

## **Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network Hosts Success Summit**

NEWPORT, NH—On May 7, community leaders from Greater Sullivan County gathered at an event at The Common Man restaurant in Claremont to celebrate the progress and achievements they have made toward a safer, healthier and more economically successful region.

“There’s a vitality and success in our community that we don’t always recognize,” said Liz Hennig of Communities United Regional Network, which sponsored the Summit along with the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network, the Greater Sullivan County Medical Reserve Corps, and Valley Regional Healthcare. “Our community has made great strides toward the future economic health and viability of our region, through expanding our economy and improving public health. We wanted to step back and take a look at the strengths that we can build on for years to come.”

Speakers included Peter Wright, CEO of Valley Regional Health Care, Dr. Cindy Gallagher, superintendent of the Newport/Croydon school district, and several others, from organizations like the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission and River Valley Community College. The summit addressed economic progress and current trends and steps forward in health and public safety. Special time was carved out to honor the region’s young people and their accomplishments toward creating a more positive future for themselves and their peers. The event gave special recognition to several Sullivan County high school students for their work preparing for a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce. “I’ve gained great personal triumphs working with this team,” Erin Truesdell of Claremont, a member of the FIRST Rogue Robotics team, said. Erin will be attending Drexel University in the fall.

Dr. Gallagher pointed out that educating our youth is where good health starts. She spoke about trends related to addiction and teenage drinking and smoking in our area, “...We really need to focus on our younger children before habits become addictions and addictions become diseases,” she said.

Liz Hennig also pointed out some promising trends in the latest Youth Risk Behavior Survey and stated that as fewer people in Greater Sullivan County are involved in drug addiction and violent crime, the healthier our community will be; we will be exposed to less stress, and have a lower susceptibility to chronic diseases.

Jessica Rosman, Regional Preparedness Coordinator for the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network, shared the region’s successful School Based Clinic program, which provided free flu immunizations to students across six school districts. The costs of a sick child are tangible – to the family, and to the school. Statistics show that a family will save over \$450.00 per child in costs if their family remains healthy over the school year. This region was able to achieve a 47% vaccination rate in some districts in 2014, vaccinating over 570 students who might not otherwise be able to get their flu shot.

You can follow the Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network on Facebook at @GSCPHN. Information is also available on Communities United’s Facebook page, @PreventionWorksNH, or their website, [www.PreventionWorksNH.org](http://www.PreventionWorksNH.org). The Greater Sullivan County Public Health Network is a collaborative of the county, municipalities and numerous health and human service agencies, schools, and community groups that work to improve our region’s capacity and capability to manage all health emergencies. It includes Communities United Regional Network for Sullivan County and the Sullivan County Medical Reserve Corps, with support from the County Commissioner’s Office.

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