health Department's public flu clinics.

Appointments are not necessary, but a signed consent form is required. Forms will be available on the Putnam County website at <http://www.putnamcountyny.com/health/immunization>

In order to streamline the onsite process, people are encouraged to download the forms, complete them and bring them to the clinic. Forms will also be available at the clinic.

Flu vaccination will be offered by the Health Department in all school districts this fall strictly for students and staff. Check your school calendar or with the school nurse for details of these school-based clinics. More public flu clinics may be held later this year. Check the PCDOH website for possible dates and further details.

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 our website at www.putnamcountyny.com ; or visit our social media sites on Facebook at www.facebook.com/putnamhealth and Twitter @PutnamHealthNY.

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