

Putnam County Community Health Assessment Community Health Improvement Plan 2022 – 2024 Addendums

The Community Health Assessment (CHA) offers an overall view of the health issues in our community; the Community Health Improvement Plan presents how the community will work together to develop and implement evidence-based interventions for two priorities that will be reported to NYSDOH. However, community health improvement planning and implementation is a continuous process that goes far beyond these two priorities. Work on all the top ten health challenges identified in the CHA will continue with community health organizations and the health department’s ongoing collaborations. This Addendum section will provide a method of updating the Early Childhood Vaccination and Substance Misuse interventions detailed in the CHA/CHIP report as well as initiatives targeting the other eight health challenges that are not covered in the CHA/CHIP report.

Priority Area: Prevent Communicable Diseases

Focus Area 1: Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Goal 1.1: Improve vaccination rates

Objective 1.1.1: Increase the rates of immunization among Putnam County 24-35-month-olds with the 4:3:1:3:3:1:4 series (4 DTaP, 3 polio, 1 MMR, 3 Hep B, 3 Hib, 1 varicella, 4 PCV13) from the 2021 baseline of 62.9% by 7.6% to the NYSPA 2024 target of 70.5% by December 2024¹

Disparities addressed: Children residing in county zip codes with lower polio vaccination rates, and children belonging to ethnic and racial minority groups

Timeframe: Enrollment of county medical practices participating in the federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program will occur on a rolling basis from January 2023 through December 2024.

Evidence Based Strategy

Intervention 1.1.2: Maximize use of the New York State Immunization System (NYSIIS) for vaccine documentation, assessment, decision support, reminders, and recall. Increased use of the registries can better inform assessments of vaccine coverage and missed vaccination opportunities and help address disparities in vaccine coverage including those for specific age groups.

¹ The baseline rate has been updated with most recent data available on New York State Prevention Agenda at: https://apps.health.ny.gov/public/tabvis/PHIG_Public/pa/reports/#county

Intervention Activities

Expansion of current Immunization Quality Improvement Programs (IQIP) activities with recruitment of practices to leverage NYSIIS to improve immunization practices through:

- Systematic monitoring of data quality through crosschecks between EHR & NYSIIS.
- Consistent utilization of recall/reminder reports to send notifications to patients due or overdue for 4:3:1:3:3:4 series vaccinations.

Implementation Partners and Roles

PCDOH is the lead organization and will enroll county VFC practices during IQIP visits. Practices located in zip codes with lower polio vaccination rates and practices serving a higher proportion of racial and ethnic minorities will be prioritized for participation.

The PCDOH immunization program will initiate IQIP visits with VFC practices, provide practice coverage reports on 4:3:1:3:3:1:4 series vaccinations, recruit practices to participate in IQIP strategies targeted in this intervention, & provide technical assistance for practices to initiate intervention activities. At 2mo, 6mo and 12mo intervals PCDOH will follow up with participating practices to review progress, troubleshoot issues, and collect metrics.

Practices that agree to participate will become partners by following the intervention protocol and reporting the required metrics to PCDOH at 2mo, 6mo and 12mo check in intervals.

Status Update, 11/16/2023

- Three county VFC practices (Practices A, F, & H) have been enrolled in the intervention. The PCDOH immunization program (Practice I) is also participating, for a total of four participating practices.
- Two of the participating practices (Practices F and H) are located on the Western side of the county, where polio vaccination rates are lower.² Practice A serves a high proportion of Hispanic patients.
- **Practice A:** 1st reminder/recall cycle (run report, clean data, send notifications) is in progress.
- **Practice F:** Two reminder/recall cycles with extensive data cleaning activities have been completed, & resulted in sending 14 notifications, 11 of which made vaccination appointments (79%).
- **Practice H:** 1st reminder/recall cycle detected high levels of discrepancies in data between NYSIIS and the practice's EMR & a high number of patients attributed to the patients that are not currently active in the practice (extensive data cleaning activities), & resulted in sending 3 notifications, 1 of which made an appointment for vaccination (33%). The second reminder/recall cycle is in progress.
- **Practice I:** 5 reminder/recall cycles have resulted in the sending of a single reminder, which resulted in an appointment for vaccination (100%).
- Amongst the 9 VFC practices in Putnam County, the practices enrolled had the lowest baseline 4:3:1:3:3:4 practice coverage reports. Year over year change in coverage reports will be measured at the one-year anniversary of each practice's enrollment.
- The most recent county level early childhood vaccination rates are now for 2021. The rate of 62.9% is a 1% increase from the 2020 baseline, however this cannot be attributed to the intervention since it predates our work by two years.

² The most recent polio vaccination rates for Putnam County zip codes released by NYSDOH can be found at: https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/polio/zip_code_rates/docs/Putnam_polio_vaccination_report.pdf

Priority Area: Promote Well-Being and Prevent Mental and Substance Use Disorders

Focus Area 2: Mental and Substance Use Disorders Prevention

Goal 2.2: Prevent opioid and other substance misuse and deaths

Objective 2.2.1 (modified): Reduce the annual crude rate of overdose deaths involving any opioid from the 2022 baseline of 20.2 per 100,000 population to the prevention agenda target of 14.3 per 100,000 population by December 2024.³

Objective 2.2.4 (modified): Reduce the annual crude rate of outpatient emergency department visits involving any opioid overdose by 10% from the 2022 baseline of 26.3 per 100,000 population to 23.7 per 100,000 population by December 2024.⁴

Disparities addressed: Intervention 2.2.2. Spanish speaking immigrants

Timeframe: Engagement of schools for participation in senior check-outs and on-site consumption liquor licensed establishments for participation in Narcan Behind Every Bar will occur on a rolling basis from January 2023 through December 2024. Engagement of first responder agencies for participation in Peer Referral Program will occur in the first quarter of 2023, with the engagement of individuals referred for peer support ongoing from January 2023 through December 2024.

Evidence Based Strategy #1

Intervention 2.2.2: Increase the availability of/access to overdose reversal (Naloxone) trainings to prescribers, pharmacies and consumers.

Intervention Activities

1. Engage county high schools to require naloxone training for graduating seniors; conduct trainings at participating high schools (senior check-outs); distribute kits to all graduating seniors at senior check-outs.
2. Engage on-site consumption liquor licensed establishments (OSCLLE) to participate in Narcan Behind Every Bar (NBEB) program; conduct trainings at participating establishments; distribute kits and opioid overdose emergency cabinets to participating establishments.

Implementation Partners and Roles

The Prevention Council of Putnam (PCP), through their substance use specialist and Master Counselor (CASAC) is the lead local harm reduction agency implementing evidence-based strategies and promising practices to reduce opioid overdose, expand community awareness about substance misuse and reduce stigma around addiction and normalize pathways to recovery. PCP will be the lead agency for this intervention.

PCDOH, (Health Education Division, NYSPHC fellows, and Nursing Division) will support PCP in expanding the reach of the interventions to the Spanish speaking communities of Putnam through the provision of Spanish speaking health educators and education material translation.

³ Updated based on most recent baseline rate available: https://health.ny.gov/statistics/opioid/data/pdf/nys_jul23.pdf

⁴ Updated based on most recent baseline rate available: https://health.ny.gov/statistics/opioid/data/pdf/nys_jul23.pdf

Status Update, 11/1/2023

- All 5 public Putnam County High Schools have been engaged to sign on to do senior check-outs and there have been 4 Naloxone trainings at Putnam County High Schools. There have been 624 naloxone kits distributed at school trainings to students.
- 41 on-site consumption liquor licensed establishments have signed on to Narcan Behind Every Bar (NBEB) and 38 on-site consumption liquor licensed establishments are trained and actively participate in NBEB.
- There are 2 NBEB establishments with Opioid Overdose Emergency Cabinets, and 38 NBEB establishments with Naloxone Kits on-site.

Evidence Based Strategy #2

Intervention 2.2.4: Build support systems to care for opioid users or at risk for overdose.

Intervention Activities

First response agencies (emergency medical service corporations, fire departments, and police departments) will be engaged to participate in naloxone leave behind and peer referral programs. Participating first response agencies will distribute naloxone kits and offer referral to Certified Recovery Peer Advocate (CRPA) at all opioid related calls, and other substance-related calls. CRPA will reach out to residents who have been referred to offer support and linkage to services within 3 days of referral.

Implementation Partners and Roles

The PCP CRPA is the lead contact in Putnam to connect individuals at risk of opioid overdose with support and linkage to services. The CRPA will engage with individuals identified by participating first response agencies and provide linkage to the following harm reduction activities: training and distribution of naloxone, distribution of fentanyl test strips, periodic detox check ins (for individuals with confirmed plans for detox), & referral to services including but not limited to treatment programs, medical care, and programs that address SDOH.

Status Update, 11/1/2023

- 18 out of 18 first responder agencies have been engaged for participation in the peer referral program and the naloxone leave behind program.
- Through an expanded collaboration between public health and public safety, the peer referral program has been restructured. Rather than engaging agencies to refer substance-involved individuals to a peer, referrals are initiated through data collection efforts from 911 dispatch and ODmaps.
- 15 of 18 first responder agencies have signed on to the Naloxone Leave Behind Program. First responders will leave behind naloxone kits, which also include contact information for a Certified Recovery Peer Advocate.
- 31 of 33 individuals identified through the 911 Dispatch and ODMAPs data collection method were referred to the peer program.
- 9 of the 31 referred cases had at least one successful engagement by a peer specialist.

ADDENDUM 1, FEBRUARY 23, 2023: TRANSPORTATION, SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH

The issue of limited public transportation was identified as Putnam’s top social determinant of health (SDOH) in the CHA report and one of the top ten overall health challenges in the county. Amongst these ten health challenges, the CHIP Steering Committee expressed an urgent need to address deficits in transportation because impacts on residents were noted by all participating partners. The Committee recommended that county health partners explore avenues to address the issue and spearhead advocacy for county-level policy and system changes. To this end, the February 13, 2023 Live Healthy Putnam (LHP) Coalition meeting, hosted by PCDOH, included the Putnam County transportation manager for planned discussion on the topics of transportation access and availability. While recognition of this problem was not new, this meeting initiated a new collaborative focus on analyzing, researching and developing solutions to alleviate the issue. Collaborative community work is beginning with a work group to brainstorm solutions, identify grant possibilities and build broad based support with stakeholders.

As a next step, the LHP Coalition decided to form a community transportation work group, including the County’s transportation manager. This group will meet in the first quarter of 2023 and review the county’s transportation assessment, identify if updates to the assessment are necessary, brainstorm and research solutions, identify grant opportunities, build broad based support with stakeholders, and advocate for policy and systems level changes to improve equity in access to transportation.

UPDATE, OCTOBER 18, 2023:

At the time of the LHP meeting on May 8, the transportation work group had met twice. Potential pilot programs were discussed that would test a demand-response model of transportation. Putnam County Transportation Department is taking into consideration the recommendations and concerns of the work group as they further develop plans for revision and eventual assessment and surveys. One need identified by the group is a large educational marketing campaign so residents are aware of transportation design and implementation options both prior to and after surveys are completed. LHP partner agencies will support these efforts in whatever ways they can.

ADDENDUM 2, OCTOBER 13, 2023: TICKBORNE DISEASE, COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

The high burden of tickborne disease was identified as one of several communicable disease concerns, and one of the top ten overall health challenges in the county. High rates of tickborne disease are a long-standing problem in the Hudson Valley that garners considerable concern from residents and the attention of lawmakers (Dunne, 2021). In 2023, the Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) re-committed to promoting tick bite prevention strategies and early disease recognition in the county. To this end the following efforts have been launched or are in development:

- **Tick Warning Signs**
 - During the summer of 2023, Putnam County Parks posted 25 signs to new sections of the Putnam Trailway and replaced damaged or missing signs in existing sections. Two signs were also provided to each of five county sleep-away camps.

- Efforts will continue to add signage in parks, camps, and other outdoor recreation areas in 2024.
- **Outreach and Education Events**
 - To date in 2023 PCDOH staff have provided tickborne disease prevention education and distributed educational materials at five community events across the county. Educational presentations were given to school nurses at a meeting hosted by Putnam|Northern Westchester BOCES on August 21st, and to the general public at a meeting hosted by Mahopac Library on May 20th.
 - Residents and organizations can submit requests for PCDOH staff to provide tickborne disease education (or education on other health topics) at events or in presentations using forms available on the [department's website](#).
- **Tick Removal Kits**
 - 250 tick removal kits (fine tipped tweezers, alcohol swab, tick identification card, and a collection tube) were distributed to the public at community events in 2023.
 - PCDOH has received sponsorship from Nuvance Health to purchase approximately 500 kits for distribution in 2024.
- **Diagnostic Resources for Healthcare Providers**
 - To promote early diagnosis and treatment of tickborne disease, 25 diagnostic manuals and 25 erythema migrans (EM) rash identification posters were distributed to county medical offices. Thirty-five EM rash identification posters were provided to school nurses.
- **Web Page**
 - A dedicated tickborne disease web page is in development, with plans to launch in early 2024.

ADDENDUM 3, NOVEMBER 13, 2023: OBESITY, CHRONIC DISEASE

The 2022-2024 CHA identified obesity as a primary chronic disease concern, and one of the top ten overall health challenges in the county, based on increasing rates of obesity in adults and children alongside increasing consumption of sugary beverages and decreasing days per week consuming a healthy diet. More recent data released since the publication of the CHA shows that the increasing trend in adult obesity continued from 2018 to 2021 (NYSDOH, n.d.).

Housed in the health department, the Putnam County Employee Wellness Program's goal is to support well-being, lessen workplace stress, increase productivity, reduce healthcare costs, and improve the lives and health of employees. In 2023 the Wellness Program aimed to reduce obesity through the following activities:

- Fitness classes, including low-intensity Yoga and high-intensity interval and weight training ("Boot Camp"), were offered to Putnam County employees, interns, and volunteers.
- [Walk for Wellness](#) was a 4-week challenge offered in the summer of 2023 to increase exercise and improve physical fitness and stamina. Two dozen corrections officers and 30 other county employees tracked their steps and submitted a combined 4,452,955 steps to the health department.
- Lunchtime Learning presentations:
 - Healthy Plate, Healthy Planet: Simple Changes towards a healthy and sustainable future, benefits of integrating more plant-based foods into your lifestyle.
- In collaboration with Putnam Hospital Center (PHC), a hospital wellness board is updated monthly to include heart health awareness.
- County employees also receive emails containing health information which is also showcased on Putnam County Department-Wide Wellness Boards, such as:

- A digital version of The Nutrition Action Newsletter which provides honest, unbiased, science-based advice on nutrition and health.
- Office Stretches
- Wear Red, Heart Disease/Blood Pressure information
- "Desk Friendly Yoga Stretches" showcasing PCDOH Employees
- Self-Care at Work
- Guided Hikes brochure shared from Cornell Cooperative Extension, Putnam County

Plans for 2024:

- Employee Wellness SharePoint site where employees can view all wellness offerings and information.
- Putnam County Employee Wellness flyer included in employee orientation information provided by the Personnel Department.

ADDENDUM 4, NOVEMBER 20, 2023: MENTAL HEALTH

The 2022-2024 CHA identified mental health as a main health challenge based on resident input on the Community Priority Poll in 2022 and increases in self-reported poor mental health and depressive disorders from 2016 to 2018. More recent data released since the publication of the CHA shows that these increasing trends continued into 2021 (NYSDOH, 2023).

The Putnam County Department of Health (PCDOH) and the Department of Social Services, Mental Health and The Youth Bureau (PCDSS/MH) have implemented several programs to address this main health challenge:

Through the New York State Public Health Corps (NYSPHC) Fellowship, PCDOH has been able to send a public health fellow, who is also a licensed social worker, to schools throughout the county to provide direct therapy as well as social and emotional support and additional interventions:

- Provided individualized support for approximately 46 students identified by needs assessments of behavioral health/clinical teams.
- Consulted with 14 staff and faculty seeking additional methods to support the mental health of students.
- Presented two workshops for school district staff on mental health issues and trends among youth, and how to identify and support students who are experiencing mental health crises.

Additionally, a bilingual fellow has worked with Brewster Central School District to offer education to parents. Parent University is a K-12 initiative created to engage bilingual parents through virtual meetings which are in Spanish and tailored specifically to the needs of this community. A NYSPHC Fellow presented virtually in Spanish on the topic of Mental Health and Wellbeing (Salud Mental y Bienestar). During this meeting the following information was provided:

- What is mental health?
- Myths and realities of mental health
- Videos were shown providing information supporting the story of an adolescent surviving an episode of depression.
- Treatment and alternatives to improve our mental health.
- Facts about mindfulness and mindfulness exercise.
- PDF pamphlet was shared with the parents with information about mental health.

PCDOH and PCDSS/MH have also offered no-cost Youth Mental Health First Aid® training to school district staff and faculty throughout Putnam County. Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach adults how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or substance use challenge or is in crisis.

- Three training courses, with 45 school staff trained in 2023.

ADDENDUM 5, NOVEMBER 22, 2023: SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS, COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) were identified as one of the county's 10 main health challenges in the 2022-2024 CHA based on upward trends in cases of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis from 2011-2021. More recent data shows this trend continued in 2022 (PCDOH, 2022). In 2023 PCDOH conducted the following STI prevention activities:

- During STI awareness month, the Westchester Medical Center Mobile van visited two county locations and provided education, condoms and STI testing to over 30 participants, including teens. The van was stationed at Chamber Park in Mahopac on April 17th and at the Carmel Fire Department on April 24th.
- PCDOH provided STI education and information at 8 community events. Condoms were distributed at three of these events.
- Kits containing condoms and HIV and STI testing information, along with health information on other topics, were created and distributed to the following:
 - 440 condoms were provided to 18 local community businesses and health centers including barber shops, nail salons, bars, a food pantry, urgent cares, and the Federally Qualified Health Center.
 - Over 1,000 condoms were provided to an addiction treatment and drug rehabilitation center.
 - Over 500 condoms were distributed at the monthly PCDOH Migrant Clinics, vaccine clinics coordinated for the under or uninsured population in Putnam County. These clinics provide vaccines and tuberculosis screening and are held in the evening to accommodate client work hours. Condoms are provided to clients in envelopes, or a basket located in the waiting area.
 - 500 condoms were provided to summer camps for their staff.
- PCDOH worked with two county prenatal care providers with incidence of patients presenting with syphilis during pregnancy to ensure awareness of clinical consulting resources available through the Clinical Education Initiative (CEI) within the AIDs Institute at the New York State Department of Health, and to provide clinician resources for treatment of syphilis during pregnancy.

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