

The Advocate

Fall 2019 Newsletter



Family Planning

OF SOUTH CENTRAL NEW YORK, INC.™

HEALTH CARE

With the nation's family planning safety net under unprecedented attack, access to vital reproductive health care has become increasingly challenging for millions across the country. And no where has that challenge been more greatly felt than in our nation's rural communities.

"There are three aspects of access: availability, accessibility and affordability. And there are huge challenges in each of these categories for rural residents," Connie Kelly, FNP, the nurse practitioner who serves Family Planning's Delaware County medical centers in Sidney and Walton, said. Kelly explained that people in rural communities face different barriers to care than people who live in towns and cities.

"There is often a shortage of clinicians locally, long distances and a lack of transportation make it difficult to get to routine exams and screenings, and a lack of insurance or underinsurance can make care unaffordable," she said. "And when people don't have adequate access to quality care, their health outcomes worsen."

That's why Family Planning's Sidney and Walton centers serve as crucial access points for some of the south central New York's most remote communities, Kelly said. She added that although the agency's centers in Binghamton, Oneonta and Norwich handle the bulk of patient



visits each year, the agency's medical staff is able to reach out to patients who might have otherwise delayed or gone without the care they needed — if they hadn't walked through Sidney or Walton's welcoming doors.

"We don't just say we're local. We ARE local. These are the communities we live and work in, and these are the communities we're proud to serve," Kelly said. "Because every person deserves quality, timely access to health care — no matter their ZIP code."

ADVOCACY

A patient's health should always come before politics. Yet the Trump administration continues to attack our nation's vital family planning safety net — most recently implementing its Title X "gag rule." Title X is the only federal program specifically focused on supporting the delivery of family planning care to millions of low income, uninsured and underserved people.

Family Planning of South Central New York, along with the New York State Department of Health, have pledged not to accept Title X funding rather than comply with the Trump administration's dangerous gag rule.

The gag rule:

- Mandates coercive counseling of pregnant patients, rather than patient centered information that would allow voluntary, fully informed decision making;
- Restricts sites that participate in



- Title X from referring pregnant clients to abortion providers;
- Encourages participation by organizations that do not provide medically effective contraception, and may only offer the least effective fertility awareness method; and
- Weakens confidentiality protections, particularly for adolescents.

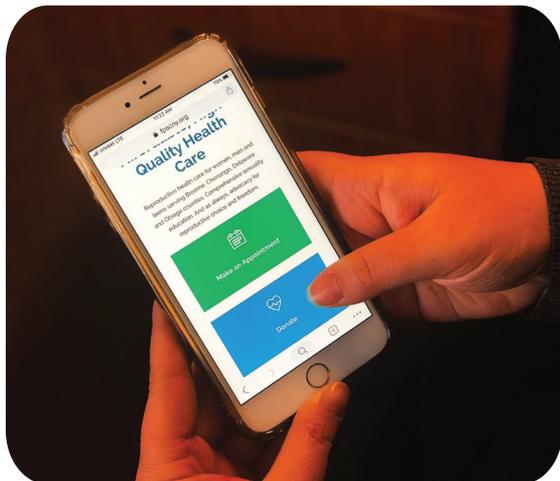
While Family Planning does not provide abortion care services at any of its five local health centers, the agency's health care professionals do provide patients with nonjudgmental, all-options pregnancy counseling — including providing information about, and

referrals for, prenatal care/delivery, adoption and abortion.

"Patients deserve and have a right to receive accurate, complete information about their health care. And we will continue to provide that information. And those referrals. Regardless of the new federal rule," Debra Marcus, Family Planning's CEO, said. Family Planning's leadership and medical staff remain unwavering in their commitment to providing high quality, affordable, comprehensive and compassionate reproductive health care to the communities they have served for more than 75 years.

MEDICAL SERVICES

- Annual exams for women & men
- Birth control, with all FDA approved methods
- Pregnancy testing with full options counseling — including information about adoption, abortion & parenting
- Screening for breast & cervical cancers
- Pap tests with follow-up care
- Advanced diagnostic screening, treatment for precancerous cervical conditions
- Testing & treatment for sexually transmitted infections
- Rapid HIV testing & counseling
- HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)
- HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- Rapid Hepatitis C testing & counseling
- Gardasil, the HPV vaccine that prevents cervical and other cancers
- Emergency contraception for only \$15
- Free condoms
- Walk-ins always welcome
- Certified medical translation services



ONLINE GIVING

The giving season has begun. And this year, we once again ask for your support, knowing that 100 percent of your donation stays right here in south central New York — directly impacting the thousands of women, men and teens we serve throughout Broome, Chenango, Delaware and Otsego counties.

But did you know you can pass along your annual gift through our digital donation system? It's quick, simple and secure from your smartphone, tablet or desktop. No stamp required! Donate online anytime at: www.fpscny.org/donate.



Community educators Marilyn Hess, center, and Kasia Swift, far right, stand with Walton Teen's Count students prior to leaving for their day trip to New York City.

EDUCATION

Family Planning's education department plays a vital role in advancing reproductive health and wellness throughout south central New York.

The agency's educators are out and about in communities across the region — from small cities in Broome County to rural towns in Delaware County — connecting and engaging with local residents, sharing medically accurate, age appropriate education about sexuality and sexual health.

The department provides more than 20 public school districts, human services agencies, churches, county jails and other local organizations with multiple evidence based education programs. But it's not just about classrooms and textbooks. Every summer, Family Planning's community educators run multiple sessions of its "Teens Count" program for girls and boys at risk across Broome, Chenango, Delaware and Otsego counties.

"The program provides activities framed in a youth-development philosophy that stimulate cognitive, social, physical and emotional growth," Andrea Guccia, Family Planning's director of education, said. Guccia explained youth who are prepared for adulthood are more comfortable demonstrating fundamental life skills such as communication, cultural competence, conflict resolution and the ability to cope.

For example, this summer the Walton Teens Count participants traveled to Binghamton East Middle School Teens Count site to meet. Guccia said the girls discussed "cultural differences, rural vs. urban environments, social norms with trends in their school districts, while also identifying areas where their schools need a greater awareness."

"This program provides them with the opportunity to experience the value of peer support, develop healthy life skills, communication skills and more," Guccia said.

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COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Family Planning's Chief Executive Officer Debra Marcus, center left, was honored Sept. 26 by United Way of Delaware and Otsego Counties with 2019 M. Cheri Albrecht Executive Director Excellence Award. The award, named after Opportunities for Otsego's former executive director, is given annually to a local leader to recognize their leadership and work within the nonprofit communities. Tim McGraw, center right, Onegroup NY account executive, received the Alan Donovan Community Leadership Award. Also pictured, left, Kimberley Lorraine, United Way executive director, and Bryan Birdsall, board president. Photo: Ian Austin/ALLOTSEGO.com

OUR LOCAL CENTERS



Our mission is to advocate and provide individuals, families and organizations in our region with information, education and health care services pertaining to human sexuality and reproductive health in a private and confidential manner, respectful of all beliefs, supporting individual freedom of choice and responsibility.