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Public Health Works!
New Campaign Launched About the Value of Public Health

April 3, 2006: To celebrate Public Health Week (April 3-9), the New York State Community Health Partnership, a public-private partnership dedicated to improving community health, is launching *Public Health Works*, a campaign to inform New Yorkers about the range of important public health work being done in their communities.

The *Public Health Works* campaign will be launched on April 6th and will highlight local public health professionals who help New Yorkers live healthy and safe lives. Materials related to the campaign will be distributed by local health departments, hospitals, local medical societies and other members of the Partnership. A discussion about *Public Health Works* and a related opinion poll will be presented at the SUNY Albany School of Public Health on April 6, from 9-10:30 am.

A recent telephone survey commissioned by Research!America on behalf of the New York State Community Health Partnership found that New York State residents almost unanimously (96%) value public health. Yet one-third (33%) were not familiar with their local public health department and four in ten (40%) either did not believe they had benefited from public health services (28%) or were not sure (12%). *Public Health Works* is being launched to improve New Yorkers' understanding of who delivers public health services, and how these public health services benefit their lives. The materials can be personalized by each county so local residents can learn about those working to improve public health in their own community.

Carol Ryan, President of the New York State Association of County Health Officials, Public Health Director of Sullivan County and a member of the Partnership, said "We are pleased that New Yorkers value public health services. We are launching *Public Health Works* because we want to make sure that every New Yorker knows what their local health department is doing to protect the health of their community."

"Public health should be a part of each citizen's life," said Tina Gerardi, Deputy Executive Director of the New York State Nurses Association, another member of the Partnership. "Each citizen should know and trust what public health does, so that if or when the time comes for issuance of public health directives, the message gets through."

Established in 1997, the New York State Community Health Partnership members include the American Cancer Society; Cornell Cooperative Extension and Cornell University; Healthcare Association of New York State; Medical Society of the State of New York; New York Health Plan Association; New York State Association of County Health Officials; New York State Department of Health; New York State Nurses Association; New York State Public Health Association; and Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy. For more information about the campaign, please contact JoAnn Bennison, Executive Director, NYS Association of County Health Officials, at 518-456-7905. For the full survey results please visit www.researchamerica.org.