



Department of Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: December 19, 2017

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Health Dept. Offers Help with New Year's Resolution to Quit Smoking *Freedom from Smoking Program to Begin Late January*

BREWSTER, NY- Are you ready to quit smoking? It is one of the top New Year's resolutions each January, and this year the Putnam County Department of Health offers help with an eight-session program developed by the American Lung Association called Freedom from Smoking (FFS). The sessions, which last from 60 to 90 minutes, begin in late January at the health department's main office at 1 Geneva Road in Brewster. Nicotine replacement products (NRT) will be available for free while supplies lasts. Using NRT is encouraged, and will be discussed as part of the program, but it is not required.

"Our first Putnam smoking cessation program was held earlier this year. It is just one way we help our residents live healthier lives," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. "For those who want to make the decision to quit, the extra support from the health department can make all the difference."

"Smoking is an addiction that many say is one of the most difficult to overcome," says interim Health Commissioner Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD. "Most people try to quit, even many times, before finally finding success. The first steps can be the hardest, but we are here to help you get started."

Based on scientific research, the FFS Program is a proven way to quit smoking for good. Some smokers feel hopeless after unsuccessful attempts at quitting. The FFS Program recognizes this and stresses the fact that most successful quitters have failed at it before. The program reinforces the greater belief that "You can still quit." Thousands of smokers have quit through the FFS program since it began over 30 years ago.

Eight classes are held over seven weeks. The group leader is a certified facilitator, who discusses preparing and planning to quit, as well as lifestyle changes that support tobacco-free living. Two sessions are held during “quit week,” to fully support participants.

“Becoming a nonsmoker is a journey,” emphasizes Dr. Nesheiwat. “Failed attempts happen and are even expected. This time—with the right support—might be your time to quit. Remember there are health benefits to quitting at any age. So you are never too old, even if you’ve smoked for a long time.”

Pre-registration is required, as group size is limited. Start date and class schedules will be determined based on preferences of early registrants and posted on the health department’s website at www.putnamcountyny.gov/health. For more information or to pre-register, contact the Putnam County Department of Health at (845) 808-1390, ext. 43155.

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