

Bridging the Gaps: Three Common-Sense Solutions to Expand Oral Health Access in New York

Across New York, a quiet crisis is unfolding: millions of people, especially children, low-income families, older adults, and those living in rural areas, lack access to essential dental care. Tooth decay remains the most common chronic childhood disease, yet too many kids miss out on simple preventive services. Seniors in long-term care go without services that could prevent pain and infection. And underserved communities face a dwindling dental workforce.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

The Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy and the Community Health Care Association of New York State, alongside partners across the state, are championing three powerful policy solutions to meet this challenge. Each is rooted in evidence and common sense—and each is ready for action in Albany.

THREE BILLS NEW YORK SHOULD PASS TO EXPAND ORAL HEALTH ACCESS:



Let Parents Prevent Cavities at Home

S.6759/A.8145 – Fluoride Varnish Application by Parents

Authorizes parents to apply fluoride varnish at home under telehealth guidance from a licensed provider. Fluoride varnish prevents disease and can be quickly applied at home making telehealth a great vehicle for getting the service to more families.

With the Federal Government about to eliminate access to fluoride supplements, this timely legislation fills the gap, helping more children avoid preventable pain and poor health.

Expand Where Dental Hygienists Can Work

S 3157/A2341 -Collaborative Practice Dental Hygiene

Expands practice settings for dental hygienists to include schools, nursing homes, domestic violence shelters, correctional facilities, and more. It builds on proven models from other states where expanded hygiene practice has led to better access and outcomes.



Unlock the Skills of Foreign-Trained Dentists

A.3244-B/S.3966-A – Alternative Pathways to Licensure

Allows foreign-trained dentists to complete a supervised faculty mentorship or preceptorship instead of repeating an entire U.S.-based dental program. It recognizes their existing training and accelerates their entry into New York's workforce, especially in high-need communities.



Foreign-trained dentists are **2.5 times** more likely to accept Medicaid

It's time to move from barriers to bridges—and ensure that every New Yorker can smile with confidence.



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About These 3 Bills**

