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Putnam Health Dept. Wins \$55,000 Award from NYSDOH

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Written by Putnam County Department of Health



The Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) has been awarded a total of \$55,000 through a competitive, state-wide program focused on the prevention of chronic diseases, such as obesity or diabetes. The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) chose to focus funds on preventing these types of diseases because they have surpassed communicable diseases,

like influenza, as the leading cause of death and disability. Nationally-accredited health departments, such as Putnam County's, were at an advantage with an automatic \$7,500 base payment. An additional \$5,000 automatic payment went to all agencies who competed due to the sheer work involved. The remaining funds were distributed to just 20 health departments based on performance and county population, and Putnam received an additional \$42,500.

"Putnam residents can be reassured that our health department is among the best in the state with this award," said County Executive MaryEllen Odell, "and our health department should be proud."

Interim Health Commissioner Michael Nesheiwat, MD, thanked staff for their perseverance, saying, "I am delighted that our staff decided to put in the extra work to compete for these funds. It was not an easy task, but having achieved national accreditation in 2016 helped to ease the submission process. No doubt it also helped us think more strategically and strengthen our partnerships with community members."

Only 50 percent of health departments vying for the funds were awarded competitive monies. The PCDOH received four perfect scores in the highest category and three near-perfect scores in the second highest one. Extensive documentation was required, explaining health department activities in seven key areas, such as engaging community partners. The evaluation process the State Health Department used was similar to the process for national accreditation formulated by PHAB, the Public Health Accreditation Board. This was done because national accreditation may become mandatory in the future.

As with all performance-based awards, the funds must be used to support specified public health services. NYS-recommended activities include conducting campaigns to reduce chronic diseases, and to promote enhanced screening activities and follow-up care by individual providers. Funds may also be used for accreditation or reaccreditation fees. The PCDOH will work with community partners involved in Putnam's Community Health Improvement Plan to prioritize and develop ideas for the use of the funds.

Residents with ideas are invited to visit the PCDOH website at www.putnamcountyny.com/health/chronicdisease/ to learn more about chronic diseases. They are encouraged to submit their own suggestions for prevention programs by mail to: Chronic Disease Prevention Programs, Health Education Unit, Putnam County Department of Health, 1 Geneva Road, Brewster, NY 10509, or by email to health@putnamcountyny.gov

The mission of the Putnam County Department of Health, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), 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 County 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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