



PUTNAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1 Geneva Road, Brewster, NY 10509 ■ 845-808-1390

www.putnamcountyny.gov/health

A PHAB-ACCREDITED HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MaryEllen Odell
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Michael J. Nesheiwat, MD
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH

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Contact: Susan Hoffner, Public Information Officer, (845) 808-1390

“4Mind4Body” Highlights the Two Parts of Health *Mental Health Awareness Month Marks 70 Years*

BREWSTER, NY— — Most people still think mental health issues are uncommon. The truth is quite the opposite: One in five people are estimated to have a mental health condition and that is why promoting mental health and well-being is a key priority of Putnam’s Community Health Improvement Plan, often referred to as “the CHIP.” This May, the Putnam County Department of Health is promoting the national theme of “4Mind4Body,” and marking 70 years of Mental Health Awareness Months, started by the national organization Mental Health America (MHA). Their initial goal in 1909, and still going strong today, is to raise awareness about mental health conditions and the importance of good mental health for everyone.

“Mental health touches all of us,” said County Executive MaryEllen Odell. “If we have not directly experienced a mental health problem ourselves, we likely know someone close to us who has, either a family member or close friend. Our community is fortunate to have many resources here in Putnam. These organizations work together tirelessly providing an array of services. Help is available.”

“Mental health cannot be separated from physical health—the two are intimately intertwined,” explained Health Commissioner Michael Nesheiwat, MD. “And it works both ways: A healthy lifestyle can prevent, delay or alleviate mental health conditions, while chronic diseases such as heart disease or diabetes impact and have a mental health component.”

The theme “4Mind4Body” focuses on this, bringing awareness to many aspects of a lifestyle that can positively impact mental and physical health such as recreation and fitness, work-life balance, animal companionship, social connection, religion and spirituality.

Adapting to an increasingly digital world, Mental Health America offers a set of quick and easy online mental health screenings that provide in-home convenience and anonymity. For some this is a good first step. Others may prefer to speak with their personal health care providers, or to call the Mental Health Association in Putnam for a referral at 845-278-7600.

The online screenings for depression, anxiety, eating disorders, PTSD, bipolar, psychosis, and addiction are available at www.screening.mentalhealthamerica.net/screening-tools. These are complemented by a screening that parents can take if they have concerns about their child, a screening for youth who want to assess themselves, and a work health survey that helps measure the stresses one may be experiencing at work.

CoveCare Center, one of the largest providers of mental health services in Putnam County, recently formed an affiliation with the Mental Health Association in Putnam. CoveCare Center supports the work of MHA in Putnam while also providing compassionate and confidential prevention and treatment services for mental health, substance use, and emotional and social challenges. CoveCare Center can be reached at 845-225-2700. The Mental Health Association continues its vital work in the areas of peer support, community education and outreach, with an emphasis on suicide prevention and veterans. In the case of a crisis, individuals should call the local Putnam County Crisis Line at 845-225-1222, or 911.

Other Putnam organizations and agency-based groups leading the work together on the CHIP with the health department include the Putnam affiliate of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), which recently hosted its sixth annual fundraising walk against the stigma of mental illness; the Putnam County Suicide Prevention Task Force; the Child Advocacy Center; the Mental Health/Substance Use Providers Coalition; the Putnam County Department of Social

Services, Mental Health and the Youth Bureau; Putnam Hospital Center; and the Veterans Service Agency. A full list of community partners working on the mental health priority is published in the CHIP report, accessible online from the health department's home page.

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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