



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

Ortt Secures State Funding in Support of Niagara Falls Methadone Clinic

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| ISSUE: **COMBATING HEROIN AND OPIOID ADDICTION**



Senator Rob Ortt (R,C,I – North Tonawanda) today announced he has secured \$150,000 in state funding to assist with a expansion project to keep Northpointe Council's methadone clinic at its current location at the Niagara County Trott Access Center in Niagara Falls.

Northpointe Council's board of directors passed a resolution this afternoon to move forward with expansion and renovation plans within the Trott building instead of relocating to a

building on Sixth and Walnut streets in the city. That location had necessary approval from state and federal agencies earlier this year, but was met with opposition from some city leaders and residents. Now, the clinic will remain on the first floor of the Trott Access Center and move its operations across the hallway into a larger space where it can serve the 150 clients on its waiting list.

Senate Joint Task Force on Heroin and Opioid Addiction Co-Chair Senator Ortt said, “With the ongoing heroin and opioid addiction crisis sweeping across our communities at an alarming rate, the need to expand Northpointe’s services is clear. Northpointe has been extremely flexible and patient when working with the city, county and state to find common ground, and I want to thank them for that. I also want to thank OASAS and the Niagara County Legislature for stepping up and coming to a resolution that works for everyone.”

Northpointe Council, Inc. President and CEO Daniel Shubsda said, “The expansion will allow Northpointe to provide long overdue relief to families and individuals struggling with addiction. I’d like to thank Senator Ortt for his work and commitment to help move plans forward. With further access to treatment, we can serve more people and help them to become more productive members of society. Ultimately, we’re talking about saving lives and that is something we all agree on.”

The move will expand Northpointe Council’s footprint from 3,800 square feet to approximately 9,000 square feet, allowing the clinic to double the amount of clients it serves. The total number of heroin and opiate addicts receiving treatment at Northpointe will increase from 120 to 250. Additionally, the project will create 10 new jobs at the clinic ranging from health care to counseling and support services.

The secured funding will help to transform two spaces – a former day care center and the Niagara County Department of Health’s Children With Special Needs division. The project

includes reconfiguring and upgrading office spaces and conference rooms, and improving the overall flow for clients receiving methadone treatment. Improvements made to the new area will need to fall in line with state and federal requirements from the state Department of Health (DOH), state Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS), and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

Niagara County, which owns the Trott Access Center, worked out negotiations with Northpointe, so that it could remain in the building. Agreements include terms of the lease, allocation of extra parking spaces, and moving the Children With Special Needs division from the first floor to the second floor.

Niagara County Legislature Chairman Wm. Keith McNall, R-Lockport, said, “The county government’s efforts to negotiate a viable long-term solution for Northpointe are wholly consistent with our emphasis on countering the opioid epidemic impacting our nation and our local communities. We’re grateful for Sen. Ortt’s leadership on both the overall issue of opioid and heroin addiction, and in securing funds so our county can accommodate Northpointe’s expansion needs.”

Niagara County Legislature Majority Leader Randy R. Bradt, R-North Tonawanda, who authored a county law creating an opioid task force, said, “Niagara County views opioids and other drugs as a threat to our youth, a threat to public safety, and most of all, a health crisis. Our assistance to Northpointe’s expansion will double their treatment capacity while affirming our county opioid taskforce’s goal of compassionate treatment for victims of this addiction crisis. Sen. Ortt’s success in securing a \$150,000 grant to aid this effort is absolutely critical to meeting that goal.”

Niagara County Director of Mental Health Laura Kelemen said, “Because of the physiological impact of opioid addiction, Medication Assisted Treatments, such as Methadone, are an

essential component in a whole-person approach to treatment and recovery. We applaud the efforts to expand the availability of Methadone treatment for individuals in our community.”

Renovation work is expected to be completed this spring.