



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH **CITY OF WEST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT**

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Mayor

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The West Haven Department of Public Health is celebrating National Immunization Week this week. “We really are quite proud of the way our community and the public health infrastructure has risen to the call of preventing disease through smarter hand and social practices, and timely vaccination, especially of higher risk groups in our community” Eric Triffin, MPH the Health Director asserted. People have adopted new habits and made an ounce of prevention part of their style of living.

The city’s health department was given special recognition by the Centers for Disease Control last year and has continued to excel in preventing disease. Through the opportunity of ensuring timely childhood vaccinations with the Connecticut Immunization Registry and Tracking System (CIRTS) we have been able to educate area doctors about other programs to reduce lead poisoning and asthma too. Betty Murphy, the CIRTS Coordinator has been able to highlight these through Grand Rounds presentations at our local hospitals. Most the doctors who attended had never heard of these efforts and were very enthusiastic about using these services to improve the health of the families under their care.

This is part of a more wholistic approach to care that does not just focus on medicine but also on what people can do at home to stay healthy and not get sick. Home visits with a sanitarian to pinpoint possible asthma triggers is but one example of a way that public health can address an unmet need in medical care.

“All the healthy hand washing and hygienic habits that people have adopted thanks to the H1N1 pandemic will also go far to prevent other hand to mouth diarrheal illnesses as well as lead poisoning” Triffin said. If we continue these healthy choices and improve our diets and exercise too, along with vaccinations, people will be able to avoid illnesses like measles that kill 250,000 children worldwide every year.

The West Haven Department of Public Health offers **free** immunization clinics for children, **free** H1N1 vaccination for everyone, and now has seasonal flu vaccine available again too (there hasn’t been any to be found for a couple of months now) for a fee of \$15.00 for those without Medicare. “Get Winterized, Get Immunized” at the Health Department in City Hall on Tuesdays from 2:30-5, Thursdays 4:30-6:30 and Saturday January 23rd from 12-3:30. No appointment is necessary.



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