



Stony Brook University Cancer Center and the NYS HPV Coalition Congratulate the Long Island FQHC, Inc. Health Centers as Winners of the HPV Vaccination Honor Roll Award

Nassau County, NY (TBD) – A 2021 Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination Honor Roll Award was presented to two family health centers in the Long Island FQHC, Inc network. Both the Hempstead and Elmont Family Health Centers received this award for achieving the largest percentage increase in HPV vaccination on Long Island. They are the only two practices on Long Island to achieve this honor.

With at least 40% of adolescents in New York State (NYS) not vaccinated against HPV, the NYS HPV Coalition, the NYS Department of Health and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene united to develop an awards campaign in 2021 to recognize health systems across the state that have excelled at increasing HPV vaccination rates in youth. These new and unprecedented awards are based upon immunization registry data of individuals 18 years of age and younger.

Gina Reinoso, MD, FAAP, and Nurse Manager Yomaira Mesquita, BSN, RN, spearhead HPV vaccination efforts at Hempstead Family Health Center. Dr. Reinoso shared the importance of offering the vaccine at all visits until vaccinated. “If a patient comes in for any reason, and is behind on vaccines, we take the opportunity to catch them up,” said Dr. Reinoso. At Elmont Family Health Center, Rajender Jinna, MD, and Nurse Manager Kesline Milord, RN, lead HPV vaccination efforts for their patients. “We encourage the HPV vaccine to both boys and girls equally,” said Dr. Jinna, when asked how he was able to increase HPV vaccination. Both practices also cite the importance of training nursing staff on HPV vaccination, as well as educating parents and patients on the benefits of this vaccine.

An estimated 80% of people will become infected with HPV during their lives. HPV is known to cause six different types of cancer. The HPV vaccine, which can prevent these cancers, is recommended for boys and girls beginning at ages 11-12. This vaccine is safe, with more than 270 million doses given worldwide. Despite this, nearly half of NYS adolescents are not getting vaccinated as recommended, and the pandemic has created additional barriers in vaccination. COVID-19 has caused many parents to delay regular healthcare visits for their children. Recent data shows a 71% decrease in healthcare visits for children ages 7 to 17 years old in 2020, ages when critical vaccines like HPV are given.

On Long Island, the Stony Brook Cancer Center was awarded a Cancer Prevention in Action (CPiA) grant through the NYS Department of Health and Health Research Inc. to promote cancer prevention initiatives in local communities. As a member of the NYS HPV Coalition, Stony Brook Cancer Center will provide education and resources about the HPV vaccine to community partners and health centers, such as Long Island FQHC, Inc., in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

CPiA is supported with funds from Health Research, Inc. and New York State.

About Long Island FQHC, Inc.:

Long Island FQHC, Inc. is a designated Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving Nassau County through a network of six Family Health Centers in Hempstead, Elmont, Oceanside, Freeport, Roosevelt, Westbury, and three school-based health centers in Roosevelt, Freeport, and Westbury High Schools. LIFQHC provides adult medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, women's health, dental, WIC, and specialty services to patients of all ages in Nassau County. LIFQHC's goal is to increase access to preventative healthcare regardless of the patient's ability to pay for services received. To learn more, visit: <https://www.lifqhc.com/>

About Stony Brook University Cancer Center:

Stony Brook University Cancer Center is Suffolk County's cancer care leader and a leader in education and research. With more than 20,000 inpatient and 70,000 outpatient visits annually, the Cancer Center includes 12 multidisciplinary teams: Breast Cancer; Colorectal Cancer; Gastrointestinal Cancer; Genitourinary Cancer; Gynecologic Cancer; Head and Neck Cancer, and Thyroid Cancer; Hematologic Malignancies and Stem Cell Transplant; Lung Cancer; Melanoma and Soft Tissue Sarcomas; Neurologic Oncology; Orthopedic Oncology; and Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. The cancer program is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer. To learn more, visit cancer.stonybrookmedicine.edu.

About the NYS HPV Coalition:

The NYS HPV Coalition, started in 2017, is part of the NYS Cancer Consortium, and is led by the American Cancer Society to increase HPV vaccination rates and decrease HPV-related disease in NYS through education, coordination, advocacy, and leadership. The Coalition is led by 17 major public health and medical organizations in the state and is one of several action teams connected to the NYS Cancer Consortium. To learn more, visit: nyshpv.org