



PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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www.putnamcountyny.gov/health

A PHAB-ACCREDITED HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MaryEllen Odell
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD, named permanent Health Commissioner

BREWSTER, NY— Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD, assumed appointment as the permanent Commissioner of the Putnam County Department of Health on March 5. In making the announcement, County Executive MaryEllen Odell said, “There is no question that Dr. Nesheiwat is the best candidate for the position. He has proved this many times over the past three years. He is a true gem and we are fortunate to have him here in Putnam. I am thrilled he has decided to accept this as a permanent appointment.”

In the announcement the County Executive listed numerous accomplishments attributed to “Dr. Mike,” as he is known by many throughout the community, and in her 2019 County Address on March 7, she heralded the upcoming year as the “Year of the Health Provider.” This was due in part to Dr. Nesheiwat’s leadership, under which the department took the final step in achieving national accreditation and is on the fast track moving forward to reaccreditation in 2021.

Dr. Nesheiwat’s guidance can be seen in the health department’s ongoing shift toward a quality improvement and performance management work culture. Staff have been trained in the “plan-do-study-act” method or “PDSA,” for short. One of the first issues tackled was the reduction of paper records, while enhancing electronic record keeping. Developed and implemented by department staff, this PDSA project has improved overall productivity. In particular disease reports are now more comprehensive and are completely captured in the New

York State electronic reporting system. The ultimate result to better protect residents' health and well-being.

Another accreditation-required task involves creating a branding communications strategy. Community partners and health department staff members were surveyed for feedback on the department's current public image and how enhancements can be made. The department is in the process of rolling out a nameplate for their logo.

Other highlights under Dr. Nesheiwat's leadership include building a blue-green algae monitoring program in which health department staff partnered closely with towns and beaches, and continuing tick surveillance with the New York State Department of Health in efforts to stem the rise of tick-borne illnesses. On the nursing side, flu immunizations continued to rise in the county with the popularity of the department's school-based and public flu clinics and the promotion of pharmacy-based immunizations. Additionally STD surveillance and investigations are at an all-time high, important because of the rising number of cases.

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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