News Release

Date: January 4, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Clinton County Health Department Receives Community Health Award from
Excellus BlueCross BlueShield
Award to fund a local Sun Safety Initiative.

Plattsburgh, NY January 2018- In mid-December, Excellus BlueCross BlueShield announced the winners of its Fall 2017 Community Health Awards, with Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) among its 12 recipients from across the Utica/Rome/North Country Region.

“The company’s Community Health Awards demonstrate a corporate commitment to support local organizations that share our mission as a nonprofit health plan,” said Eve VandeWal, regional president of Excellus BlueCross BlueShield. “These awards complement our existing grants and sponsorships with agencies that work to enhance quality of life, including health status, in upstate New York.”

Through a competitive application process, Excellus BlueCross BlueShield’s Community Health Awards support programs that have clear goals to improve the health or health care of a specific population. Awards focus on improving the health status of the community, reducing the incidence of specific diseases, promoting health education and enhancing overall wellness and are made based on scope of need, goals of the program, number of people expected to benefit from the program and positive impact on the community’s health status.

CCHD’s award will be used to purchase and install sun screen dispensers in key locations across the county in an effort to support safe sun practices among residents taking advantage of the county’s many outdoor recreational opportunities. A resident survey completed in 2016 intended to assess the practice of sun safety behaviors among Clinton County residents found that only about 1 in 5 residents reported always using sunscreen while outdoors. Looking to identify ways to improve these statistics, CCHD also inquired if residents would use sunscreen dispensers if they were available. Nearly 60% of respondents said they would, leading the Department to develop the Clinton County Sun Safety Initiative.

“It has been exciting to take feedback directly from residents and to use it to make change in our community that supports better health. We very often recommend residents get

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*Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations*
out and be more physically active. It makes a lot of sense that we also support the practice of sun safe behaviors as they do”, says Mandy Snay, Director of the Division of Health Planning & Promotion at CCHD. The Health Department is in the process of identifying locations and community partners that they will work with to assure upkeep of the dispensers in the years ahead. Dispensers will be installed in Spring 2018.

About the Clinton County Health Department:

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News Release

Date: January 25, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Vaping Now Included in Indoor Smoking Regulations

Plattsburgh, January 23, 2018. Use of electronic cigarettes has been added to New York State’s ban on smoking in public indoor spaces and certain outdoor spaces where smoking is prohibited. The Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA) which has been in existence since 2003 was expanded in November to include these products.

In a press release issued by Governor Cuomo’s office when the ban went into effect, New York State Commissioner of Health, Dr. Howard Zucker stated “Although e-cigarette use is promoted as a healthier alternative to tobacco use by the vaping industry, research has shown that they may carry long-term health risks for users and those exposed to secondhand emissions." Vaping is a term that describes the use of an electronic nicotine device such as a vape pen or electronic cigarette often referred to as an e-cigarette. The expansion of the Clean Indoor Air Act builds on previous legislation that banned the use of e-cigarettes on all public and private school grounds in New York State.

New York State is still in the process of updating Clean Indoor Air Act written materials but the Clinton County Health Department wants residents to know that the expanded version of the law which includes all electronic nicotine delivery devices, is currently in effect. Ryan Davies, Director of the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety is reminding business owners and the public that “all restrictions that apply to smoking cigarettes, cigars and pipes, in workplaces including restaurants, bars, bowling facilities, taverns, bingo halls and other public spaces, now extends to electronic nicotine delivery devices”.

“Enforcement of indoor smoking and vaping restrictions is primarily a complaint driven system,” according to Davies. Anyone who witnesses a violation may contact the Health Department. Complaint forms are available on the Department’s website at www.clintonhealth.org in the Environmental section, or a complaint can be made by phone or in person. When a complaint is received, it will be assigned to a staff member to investigate and the building or business owner may be subject to fines and enforcement.

Electronic nicotine and vapor delivery systems which includes e-cigarettes, vaping pens, e-hookah and similar devices, typically contain nicotine. Some ingredients found in e-cigarettes are considered toxic and there is no regulation of the chemicals e-cigarettes may contain or how much nicotine the user is inhaling. These factors could lead to long-term adverse health effects for e-cigarette users and bystanders.

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In New York State, e-cigarette use among high school students nearly doubled from 10.5 percent in 2014 to 20.6 percent in 2016 and it now far exceeds the rate of cigarette smoking. New York's high school student smoking rate in 2016 was the lowest on record at 4.3 percent, down from 27.1 percent in 2000. However, like cigarettes, e-cigarettes are aggressively marketed to teenagers to make them as appealing as possible with flavors such as mint chocolate and melon candy, with the mistaken belief that they are not harmful to users. A report by the U.S. Surgeon General also found that the use of e-cigarettes among youths and young adults is strongly associated with the use of other tobacco products.

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News Release

Date: February 9, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

FLU CASES CONTINUE TO RISE

Plattsburgh, February 9, 2018. Cases of influenza, more commonly known as flu, continue to rise in New York State and across the Country. Yesterday, Governor Andrew Cuomo directed the New York State Department of Health and local health departments to step up efforts to ensure that community members are vaccinated. He also spoke directly to residents imploring them to get the flu vaccine, as the number of confirmed cases of flu in New York State reaches well over 52,000. Almost 12,000 have been hospitalized this flu season and three children have died.

Clinton County Health Department has taken steps in response. Flu information is even more prominently displayed on the Department’s website now. “Our webpage opens to information about flu and links directly to the Governor’s webpage,” states Darwyna Facteau, the Department’s Director of Health Care Services. “In addition, a listing of the types of vaccine available at local pharmacies has been added.” This list will be updated weekly, however, because demand for vaccine may rise, residents are advised to call ahead to ensure that their pharmacy still has the vaccine they need.

Last month, Governor Cuomo issued an executive order allowing pharmacists to administer flu vaccine to children ages 2-18. Previously, pharmacies could only provide vaccination for flu to adults. Many but not all pharmacies now have pediatric vaccine available. The list also shows which pharmacies have high-dose influenza vaccine designed for people over the age of 65. Parents or guardians of children between the ages of 6-24 months should contact the child’s health care provider. “People can contact their own health care provider, a pharmacy or even the Health Department about getting vaccinated,” stated Ms. Facteau.

In the Governor’s press release, New York State Department of Health Commissioner, Dr. Howard Zucker had this to say. “Getting vaccinated is the best thing that New Yorkers can do to protect themselves and those around them, followed by good hand hygiene.” Messages such as this have appeared regularly on the Health Department’s Facebook page during this flu season. Facebook followers can expect to see even more flu related messages as CCHD begins posting them daily as advised in the Governor’s release.

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*Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations*
Ms. Facteau concluded by saying that “We will continue to provide information to the public, encourage and make it easy for people to get vaccinated, and coordinate with schools and other institutions to see that steps are taken to reduce the spread of the flu virus.” She advised the following individual health practices to stop the spread of flu germs.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Flu is easily killed by soap and hot water. Wash your hands often. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at home, work or school, especially when someone is ill.
- Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.
- If you are sick stay home. People with flu are contagious for up to seven days after symptoms begin.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Do not sneeze or cough directly into uncovered hands.

Those who get the flu should contact their health care provider to determine if they are a candidate for treatment with anti-viral medications. Anti-virals can lessen the severity and duration of the flu. They work best when started within 48 hours of first symptoms.

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“Working Together for a Healthier Community”
FREE WELL WATER TESTING PROGRAM

Clinton County, March 9, 2018. For residents with individual wells supplying their water, testing for coliform bacteria is the simplest way for them to know if their water is safe. For a limited time and a limited number of samples, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is offering free coliform bacteria testing, through Endyne Labs, to residents with their own individual well.

Coliform bacteria is found in the soil, in water that has been contaminated by surface water, and in human and animal wastes. If coliform bacteria are found in water, it means that the water system is not properly sealed, and may be unsafe. The CCHD strongly suggests that homeowners with a private water source, such as wells, test the water for coliform bacteria at least one time each year using a New York State certified lab.

Through March 31, 2018, the CCHD is offering Clinton County residents with their own well free coliform bacteria testing, through Endyne Labs (located on New York Road in Plattsburgh). This test normally costs $25. If residents miss the cut-off for the free testing, Endyne lab is also offering a $5 discount to residents on samples received through this program. Original paperwork provided in the kit must be submitted with the water sample.

Interested residents should visit the CCHD Environmental Health & Safety Division, located on the 2nd floor of 135 Margaret Street, Plattsburgh, between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm to pick-up a sampling kit with instructions. Staff are available to answer any questions regarding sampling procedures. To be eligible for this program, residents must have an on-site private water source (not a community water supply), own the home for the water they are testing, and the home must be their primary residence. “This is a great way to find out the quality of the water you are drinking and using for cooking at home – and it’s free,” states Tim Simonette, Senior Sanitarian for the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety. “Don’t miss this opportunity!”

This program expires March 31, 2018. Approximately (60) sampling kits remain. The CCHD anticipates having a similar well water testing program later in 2018. If residents have any questions, they should call the CCHD at 518-565-4870.

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"Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations"
News Release

Date: 3/21/2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Clinton County Health Department
Press Release
"Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood"
(March, 2018)

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program of the Clinton County Health Department will be conducting door to door outreach and offering in-home surveys in the Town of Champlain during the months of April, May and June. These brief in-home surveys are designed to identify and educate residents on health and safety concerns. Home safety products such as carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, first aid kits, flashlights, asthma safety materials and child safety products are some of the items that are provided by the Healthy Neighborhoods Program depending upon the needs of the household.

During the home visit, education is provided regarding fire and burn safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, lead poisoning prevention, asthma, injury prevention and many other health and safety topics. Information and referrals may also be provided regarding available community resources for which the family may qualify. Participation in the Healthy Neighborhoods Program is free and open to all Clinton County Residents! Don’t miss this opportunity to participate!

If you would like more information about Healthy Neighborhoods or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Healthy Neighborhoods at (518) 565-4870 or visit us on the web at www.clintonhealth.org.

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"Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations"
News Release

Emergency Preparedness Exercise

Health Department Practices Skills for Dispensing Medical Counter Measures.

Plattsburgh, March 26, 2018. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) will be testing their ability to protect residents from a disease outbreak by employing Medical Counter Measures (MCM) during an exercise on Tuesday, April 3, 2018. The exercise will be held at the Crete Memorial Civic Center in Plattsburgh between 11AM and 1PM. Set up will begin about two hours earlier. Residents should know that this is only an exercise and that no real emergency is taking place.

Each year, the New York State Department of Health requires local health departments to conduct exercises to hone their skills in setting up and conducting a Point of Distribution (POD) for Medical Counter Measures (MCM). Medical Counter Measures protect communities from public health emergencies stemming from a naturally occurring emerging disease threat or terrorist attack with a biological, chemical, or radiological/nuclear material. Medications and vaccines are examples of Medical Counter Measures.

According to the Department’s Public Information Officer, Karen Derusha, “The Clinton County Health Department continuously plans for and practices procedures for responding to disease threats and other emergencies. The ability to quickly and efficiently distribute Medical Counter Measures is a critical component of this agency’s emergency preparedness.”

About 75% of the Health Department’s staff will be participating in the exercise. Medical Reserve Corps. volunteers and representatives from partner organizations such as emergency services, law enforcement, the college community, and mental health services will also participate. The exercise mimics a real event, allowing all participating organizations to practice their roles. Also participating are many community volunteers. “We could not do this without the help of other organizations and community volunteers,” stated Ms. Derusha. “We greatly appreciate our volunteers from the Medical Reserve Corps., from other agencies, and the general public.”

In preparation for the exercise, CCHD has recruited individuals to be “actors” in this exercise. Actors will represent over 200 patients who will receive the Medical Counter Measure during the two hour period. The number of patient actors is calculated to test whether, in the event of a real emergency, the CCHD can provide MCMs to the affected population of Clinton County within a specified time frame.

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”
Although Health Departments prepare in advance for exercises, the NYS Department of Health will not divulge the full scenario until between 48 and 72 hours ahead of time. Over those 48 to 72 hours, as well as during the exercise, additional information will be provided much the same way new information will come in during a real event. These “injects” of information often require health department staff to adjust the way in which they are responding. “It’s all part of the process,” stated Ms. Derusha. “Real life is unpredictable and we need to be ready to respond no matter what comes our way.”

Similar exercises will be taking place in in seventeen New York counties on the same day including Essex and Franklin Counties. Adults who are interested in participating in the exercise in Clinton County are asked to call 518-565-4840 and provide contact information so that pre-registration information can be sent to them. Clinton County residents can also simply show up at the Crete Civic Center on April 3rd between 11AM and 1PM and register on the spot.

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###

"Working Together for a Healthier Community"
**News Release**

Puppy Tests Positive for Rabies

**Plattsburgh, April 10, 2018.** Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is investigating a case of rabies in a puppy. The puppy was a stray in Canada that was transported to the Altona area on March 5, 2018. The puppy began to show symptoms of illness on April 1st and died on April 3rd. Post-mortem testing revealed rabies as the cause. The time between exposure to the rabies virus and the onset of symptoms varies so it is not known where or when the puppy contracted the disease. CCHD is working with the owner to identify humans and animals that may have had contact with the puppy. Rabies is a deadly viral disease that affects the nervous system and is 100 percent fatal once symptoms develop. Timely vaccination and preventive treatment can stop the onset of symptoms and should be administered to those who may have been exposed to rabies.

“All individuals should exercise care with stray animals.” noted Judy Ross, a Principal Public Health Sanitarian at the Clinton County Health Department. “When an animal is a stray, its vaccination status is unknown. There is also no way to know if it has been exposed to rabies or other diseases.”

The following are standard precautions regarding animal rabies.

- Have pets (dogs, cats, and ferrets) vaccinated against rabies as soon as they reach 3 months of age. New York State law requires that all dogs, cats and ferrets be vaccinated against rabies by 4 months of age. Vaccination is also recommended for livestock with frequent human contact.
- Report all animal bites to your local health department. It is very important that follow up is done on the biting animal to protect the health of the person bitten. If the biting animal is not available, the person bitten may need rabies vaccinations to prevent the disease.
- Spaying and neutering your pets decreases undesirable behavior, like aggression and roaming and reduces the number of unwanted animals that may not be properly cared for or regularly vaccinated.

Ms. Ross also reminds pet owners to keep pets under control. “Pets should never be left outside unattended. If your pet gets outside, look it over for any wounds or signs that it fought with another animal and keep an eye out for signs of illness.”

The New York State Department of Health website cites several signs of rabies in animals, the first of which may be a change in behavior. The animal may become unusually aggressive or tame. It may lose its fear of people and natural enemies. A wild animal may appear affectionate and friendly. It may become excited or irritable and attack anything in its path. Staggering, convulsions, choking, frothing at the mouth and paralysis are sometimes seen. Many animals will make very unusual sounds. Infected animals usually die within one week after showing signs of rabies.

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Due to requirements for vaccination, rabies in pets is rare in New York State, however wild animals can spread rabies to pets and to humans. These additional rabies precautions should be followed.

- Use caution around all wild animals especially raccoons, skunks and foxes. Talk to children now about not approaching wildlife, and to immediately tell a parent or adult if they see a wild animal.
- Secure all garbage in containers that will prevent access by wild animals.
- Do not feed wildlife or stray animals and discourage them from seeking food near your home. Feed pets indoors, leaving food outside will attract strays or wildlife.
- Report all contact with bats, including finding a bat in the same room with a sleeping person, to your local health department.
- To prevent the spread of rabies, no one should transport or relocate trapped wild animals.
- Puppies, kittens and other small pets should not be left outside alone (even in a fenced area).
- If your pet fights with a wild animal, put gloves on before you handle the pet. Call your veterinarian or the local health department for advice.
- If an unvaccinated pet comes in contact with a rabid or suspected rabid animal, the pet must be quarantined for six months or euthanized.
- Vaccinated pets that come in contact with a rabid or suspected rabid animal must be given a booster rabies vaccination within five days of the contact.

For more information on rabies, contact the Clinton County Health Department at 518-565-4870 or online at www.clintonhealth.org.

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###

"Working Together for a Healthier Community"
Media Release

Date: May 10, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Drinking Water Awareness Week: Artwork Contest Winners Announced

PLATTSBURGH, NY May 10, 2018 When we turn on our faucets, water comes out. We drink, cook and clean with it. Many residents haven’t thought about where their water comes from, or if it’s clean and safe. However, having access to clean, potable drinking water is one of the most important contributions to a community’s overall health. In an effort to promote local awareness of drinking water, the Clinton County Health Department is celebrating the American Water Works Association’s Drinking Water Week, May 6-12, 2018. The theme for 2018 is “Protect the Source” with a local focus on private well water maintenance.

To highlight Drinking Water Week, the Clinton County Health Department held its 3rd Annual Drinking Water Week artwork contest. The Department reached out to local schools, inviting art and science teachers to promote the contest with their students. Students grades 12 and under were asked to color or draw a picture showing how water is essential to their daily lives. The Department received submissions from schools in the AuSable, Beekmantown, Chazy, Peru and Plattsburgh school districts.

The entire Health Department was invited to vote on entries and after careful consideration, three entries were chosen as winners. The winners are as follows: Sahar Fatima, Peru Central School; Sylvia Tardif, AuSable Valley Middle School; and Rylan Garden, Beekmantown Middle School. Their artwork will be entered into a national artwork contest hosted by the American Water Works Association, as well as featured in the Department’s annual water operator’s calendar and social media pages. “We were thoroughly impressed by the artwork submissions we received, and are hopeful that one of our local winners will rise to the top of the national contest,” states Jennifer Trudeau, Principal Public Health Educator for the Clinton County Health Department.

Mrs. Trudeau also states “It was a pleasure to review all of the amazing artwork submissions. We appreciate the time that our local art and science teachers invested to teach their students about the value of one of our most important natural resources.”

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”
While public water systems are regulated and must adhere to strict standards, private water sources, such as wells, are not typically regulated. Individual homeowners are responsible for keeping their water safe. Tim Simonette, Senior Public Health Sanitarian at the Clinton County Health Department states that, “Approximately 28% of Clinton County residents have a private water source. Residents with private water should take steps to ensure their water is safe, such as yearly testing for coliform bacteria using a NYS Certified lab, testing for nitrate if a newborn resides in the home, and checking to see that the well has a tight-fitting sanitary cap. Just like maintenance on your car or your home’s roof, your water source should be properly maintained.’

Residents looking for more information on maintaining private drinking water sources are encouraged to read the Department’s blog at http://cchdblogs.blogspot.com/2018/04/does-your-well-need-checkup.html. For more information about drinking water in Clinton County, residents can read Clinton County Profiles in Public Health: Drinking Water in Clinton County, found at http://www.clintonhealth.org/pdf%20files/CCProfilesInPublicHealthFall2016.pdf, or visit www.ClintonHealth.org.

Note: Digital images of winning artwork submissions are available upon request.

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News Release

Date: June 8, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Sexually Transmitted Diseases on the Rise

June 4, 2018 Plattsburgh. Darwyna Facteau, Director of Health Care Services for the CCHD is concerned about increases in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in the U.S. and Clinton County. Facteau reports that Clinton County has seen a 175% increase in gonorrhea, a 33% increase in syphilis and a 13% increase in chlamydia when compared with the first quarter of 2017.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) the number of STD cases is quickly rising in women, infants and gay and bisexual men. Antibiotics can cure chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis. However, left untreated, they put men, women, and infants at risk for severe, lifelong health outcomes like chronic pain, severe reproductive health complications, and HIV. Turning back the rise in STDs will require renewed commitment from all players according to the CDC.

Clinton County is taking a three prong approach to reduce these rates, by focusing on prevention, screening and treatment according to Facteau. “We would like everyone to talk openly about STDs, understand the importance of getting tested regularly, and get treatment if needed. Additionally, CCHD is asking health providers to make STD screening a standard part of medical care by seamlessly integrating it into routine care. Reviewing your patient’s sexual history normalizes conversation about sexual health and removes stigma.

Preventing the spread of sexually transmitted infections (STI) is also a key factor in reducing the number of people who get a sexually transmitted disease. Risk can be reduced by using condoms, dental dams, or by practicing mutual monogamy. The CDC provides information on these methods at www. https://www.cdc.gov/condomeffectiveness/Dental-dam-use.html. CCHD is providing free condoms and dental dams at the Health Department’s reception area on the first floor at 133 Margaret St., Plattsburgh, during normal business hours (8AM – 4PM).

CCHD works with health care partners to ensure quick detection and treatment for people diagnosed with an STD. CCHD contracts with Planned Parenthood of the North Country NY to provide STI services at no charge for those without health insurance. “Our nurses are also available to answer any questions or facilitate testing and treatment,” says Facteau.

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"Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations"
The following testing criteria is recommended by the CDC and advised by CCHD:

- All adults and adolescents from ages 13 to 64 should be tested at least once for HIV.
- Annual chlamydia and gonorrhea screening should be completed for all sexually active women younger than 25 years, as well as older women with risk factors such as new or multiple sex partners, or a sex partner who has a sexually transmitted infection.
- Syphilis, HIV, chlamydia, and hepatitis B screening should be completed for all pregnant women, and gonorrhea screening for at-risk pregnant women starting early in pregnancy, with repeat testing as needed, to protect the health of mothers and their infants.
- Screening at least once every year for syphilis, chlamydia, gonorrhea and HIV should be completed for all sexually active gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM). MSM who have multiple or anonymous partners should be screened more frequently (i.e., at 3-to-6 month intervals).
- Anyone who has unsafe sex or shares injection drug equipment should get tested for HIV at least once a year.

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"Working Together for a Healthier Community"
News Release

Date: 6/19/2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

"Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood"
June 19, 2018

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program of the Clinton County Health Department will be conducting door to door outreach and offering in-home surveys in the Town of Dannemora during the months of July, August, and September. These brief in-home surveys are designed to identify and educate residents on health and safety concerns. Home safety products such as carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, first aid kits, flashlights, asthma safety materials and child safety products are some of the items that are provided by the Healthy Neighborhoods Program depending upon the needs of the household.

During the home visit, education is provided regarding fire and burn safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, lead poisoning prevention, asthma, injury prevention and many other health and safety topics. Information and referrals may also be provided regarding available community resources for which the family may qualify. Participation in the Healthy Neighborhoods Program is free and open to all Clinton County Residents! Don’t miss this opportunity to participate!

If you would like more information about Healthy Neighborhoods or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Healthy Neighborhoods at (518) 565-4870 or visit us on the web at www.clintonhealth.org.

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“Persons who have any physical mobility or other needs, call the telephone number above to arrange for accommodations”
News Release

Date: June 28, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Extreme Heat: Recommended Precautions

PLATTSBURGH, NY June 28, 2018 The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is urging residents to prepare for the extreme heat forecasted for this weekend by staying cool, hydrated and informed. High temperatures and heat indexes can pose serious health risks, especially for certain populations. Precautions should be followed to reduce heat-related problems.

“The extreme temperatures anticipated in the upcoming days are concerning because they can lead to very high body temperatures, resulting in heat-related illnesses and even death. While heat safety is important for everyone, certain groups should be extra cautious, including older adults (65+), infants and children, those with chronic medical conditions, those in low income areas, athletes, and those who work outdoors, states Jennifer Trudeau, Principal Public Health Educator at the Clinton County Health Department. Fortunately, heat-related illnesses and deaths are preventable. By keeping yourself informed and following a few simple steps to stay cool and hydrated, you and your family can stay healthy this summer.”

CCHD recommends following these tips to protect yourself and your family when temperatures soar:

- Never leave children or pets inside a parked car, even briefly. Even with the windows cracked a car will quickly heat up to dangerous temperatures. LOOK before you LOCK.
- Stay in air-conditioned areas as much as possible. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library—even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat.
- Drink plenty of fluids before you are thirsty, regardless how active you are. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks as they will cause you to lose more body fluid. As you sweat you will need to replenish the fluids your body has lost.
- Stay out of the sun as much as possible. People and pets should limit outdoor activities to the times of the day that are typically cooler (i.e. early morning or evening). Rest often in shady areas.
- Choose lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing to help keep cool.
- Apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher before heading outside. Sunburns can affect the body’s ability to cool itself down.
- Check on your neighbors, friends and family members, especially the elderly and those without air conditioning.

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For more information about the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses and keeping cool in the summer heat, visit www.cdc.gov/extremeheat. Updates on weather conditions are available from the National Weather Service at www.weather.gov/safety/heat.

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News Release

Date: July 2, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Dragon’s Breath Banned in Clinton County

PLATTSBURGH, NY July 2, 2018 On June 25, 2018 the Clinton County Board of Health passed a resolution prohibiting the sale and service of liquid nitrogen adulterated food products at food service establishments in Clinton County. This decision was made after careful review of potential health risks associated with ingestion of liquid nitrogen adulterated food products, such as liquid nitrogen puffs.

Liquid nitrogen puffs are a food novelty made by freezing cereal puffs (or similar materials) in liquid nitrogen, often called “Dragon’s Breath.” The frozen cereal dessert is then served in a cup and eaten using a skewer or similar utensil. When the frozen cereal is chewed, the cold condenses moisture in the consumer’s exhaled breath and gives the appearance of breathing smoke. Ingestion of liquid nitrogen can cause severe damage to the mouth, esophagus, and stomach. In addition, instances of frostbite and tissue damage have been reported when residual liquid nitrogen is left in the serving cup; if fingers are used to remove the product from the cup, skin contact with liquid nitrogen can cause rapid frostbite.

Health Department Director, John Kanoza, brought the issue to the Clinton County Board of Health. According to Mr. Kanoza, “the Clinton County Health Department has a duty to protect residents from potential health harms”. He included in his presentation to the Board, information provided by the New York State Association of County Health Officials (NYSACHO), which states, based upon “literature review and discussions, the safety risks caused by exposure to liquid nitrogen far outweigh any potential novelty of the product (Dragon’s Breath) being served” (to the public).

Although liquid nitrogen is sometimes used in the food industry to add froth to products, like ice cream and beer, this use typically occurs as the product is manufactured, and does not expose the consumer to the same dangers as those found with Dragon’s Breath. Liquid nitrogen is also used in medical practice, often to quickly freeze (burn and remove) freckles and small lesions on patients.

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News Release

Be The One!
Clinton County Health Department Offers 101 Ideas for Personal and Community Health

From July 17, 2018 through July 27, 2018, Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is celebrating healthy choices and the residents that make them. At “pop-up” Be the One events around the County, residents are invited to partake in a number of activities, including navigating through a life-sized maze that tests their health knowledge at each turn.

All of the Be The One events center on the same theme: 101 ways to a Healthy Community & I’m One! Mandy Snay, Director of Health Planning and Promotion at the Clinton County Health Department, came up with this unique idea as a way to let residents know that many of the things they do every day not only helps them improve their individual health but also helps others be healthy too. “It’s likely easier to help make the community healthier than residents think it is and their help in our efforts to do that is welcomed,” stated Ms. Snay. “The events are designed to be fun and to get folks excited about the impact that an individual can have on their own health and the health and well-being of their community.” A large banner featured at each site lists over 100 ways residents can contribute to community wellness.

Each event will run for a couple of hours and residents can stop in anytime during the event period. Beyond navigating the maze, participants will be invited to take the Better Choice Pledge. The pledge challenges participants to try new healthy behaviors. There will be giveaways for the first 25 people who take the Better Choice Pledge. Event dates and locations can be viewed on the CCHD Facebook events page (www.facebook.com/clintonhealth).

Event Dates and Locations:
- July 17, 10 am – 12 pm: Northern Adirondack CSD
- July 19, 10 am – 12 pm: Recreation Park
- July 20, 10 am – 12 pm: LaFontaine Park (Breen Ln.)
- July 23, 10 am – 12 pm: Feinberg Park
- July 25, 5 pm – 6:30 pm: Recreation Park
- July 26, 10 am – 12 pm: Liberty St. Tennis Courts
- July 26, 2 pm – 4 pm: Heyworth Mason Park
- July 27, 10 am – 2 pm: Plattsburgh Housing Authority

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"Working Together for a Healthier Community"
News Release

Date: July 31, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Health Department Role in Plattsburgh Dog Attack Incident

The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) was notified by City of Plattsburgh Police of an incident on Thursday, July 26, 2018, in which a small dog was attacked and killed by two larger dogs. The small dog’s owner was also bitten in the attack.

Since receiving notification, the Department has followed its protocol for domesticated animal bites. The following information is within the scope of CCHD’s involvement and ability to comment:

- CCHD was notified of a bite to a human by an animal. This information was provided to CCHD by the City of Plattsburgh Police who responded to the incident.
- The Health Department’s role in such situations is to assess potential exposure to the rabies virus.
- Clinton County Health Department has verified that the two aggressor dogs involved in the incident were vaccinated for rabies.
- The dogs’ owners were notified by the Health Department via phone and a follow-up letter that the dogs must be confined for a 10 day observation period as an added safeguard to ensure that neither dog had rabies at the time of the attack. Confinement means that the dogs must be under the owners’ control, in the home or fenced yard and always on a leash if outside the home or yard.

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News Release

Date: August 3, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

West Nile Virus Positive Mosquitos Found Locally
Residents Are Reminded to Take Steps to Prevent Mosquito Bites

Plattsburgh, August 3, 2018. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) continues to remind people about the importance of protecting themselves against mosquito bites. “Since mosquitoes can carry diseases such as West Nile Virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis Virus (EEEV), we want to continually remind the public to take steps to prevent bites” says John Kanoza, the Director of Public Health.

The New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) Wadsworth Laboratory recently reported that two pools (batches of mosquitoes), both collected at the Ausable Point State Campground, tested positive for West Nile Virus. The pools were collected during the weeks of July 2nd and 16th.

Through a contract with New York State and the SUNY Plattsburgh Environmental Science Department, the CCHD completes mosquito surveillance at the following seven (7) mosquito trapping locations in Clinton County: (1) Point Au Roche State Park; (2) SUNY Plattsburgh Field House; (3) Plattsburgh Chamber of Commerce Building; (4) River Road in the hamlet of Morrisonville; (5) Recore Road in the Town of Chazy; (6) Ausable Point State Campground; and (7) Southwick Road in the Town of Champlain. Mosquitoes trapped at these locations are sorted at the SUNY Plattsburgh Environmental Science laboratory into mosquito pools, which are then submitted to the NYSDOH Wadsworth Laboratory for specific mosquito-borne virus testing, including West Nile Virus (WNV).

In 2017, a total of six (6) mosquito pools collected in Clinton County tested positive for West Nile Virus. The presence of mosquito-borne viruses was not identified in any of the mosquito pools collected from County traps during June of this year; however, the more recent testing found WNV positive specimens.

The first cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) disease were detected in New York in 1999, but within only four years WNV was detected in every state in the continental United States. Moreover, West Nile Virus had caused substantial outbreaks in widely separated geographic regions.
West Nile Virus is spread from mosquito to bird and from bird to mosquito, explaining how it traveled so quickly across the country. Birds serve as the primary WNV disease reservoir host and mosquitoes serve as the primary carrier of WNV disease. The West Nile Virus is transmitted by infected Culex mosquitoes. Humans become infected when bitten by a mosquito carrying WNV. A person with WNV cannot spread the virus back to mosquitoes or to other people.

About 20% of the people who become infected with West Nile Virus will develop mild symptoms that may include fever, headache, and body aches, occasionally with a skin rash and swollen lymph glands. In many individuals, these symptoms are so mild that they go unnoticed or undetected. The symptoms of severe infection can include headache, high fever, neck stiffness, muscle weakness, disorientation, convulsions and coma.

The Health Department strongly recommends the following measures to protect you and your family.

- Cover exposed skin by wearing light colored- long sleeved shirts and pants.
- Use a mosquito repellent when outdoors, especially at times when mosquitoes are most active. Be sure to follow the instructions on the label.
- Use an EPA-registered insect repellent that contains at least 20% DEET. Consider using clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents) that are treated with permethrin (an insecticide). You can buy permethrin pre-treated clothes or treat your own clothes.
- Plan outdoor activities for earlier in the day since most mosquito species are more active at dusk and night.
- Reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and property by reducing or eliminating standing water. Drain wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use, remove leaf debris from gutters, used tires, flower pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Make sure all doors, windows, screens and other openings to your home are in good repair to prevent mosquitoes from getting indoors during the day and while you sleep. Use mosquito netting over children’s strollers and infant carriers.

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News Release

Dogs in Restaurants

Clinton County, NY, August 7, 2018. According to Judy Ross, Principal Public Health Sanitarian, “the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) occasionally receives questions from the public and restaurant owners regarding which pets or dogs are allowed in restaurants.” Ms. Ross noted that “service animals (typically service dogs) are allowed in all public places.” A service animal is a working animal, not a pet. According to the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), a service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. Dogs that satisfy this definition are considered service animals under the ADA. Examples of tasks a service animal might perform include:

- Assisting with navigation, or stability and balance;
- Alerting to sounds or allergens;
- Pulling wheelchairs, carrying or retrieving items;
- Seizure assistance, or;
- Interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors.

Under the ADA and NYS law, service animals must be permitted in all areas of a facility that customers are allowed or the public is invited. This includes motels and hotels, restaurants, buses, taxis, etc. A business may not impose extra deposits, fees, or surcharges for a service animal. The business may charge a fee if a service animal causes damage, as long as it regularly charges nondisabled customers for the same type of damage. A business or other public accommodation provider cannot ask about the nature or extent of a person’s disability and may not demand proof that the animal is certified. A public accommodation provider may ask:

- If the animal is required because of a disability, and;
- What work the animal has been trained to perform.

Regardless of any “no pets” policy, the business must allow a service animal into their business to accompany their owner or handler. A business may exclude a service animal only if the animal is out of control or not housebroken and the animal’s handler does not control it. Fear of dogs or allergies is not a valid reason to exclude a service animal.

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In March 2015, the New York State (NYS) Legislature passed an amendment to the *NYS Public Health Law Section 1352–e* that allows (but does not mandate) *companion dogs* in outdoor seating areas of food service establishments under certain conditions. A companion dog is a pet. Restaurants are not required by this law to allow companion dogs in outdoor seating areas.

The following conditions must be met for a customer to be allowed to have a dog in the restaurant’s outdoor seating area:

- The food service establishment’s owner elects to allow companion dogs in the outdoor seating area;
- A separate outdoor entrance is present to access the outdoor dining area. Dogs are not allowed on chairs, benches, seats, or other fixtures;
- The outdoor seating area is not used for food or drink preparation or utensil storage;
- Food and water provided to companion dogs shall only be in single-use disposable containers;
- Food employees are prohibited from having direct contact with the companion dog while on duty;
- The outdoor dining area is maintained clean;
- The companion dog is on a leash or confined in a pet carrier and is under the control of the companion dog owner;
- There is reasonable signage indicating that companion dogs are allowed in the outdoor dining area, and;
- The food service establishment owner ensures compliance with local ordinances related to sidewalks, public nuisance, and sanitation.

This NYS Public Health Law does not interfere with nor impair or diminish the right of an individual to be accompanied by an animal where otherwise permitted by law, including but not limited to the rights of people with disabilities using guide, hearing, or service animals.

More information on service animals is available at:
NYS Attorney General - [www.ag.ny.gov](http://www.ag.ny.gov)
The Americans with Disabilities Act - [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

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518-565-4840

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“Working Together for a Healthier Community”
News Release

Date: August 9, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Community Partnership Award
Local Convenience Store Receives Award from the Health Department

Plattsburgh, August 9, 2018. On July 25, 2018, the Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) presented a Community Partnership Award to Harrison Clodgo, Manager and Bruce Monette, III, Owner of the Mountain Mart #109 in Plattsburgh, NY. The award recognized the establishment for supporting efforts to reduce youth access to tobacco products.

Mountain Mart #109 allowed Carlin Media and the Clinton County Health Department to film a short video about the Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act (ATUPA) program at their location. Store staff posed as actors in the video. The award recognized the staff who participated and the management at Mountain Mart who made this video possible. To view the video, visit www.clintonhealth.org and click on the YouTube icon, or visit https://bit.ly/2KmNVjK.

The store, located on Route 9 in Plattsburgh, is owned by the Monette family of Malone. The family operates The Adirondack Family of Businesses across Northern New York. The Plattsburgh store is one of seven convenience stores that they operate in Clinton, Franklin, and St. Lawrence Counties. The family also operates Adirondack Energy, located on Monroe Way in Plattsburgh.

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News Release

Septic System Replacement Grant

Plattsburgh, August 10, 2018. Clinton County has enrolled in the New York State Environmental Facility Corporation’s Septic System Replacement Grant program. The Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) is pleased to work with New York State on the implementation of this important effort to safeguard the health of County residents. Clinton County was awarded with $75,000 for the first funding round for properties in the vicinity of Upper Chateaugay Lake and Lake Champlain. The first round of grant funds expires on March 31, 2019. The program will allow residents to apply for financial assistance to replace their existing failing septic system. Eligible participants may be reimbursed for 50% of their septic system replacement costs, up to $10,000.

Clinton County residents whose residence is within 250 feet of Upper Chateaugay Lake or Lake Champlain are eligible to receive grant funds. To apply for the funds, please contact the CCHD to obtain a Grant Application for submittal to the CCHD.

Funds for the Program are limited, and the County can only provide grant funding to those septic system projects that will significantly and quantifiably reduce environmental and/or public health impacts from older/failing cesspools or septic systems. If a project is selected for a grant, the County will notify the applicant with an award letter detailing how much the resident can expect to be reimbursed for the project. The County will also notify the applicant if the project does not qualify for a grant.

If an award letter is received, the applicant must confirm acceptance of the award and the terms and conditions by signing and returning the letter to the County. Once the applicant signs and returns the award letter, the applicant may hire a Design Professional and a Contractor for the septic system project. Design plans must be approved by the CCHD and the project must be completed before the applicant can be reimbursed for eligible, documented costs.

The County encourages residents to apply to for this Program. “This is a unique opportunity for cooperation between the state, local government, and property owners, to address a pressing environmental and public health issue in our community, and we hope residents take advantage of it” states Ryan Davies, Director/Engineer for the Department’s Division of Environmental Health and Safety. For more information about the program, visit the Environmental Facilities Corporation’s website at www.efc.ny.gov/SepticReplacement.

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“Working Together for a Healthier Community”
News Release

Clinton County Sun Safety Initiative Offers FREE Sunscreen to Residents

Plattsburgh, NY August 14, 2018 Clinton County is joining communities across the nation in promoting sun safety by offering free sunscreen to its residents. Located throughout the county, the dispensers are part of the Clinton County Health Department’s (CCHD) Sun Safety Initiative.

The Initiative follows a Sun Safety Survey conducted by the Department in 2016, which assessed attitudes and practices of Clinton County residents toward common sun protection measures and sunscreen usage. Results of the survey indicated that less than one out of five residents always used sunscreen and less than one quarter of respondents practiced other safe behaviors, such as wearing hats and protective clothing while in the sun. Looking to identify ways to improve local health behaviors, CCHD also inquired if residents would use sunscreen dispensers if they were available. Nearly 60% of respondents stated they would, leading CCHD to develop the Clinton County Sun Safety Initiative.

Jennifer Trudeau, Principal Public Health Educator for CCHD, stated, “We encourage residents to take advantage of the many outdoor physical activity opportunities our region offers, but we want to be sure that they aren’t putting themselves at greater risk [for skin cancer] while doing so. The sunscreen dispensers are located at 15 sites throughout the County. Locations include those commonly used for outdoor recreation, including beaches, pools, parks and playgrounds.” To help keep the dispensers in good working order, a number of community partners have stepped up and volunteered to become dispenser stewards. “Even if you apply sunscreen at home, the dispensers provide a gentle reminder of the importance of protecting your skin. We were pleased to learn how many community partners agreed with us,” added Mandy Sny, Director of the Health Planning & Promotion Division at CCHD. The Sun Safety Initiative is supported by funding from Excellus BlueCross BlueShield’s Community Health Award.

For a full listing of sunscreen dispenser locations, visit http://www.clintonhealth.org/sunsafety.

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News Release

Date: 9/21/2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Clinton County Health Department
"Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood"
(September, 2018)

The Healthy Neighborhoods Program of the Clinton County Health Department will be conducting door to door outreach and offering in-home surveys in the Town of AuSable during the months of October, November and December. These brief in-home surveys are designed to identify and educate residents on health and safety concerns. Home safety products such as carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, first aid kits, flashlights, asthma safety materials and child safety products are some of the items that are provided by the Healthy Neighborhoods Program depending upon the needs of the household.

During the home visit, education is provided regarding fire and burn safety, carbon monoxide poisoning prevention, lead poisoning prevention, asthma, injury prevention and many other health and safety topics. Information and referrals may also be provided regarding available community resources for which the family may qualify. Participation in the Healthy Neighborhoods Program is free and open to all Clinton County Residents! Don’t miss this opportunity to participate!

If you would like more information about Healthy Neighborhoods or would like to schedule an appointment, please contact Healthy Neighborhoods at (518) 565-4870 or visit us on the web at www.clintonhealth.org.

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News Release

Date: October 22, 2018
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

2018-2019 U.S. Flu Season is Here

Plattsburgh, October 22, 2018. The flu, which usually begins to appear in the U.S. in October, arrived early this year just as it did in 2017. The first case in Clinton County was reported last week. According to Darwyna Facteau, Director of Health Care Services at the Clinton County Health Department, “Last year was rated as a high severity flu season. Influenza or flu showed up early and lasted well into the spring causing significant illness, hospitalizations and deaths.

The U.S. 2018/2019 season officially started on September 30th. During the first week, a child in Florida died from flu. The child, who had no underlying medical conditions, was unvaccinated. For Ms. Facteau, this highlights the importance of making sure that children are vaccinated. “In 2017/2018, the number of children receiving flu vaccine was down, and the U.S. saw a high number of pediatric deaths. In fact, the number of children who died from flu last year was higher than any year other year except 2009 during the H1N1 (swine) flu pandemic.” Ms. Facteau noted that “some children may not have been vaccinated because the flu mist was not recommended last season.” The mist offered a non-shot option. This year the mist is back. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) American Academy of Immunization Practices (ACIP) has again approved the nasal mist after some changes were made to increase effectiveness.

For the 2018-2019 flu season, ACIP recommends an annual influenza vaccination for everyone 6 months and older. “There are several forms of the vaccine available. Their use is based on a person’s age and medical history, so it’s important to speak with your doctor or pharmacist about which is best for you,” stated Ms. Facteau. She recommends getting the vaccine now rather than waiting. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for your body to develop the antibodies needed to fight the flu virus. “Vaccinating now will prepare you for the upcoming holiday season when people travel, visit and spend time together,” she noted.

Ms. Facteau also addressed one of the most common misconceptions about the flu vaccine, “The flu vaccine cannot cause the flu.” Flu viruses in most vaccines have been ‘inactivated’ (killed) and are not infectious. Other vaccines use a single gene from a flu virus (as opposed to the full virus). This also does not cause infection. Sometimes mild reactions to flu vaccination occur such as soreness or redness where the shot was given, a low-grade fever, headache and muscle aches. These are signs that your body is making the antibodies needed to help fight the real virus.

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Vaccine effectiveness can vary year to year. The protection provided by a flu vaccine depends on the age and health status of the person getting the vaccine, as well as, how closely the vaccine matches the flu viruses in circulation. Researchers predict which strains of the virus are most likely to occur each year and they develop a vaccine to match. Some years the match is better than others. “We know that flu vaccine is not perfect, but it is the best way to protect against flu infection, hospitalizations and death,” advises, Ms. Facteau. “Even an imperfect match provides important protection.”

The current flu season has historical significance. In 1918, the Spanish Influenza Pandemic killed approximately 50 million people worldwide. “One hundred years later we have so much more in our arsenal to fight the flu, starting with vaccine,” stated Ms. Facteau

Good health habits can also help you avoid the flu and other illnesses. Those habits include avoiding people who are sick, staying home when you are ill, covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and cleaning your hands often using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

For more information about staying healthy this flu season visit www.clintonhealth.org/flu

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News Release

Date: 12/27/18
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Clinton County Health Department
Press Release
"Healthy Neighborhoods May Be Coming To Your Neighborhood"
(December, 2018)

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