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EXCELA HEALTH OFFERS FAMILIES OF NEWBORNS BOOSTER SHOTS

GREENSBURG, PA, March 1, 2013... The best way to prevent pertussis (whooping cough) among infants, children, teens, and adults is to get vaccinated. Excelsa Health is helping families of newborns stay healthy by offering booster vaccines during the health system sponsored childbirth education classes and daily rounding in Excelsa's Family Additions Maternity Center at Westmoreland Hospital.

The vaccines that contain the bundled inoculations for tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) are being offered at cost by Excelsa Pharmacy staff who are licensed to dispense and administer the injections. The program began in February.

Latrobe pediatrician David Wyszomierski, who has championed Excelsa Health's flu prevention program that promotes widespread vaccination, is a proponent of adult immunization to guard against a number of illnesses, most especially those that are highly contagious and dangerous if passed to infants or the elderly.

"Most adults were vaccinated for pertussis as children, but the protection from the disease has diminished over time, which is why a booster is necessary. Depending on when you received the vaccine as a child, you could be 25 or 30 now or older and it's important to receive that booster, particularly if you are the parent or family member of a newborn under the age of 6 months."

Dean Matanin, PharmD, director of Pharmacy for Excelsa Health, believes the convenience associated with the onsite vaccination program will promote

greater participation, and therefore help control the spread of infection .”

“Many people, new dads especially, are not as attentive to their own health as they should be and are unlikely to visit their family doctor to be vaccinated, although they want to protect their family from illness. Offering this service will greatly improve the overall health of our community.

For information about childbirth classes and registration visit www.excelahealth.org or contact Excela Health’s Call Center, toll free, 1-877-771-1234.