



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

A Reason to Smile: Ritchie Secures \$250,000 to Improve Dental Services for Children and Families Across Oswego County

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State Senator Patty Ritchie is announcing she has secured \$250,000 in state funding to ensure communities throughout Oswego County have increased access to dental health services. The funding will be provided to ConnexCare, formerly known as Northern Oswego County Health Services, to establish a new dental clinic and connect more people—especially children—across the region with easier access to dental health care services.

In addition to establishing a new clinic, ConnexCare will also be able to purchase much-needed dental equipment and initiate new student-focused services at a number of local school districts, including those serving younger students. In all, the new clinic could serve 1,000 people in its first year.

“Throughout so many rural communities, including Oswego County, there is a significant lack of dental services. Many families, and unfortunately children in these underserved areas, end up going without and that can often lead to more serious health issues,” said Senator Ritchie, who serves as Deputy Vice Chair of the Senate Health Committee.

“Not only will this funding help ConnexCare establish a new clinic, it will allow them to focus on meeting the dental health needs of more than 1000 Oswego County residents—including hundreds of school age children— with little or no access to routine dental care.”

“We are delighted with the opportunity to expand our dental services to a broader population throughout Oswego County, especially for the people who aren’t able to easily get these important services any other way. ConnexCare cannot thank Senator Ritchie enough for her help in making sure the people of Oswego County are afforded every opportunity to live a healthier life,” ConnexCare CEO Daniel Dey said.

Securing the grant continues Senator Ritchie’s efforts to improve dental health for children and families in Oswego County.

In 2016, Senator Ritchie helped bring “S-miles to Go,”— a the program that uses portable dental equipment and a mobile dental van, which are provided and staffed by the University at Buffalo’s School of Dental Medicine, to bring dental care to schools—to the Hannibal Central School District.

The program has operated for several years in the Southern Tier and Western New York. After discussing the need for dental health programs with Hannibal Central School District Superintendent Christopher Staats, Senator Ritchie worked to bring the program to Central New York.

(Pictured in the photo below in the dentist's chair is Adele Butterworth, a young student at APW who just finished a cleaning. In the photo at the top, from left to right are Tricia Peter-Clark, VP/Chief of Operations, Marissa Taber, Dental Hygienist, Michael Backus, President of the ConnexCare Board of Directors and Senator Ritchie.)