

EDITOR'S PICK TOPICAL

\$2.5 million to support dentistry for Indigenous people, including in Western New York

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Aug 22, 2024

Indigenous people across New York State will benefit from a new \$2.5 million grant to help pay for their dental care.

The state Department of Health announced the funding, which will support and expand such care through the state **American Indian Health Program** (AIHP).

“Funding will support each nation’s ability to provide dental services to nation citizens on territory and enhance or expand existing dental services being offered through nation dental clinics and nation contracted health care providers,” Monica Pomeroy, a health department spokeswoman, told The Buffalo News.

The money will assist **nine Indigenous nations**, including the Seneca, Tonawanda and Tuscarora in Western New York. The others are the Onondaga, St. Regis Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Shinnecock and Unkechaug (Poospatuck).

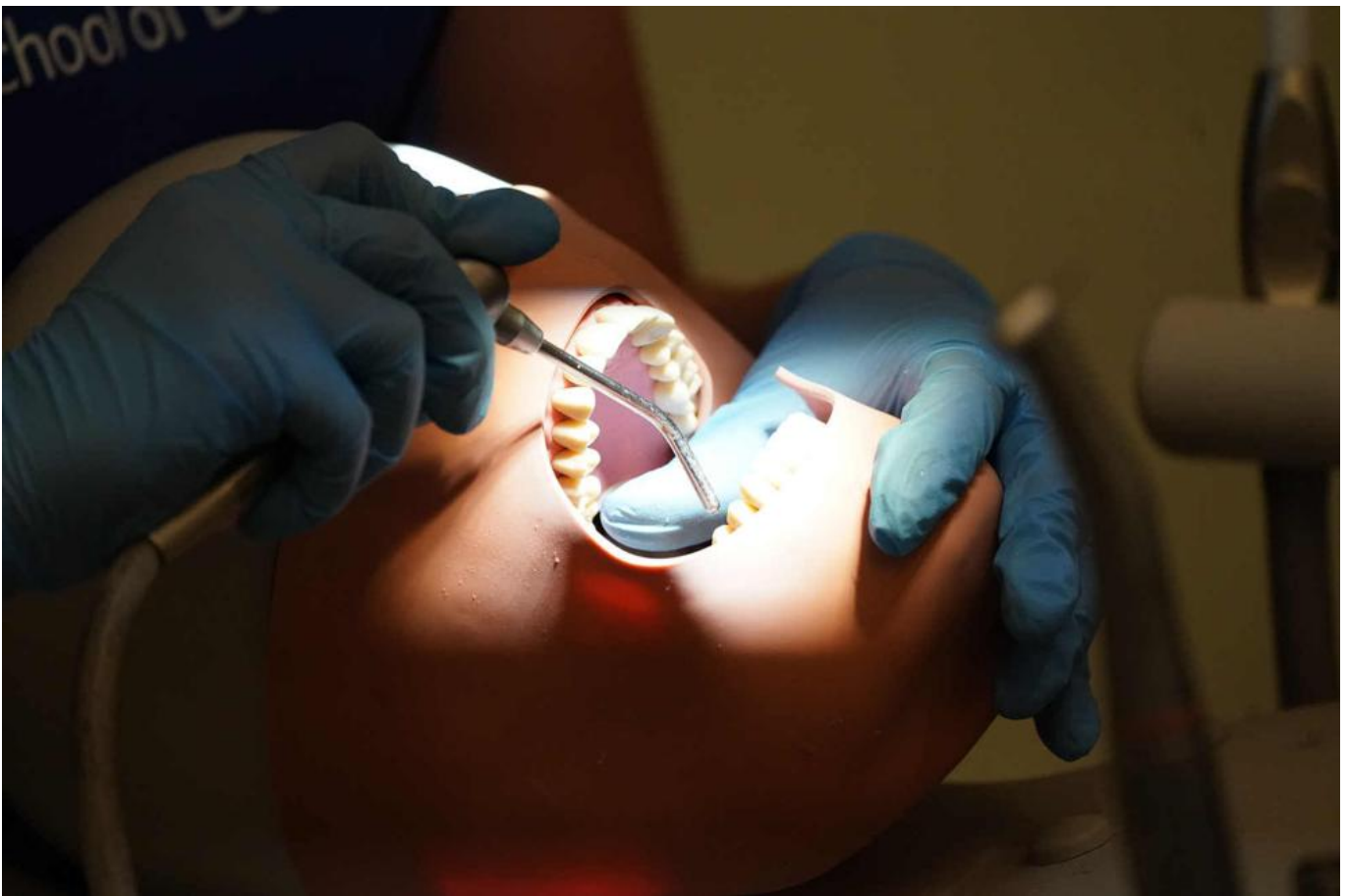
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All but the Unkechaug in Suffolk County are recognized by the U.S. government and also receive federal funding.

“As indigenous populations are historically underserved, I am personally invested in improving access to health care and health outcomes within these communities and this funding reaffirms our commitment,” State Health Commissioner Dr. James McDonald said in a news release.



Nine Native American nations in New York State, including the Seneca, Tonawanda and Tuscarora, will benefit from a new state dental grant.

Buffalo News file photo

Health department officials said the latest Dental Care for Native American Funding will be disbursed this fiscal year, which runs through March. It will continue for five years, with a total value of \$22.5 million.

The AIHP provides access to preventative, medical and dental care to all members of recognized Indigenous nations in New York State. The health department helps in those efforts, including with clinics on four territories, direct payments by the department for prescription drugs, medical equipment, laboratory services and referrals to doctors who work off of the nations.

Services also include pediatric care, diabetes education, mental health counseling and help with enrollment in child and family health programs.

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