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Oneida County Health Department Conducts Disease Outbreak Exercise

Point of Dispensing Drill Simulates Vaccine Administration

The Oneida County Health Department conducted a trial Point of Dispensing Exercise today to test the Health Department's effectiveness in responding to a disease outbreak.

The two hour real-time drill took place at Mohawk Valley Community College's Jorgensen Athletic Center and was administered by the Oneida County Health Department in cooperation with the Oneida County Executive's Office, Oneida County Office of Emergency Management and MVCC.

"This drill reminds us of the importance of preparing in advance for disease outbreaks that could occur in any community" said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. "These exercises help us to test and improve our effectiveness in simulating the administering of life-saving vaccines to the public in real public health emergencies."

Community members that registered to participate took on the roles of members of the affected population during the drill. These "patients" simulated individuals who would potentially arrive at a POD site to receive lifesaving vaccines. No actual vaccines were given during this drill, but instead, nursing personnel simulated the administration of a vaccine.

"In real public health emergencies, PODs would assist in keeping individuals with no symptoms, but requiring vaccination or medication, away from hospitals to reserve critical resources for the severely ill," said Phyllis Ellis, Director of Health.

The Health Department planned to process at least 40 people per hour during this drill. The effectiveness of simulation of vaccine administration to a large amount of people, in a short time frame will be reviewed by staff.

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