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Western New York Public Health Alliance Press Release – E-cigarettes Symposium

Western New York Public Health Alliance and the New York State Public Health Association Symposium, October 19th, 2017: E-cigarettes; Public Health Promise or Peril

On Thursday October 19th, the Western New York Public Health Alliance and the New York State Public Health Association collaborated to bring Dr. Brian King of the CDC to Western New York to present the latest information and data on E-cigarettes. This free Symposium was held at Holiday Valley Resort in Ellicottville NY and was open to the public. We had over 75 attendees representing all eight counties of WNY, including elected officials, Public Health Directors and representatives of a wide variety of non-profits involved with smoking cessation and education efforts.

Dr. Brian King PhD, MPH, is the Deputy Director for Research Translation in the Office on Smoking and Health (OSH) within the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In this capacity, he is responsible for providing scientific leadership and technical expertise related to multiple aspects of tobacco prevention and control. In his talk, he referenced the research his team is doing on E-cigarettes and how this is impacting policy level discussions across the nation.

Specifically, he organized his talk into four separate categories; Background, Patterns of Use, Health Effects and Policy Options. The first section, background, included an introduction to all of the different types of ENDS (Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems). The second section was very data oriented, including providing statistics about each type of ENDS and their use by different age groups and New York State rates vs. other areas of the country. This section also highlighted advertising over the years and the similarities between traditional tobacco advertising and the advertising now being done for ENDS.

The middle part of Dr. King's talk was focused on the health effects of ENDS. This was a critical part of his talk because of the confusion about whether E-cigarettes and other ENDS are actually good for people trying to quit traditional tobacco products or not. This has still not been completely determined, but he did provide ample evidence that E-cigarettes do pose health risks whether they are used as a means to quit traditional tobacco products or not. The final portion of his presentation was around policy changes that are being enacted or could be enacted regarding E-cigarettes.

As New York State has just added e-Cigarettes to the list of tobacco associated products that cannot be used in tobacco free areas, the WNYPHA highly recommends

that anyone interested in this topic, or who works with young people or others who believe that E-cigarettes or other ENDS are harmless take the time to read Dr. King's presentation. This can be found on the WNYPHA website (wnypha.org).

The Western New York Public Health Alliance (WNYPHA) is a not-for-profit organization comprised of the Health Commissioners/Public Health Directors and other community public health leaders from the eight counties of Western New York. Their mission is to support collaboration across WNY to further public health initiatives and priorities. As part of this mission, the WNYPHA works to provide health education and information to prevent disease and improve population health. For more information on this article or the WNYPHA, please contact Christine Schuyler, Public Health Director for Chautauqua County at 716-753-4590 or Lori Ballengee, Public Health Director for Allegany County at 585-268-9250.