

INTRODUCTION

Awarded by Retirement Research Foundation (RRF) is an 18-month, \$126,573 grant, with additional funding from Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation (DDIAF), to fund Phase II of the Mouth Care Matters (MCM) project. It will build upon Phase I, originally funded by DDIAF, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation (MIHF), and Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH). The overarching goal is to enhance access to optimal oral care for older Iowans.

NEED

Access to optimal oral care for older Iowans who receive services in their homes, assisted living communities, and other locations is compromised by the convergence of a number of complex factors substantiated by significant research and data: 1) a lack of awareness about how vital oral health is to one's overall health and well-being; 2) an increasing aging population that will require services; 3) the majority of older Iowans wanting to remain in their own homes; 4) too few direct care workers (DCWs) and other health care professionals to provide care and services; 5) a high turnover of those in direct care; and 6) a lack of educational and training opportunities for DCWs and other health professionals in the area of oral care. Each factor has its own set of circumstances but all are interconnected. Ultimately, access to oral care for many older Iowans isn't possible without a stable and well-prepared workforce.

Phase I of the Mouth Care Matters (MCM) project focused on increasing public awareness; developing the MCM curriculum for Direct Care Workers (DCWs), nurses and supervisory staff, and is overseen by the University of Iowa Colleges of Nursing and Dentistry; training a cadre of MCM instructors; testing the MCM training with nurses and DCWs; and building relationships and partnerships around the purpose.

Phase II draws upon the lessons learned and evaluation recommendations gained from Phase I and advances the effort by testing models for implementing MCM into three Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) provider corporations. These provider partners have agreed to co-host MCM trainings, in-services or round tables; distribute and promote oral health campaign packages and tools; and technical assistance in adopting oral health assessment tools ...all comprised in the MCM Employer Implementation Toolkit.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this grant-funded project is to develop and test models of oral health practice integration and sustainability to ensure that older Iowans receive optimal oral care in Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) settings. The goal is to demonstrate that with the right tools and support, providers can sustain effective oral health practices that result in better oral health for the Iowans they serve, a better prepared staff, and reap potential long-term cost savings.

GOAL

Increase access to optimal oral care for older Iowans in home and community based service (HCBS) settings through systemic changes that integrate and sustain good oral care practices.

TARGET AUDIENCES

1. Three participating Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) provider networks/corporation (4-6 locations);
2. Direct Care Workers (DCWs) and their supervisors within provider partner sites;
3. Older Iowans living in a HCBS settings or receiving care/supports in their own homes.



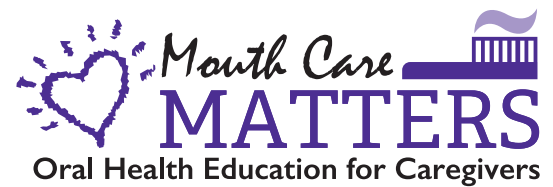
OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Implement and sustain the policies and practices provided in the *Mouth Care Matters (MCM) Employer Implementation Toolkit* in 3 home and community based service (HCBS) provider networks in Iowa by December 31, 2020.

Objective 2: Achieve integration of MCM into educational program schedules for DCWs at a minimum of three Iowa community colleges on an on-going basis by the end of the project by December 31, 2020.

Objective 3: Evaluate the effectiveness of program design and implementation to achieve desired outcomes by Dec 31, 2020.

Objective 4: Prepare and disseminate a final Mouth Care Matters Phase II: A Path to Implementation final report by Dec. 31, 2020.



KEY PARTNERS

Commitments from the following project collaborators are: 3 Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) provider corporations that include: Home Instead Senior Care, Senior Housing Management, and Iowa Western Homes (2 locations – Madrid Home and Western Homes). Other collaborators are Iowa Healthcare Collaborative (IHC), the University of Iowa School of Social Work/ National Center for Family Centered Practice, and the University of Iowa Colleges of Dentistry and Nursing. In addition, there is support from Des Moines Area Community College, Hawkeye Community College, other community college locations, Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation, and the Lifelong Smiles Coalition.

METHODS

Three Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) providers, already committed, will pilot the implementation of the *Mouth Care Matters (MCM) Employer Implementation Toolkit*. The components of the toolkit include training via in-services for all staff; MCM training for nursing and supervisory staff; DCWs; various tools; and ongoing technical assistance in developing and utilizing oral care assessments and other practices within their organizations. Local community colleges will serve in a role and provide local infrastructure by providing ongoing MCM training post MCM Phase II. The evaluation team will develop an effective design to ensure the ability to measure meaningful outcomes and track lessons learned and best practices for sharing at the conclusion of the project.

OVERARCHING EXPECTATIONS

At the end of the 18-month project, working with grant partners, collaborators and consultants, Iowa CareGivers expects to report five key outcomes: 1) *Mouth Care Matters (MCM) Employer Implementation Toolkit* serves as an effective model to aid in the integration of sound oral health practices within the 3 HCBS corporations; 2) participating community colleges have taken steps to include MCM training for nurses and supervisory staff, and MCM training for DCWs into their regularly scheduled class catalogs and provide local level infrastructure to support providers in their district to maintain MCM practices long-term; 3) heightened awareness about the importance of mouth care/oral health; and 4) begin to identify a framework for determining benefits of MCM in terms of return on investment over a much longer period of time (e.g. number of reductions in hospital readmissions, aspiration pneumonia, extending the period of time older Iowans are able to remain living independently; 5) recognize other possible venues for use of MCM (e.g. hospitals/critical care hospitals, family caregiver and aging network training (e.g. area agencies on aging, case managers, disability consumers/providers, and others.)

SHARING OUTCOMES

MCM team and partners will prepare a final report and employ a number of strategies to share the outcomes, model, and lessons learned to a statewide and national audience of Retirement Research Foundation and other funders, health and long-term care employers/providers, workers, advocates, consumers, family caregivers, academia, elected officials, and the media. Mouth Care Matters (MCM) has the potential for being, not only a model for community colleges, but also a replicable model for other states. A final report will be prepared by team members and distributed to Retirement Research Foundation and other partners and various state and national audiences.

The Iowa CareGivers Board of Directors, Direct Care Worker Leadership Council, the MCM team, and partners appreciate the opportunity to advance the Mouth Care Matters program. For more information contact Mary Ann Young at Maryann@iowacaregivers.org

Iowa CareGivers

939 Office Park Road #332 • West Des Moines, IA 50265

Phone: (515) 223-2805 • Fax: (515) 226-3214

information@iowacaregivers.org • www.iowacaregivers.org

