

# 'Forces of Change' Addressed at Public Health Summit

## Veterans' Day Ceremonies

More than 85 public health partners from nearly four dozen community agencies convened at Putnam Hospital Center on Oct. 18 for the eighth annual public health summit. This year, for the first time, a broad effort was made to invite public participation through social media, resulting in nearly 20 Putnam residents attending.



Stephanie Marquesano, founder and president of the Harris Project, discusses the high number of individuals who have a diagnosed mental health challenge along with a substance misuse disorder, at the Oct. 18 public health summit at Putnam Hospital Center in Carmel.

Organized by the Putnam County Department of Health, with support from PHC, the event kicked off the data collection process for formulating the next community health improvement plan, known as the CHIP.

County Executive MaryEllen Odell thanked Putnam Hospital Center for its support. "This hospital is the heart and soul of our community," she said. "Many of us were born here, and had children here. Many also say their final farewells here."

Interim Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Nesheiwat welcomed and thanked attendees.

"Today's program examines the 'forces of change' that are at work in our community," he said. "Your participation plays an instrumental role not only in planning ways to improve population health, but also in the strategic planning for the health department."

Stephanie Marquesano opened the morning session of presentations by community partners. She is founder and president of the Harris Project, a unique nonprofit organization committed to co-occurring disorders, a diagnosis of one or more mental health challenges together with substance abuse and misuse.

### Recycling Reaps Rewards America Recycles Day Contest Nov. 15

Plastic film is everywhere — store carry-out bags are made of it and paper towels come wrapped in it.

Unfortunately, most of it is not recycled, but the Putnam County Department of Health is trying to change that.

Thursday, Nov. 15 is America Recycles Day, and the health department is holding its third annual Caught-in-the-Act Contest that day and the following day, Friday, Nov. 16.

On both days, the recycling coordinator from the health department will be looking for residents who recycle plastic film and rewarding them with a free reusable shopping bag, and social media recognition, for their efforts.

Thursday's event will take place at the Mahopac Acme, located at 149 Route 6, from 10 a.m. to noon; and then from 2 to 4 p.m. at DeCiccio & Sons, 15 Independent Way, Brewster.

from Kristin McConnell, director of the Prevention Council of Putnam, a local substance abuse prevention provider, who spoke about the history, implications and lessons learned regarding "Tobacco 21." The legislation prohibits sales of tobacco products to individuals less than 21 years of age, and includes electronic nicotine delivery systems products commonly known as "vapes."

Sarena Chisick, community health educator at PHC, presented on the recent falls prevention expo at the hospital and the ongoing efforts of the Falls Prevention Task Force, created to focus on the latest CHIP priority of reducing injuries caused by falls.

The "forces of change" assessment that followed was a fast-moving discussion on a variety of factors including social, economic, political, technological, scientific, ethical, legal and environmental that may affect the county and the county-at-large.

Political trends were more in the spotlight this year, with audience members mentioning the possible dismantling of the

On Friday, the event will end with a morning session at Food Town, 49 Chestnut St., Cold Spring.

"The number of plastic bags that people use is staggering, and less than 1 percent are recycled," said interim Health Commissioner Dr. Michael Nesheiwat. "The positive impact on the environment would be immense if everyone would make the effort to start and it then becomes routine."

The health department works with stores in the county that are required by law to accept plastic films. All large retail stores, or chains with more than five smaller stores, must participate. Currently, there are 24 drop-off locations in Putnam County, including Home Depot, Acme and Kohl's in Brewster, Acme in Mahopac, and Food Town in Cold Spring. A complete list is posted at [www.putnamcounty.ny.com](http://www.putnamcounty.ny.com).

Affordable Care Act, potential legalization of marijuana for recreational use, and the weakened regulation of the Environmental Protection Agency.

Other social and scientific or technical trends that were named included the continued prevalence of sexual and domestic violence, the dramatically rising rates of sexually transmitted diseases, the increase and prevalence of cancer, and the growing number of patients with Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

Identified trends were all discussed in terms of threats and opportunities for change. A full report of the Forces of Change assessment will be drafted and posted on the health department's website.

There will be many commemorations around the county Sunday, Nov. 11 to celebrate Veterans' Day.

At 9:30 a.m., Carmel VFW 1374 and its auxiliary will host a ceremony at the memorial at Terry Hill Road in Kent.

Also at 11 a.m., Carmel VFW Post 1374 and its auxiliary, along with American Legion Post 270, will host a ceremony at the VFW Memorial Hall at 32 Gleneida Ave., Carmel. Refreshments will be served after the ceremony.

At 10:30 a.m., members of VFW Post 5491 and American Legion Post 1080 will line up on East Lake Boulevard in Mahopac and march to the monument at the corner of Route 6 near the library for a ceremony. Refreshments will follow at the VFW post.

Putnam Lake VFW 9257 and its auxiliary, along with AMVETS 2017, will host an 11 a.m. ceremony at the monument at the intersection of Fairfield and Haviland drives. Refreshments will follow at the VFW post.

Also at 10:30 a.m., American Legion Post 1542 in Patterson will lead a parade from the post home to the monument on Route 311 for a ceremony. Refreshments will follow at the American Legion hall.

An 11 a.m. ceremony is also planned at the veterans' memorial on the lawn of St. Mary's in Cold Spring, by VFW Post 2362 and American Legion Post 275. At 11:30 a.m., there will be a dedication of a new memorial wall at Cedar Street in Cold Street, led by the Cold Spring VFW and American Legion.

At 11 a.m., Brewster American Legion Post 71 and VFW Post 672 will host a ceremony at the GAR monument at Southeast Veterans' Park. Refreshments will follow at the Elks Lodge on Route 22.

Then at 1 p.m., the Putnam County Joint Veterans' council will host a ceremony at Veterans' Memorial Park on Gypsy Trail Road in Carmel/Kent.

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