



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Nancy Heaton, Executive Director of the Foundation for Community Health, has been published in the *Journal of the Connecticut State Dental Association's* September 2006 issue *Crossing the Dental Divide, Access to Dental Care in Connecticut*. Her piece, *A New Foundation Begins Addressing Oral Care*, speaks to the inherent need for access to dental services in more ways than one for residents of our rural area and the Foundation's approach to clearly identifying all the factors as it proceeds on the path to addressing this need. Characteristics that are specific to our rural community such as lack of population density, long traveling distances between locations, and the perception of our overall wealth as well as an unclear identification of our geographic pockets of need are all mentioned as stumbling blocks that need to be considered when trying to get governmental attention and assistance.

Her article describes the process undertaken by the Foundation to address the issue of oral healthcare with painstaking care for accuracy and effectiveness. As Executive Director of the Foundation for Community Health, she has spear headed their effort to research, identify and support endeavors that will address oral health, as well as other major areas of concern for the health and well being of the people living in the Foundation's service area of southeastern Columbia County and northeastern Dutchess County in New York and the northern Litchfield Hills in Connecticut. Access to dental services is a primary focus for the Foundation and includes not only an individual's ability to obtain hands-on dental care, but also the financial and transportation aspects involved in making this possible.

Prior to her position with the Foundation for Community Health, Nancy L. Heaton, MPH, was the Executive Director of the Northwestern Connecticut AIDS Project for 12 years. Her career in public health includes a variety of leadership positions with health-related organizations such as directing an orphanage in the Philippines, starting a Latino AIDS Project in California, and developing outreach and parent education programs for Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees in Massachusetts.