



# Prepare to Care

## ••• Mouth Care Matters •••

Oral Health Education for Direct Care Professionals



### Set Your Organization Apart With A New Prepare to Care Oral Health Specialty Training!

There is emerging recognition by consumers and their families that direct care professionals should be providing regular, quality oral health care. They are being advised to seek care from organizations that demonstrate a commitment to oral health (Tooth Wisdom, Place-Based Care, 2014). But few facilities actually prioritize oral health for their residents (Oral Health America, Older Americans Not Receiving the Oral Care They Need, 2013).

The Mouth Care Matters pilot project is being offered to employers around central Iowa to provide Oral Health Specialty Training to direct care staff at no cost. Ensure you are able to meet the growing demand and be one of the first to offer those you serve a staff that has been trained to provide quality oral health care!

“I always say you can measure quality in a nursing home by looking in people’s mouths, because it’s one of the last things to be taken care of.”

Dr. Judith A. Jones, Chairwoman of the Department of General Dentistry at Boston University

### What is the Oral Health Specialty Training?

The Oral Health Specialty Training is a specialty training of the Prepare to Care curriculum, Iowa’s Direct Care and Support Curriculum.

Through both classroom instruction and hands-on practice, DCPs will learn:

- » The value of good oral health for the people you serve
- » To identify normal hard and soft tissue anatomy of the oral cavity
- » To identify common oral health problems
- » Observations to be documented and/or reported
- » Basic oral care, including brushing and positioning, for persons with and without teeth
- » To identify pharmaceutical side effects and medical conditions that impact oral health
- » How to use equipment, products, and a variety of approaches to support the independence of the person served
- » How to use equipment, products, and a variety of approaches to support the dependent person served

### How the Oral Health Specialty Training Benefits Employers of DCPs:

- » Be a leader in the industry by participating in the pilot project and being among the first to receive the training
- » Use this training as part of your Quality Assurance Performance Improvement Process

### How Can Employers Access the Oral Health Specialty Training in Central Iowa?

The Oral Health Specialty Training can be taken by direct care professionals who have already completed the Prepare to Care Core training, which is available free of charge both online

(<http://directcare.training-source.org>) and in-person through June 30, 2015.

The Oral Health Specialty Training will be available to direct care professionals starting Fall 2015 in the Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) region. The DMACC region includes all or portions of Adair, Audubon, Boone, Carroll, Clarke, Crawford, Dallas, Greene, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hardin, Jasper, Lucas, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Marshall, Polk, Poweshiek, Shelby, Story, and Warren counties.

Contact us to participate in this exciting pilot project!

- » Demonstrate commitment to providing excellent oral health care
- » Reduce costs associated with dental care
- » Reduce costs associated with hospitalization due to pneumonia
- » Receive free training for your DCPs from experts skilled in oral care, not just brushing teeth
- » Provide payment for DCPs who complete, help test, and evaluate the training
- » Provide better client care, including skills to deliver care in challenging situations during oral care
- » Gain knowledge of oral implants and equipment
- » Provide indirect benefit to “everyone’s” mouth care through shared knowledge
- » Keep consumers and clients healthier overall – “there is no health without oral health”
- » Enhance engagement of staff due to increased training
- » Gain more specialized and trained staff
- » Ensure staff are safe and knowledgeable while performing duties
- » Increase efficiency and ease time constraints for those providing direct care
- » Reduce staff turnover by providing specialized, sought-after expertise

## Who are Direct Care Professionals?

Direct Care Professional (DCP) is an umbrella name for the 78,000-strong workforce in Iowa. Direct care professionals are defined as individuals who provide supportive services and care to people experiencing health conditions, illnesses, or disabilities and receive compensation for such services. They may work in home-based, community-based, or facility settings. They may have job titles such as direct support professional, supported community living worker, home health aide, direct care worker, and universal worker. The umbrella term also includes other job titles like hospice aide, personal assistant, and certified nursing assistant.

## Why Does Oral Health Care Matter?

The mouth is the portal of entry to the rest of the body. “There is no health without oral health!” (Surgeon General, Report on Oral Health, 2000) Oral Health can affect general health in very direct ways.

- » Oral health problems can cause pain and suffering as well as difficulty in speaking, chewing, and swallowing.
- » Loss of teeth is associated with loss of self-esteem.
- » Poor oral health has been linked to many health problems, including stroke, heart attack, diabetes, and the number one cause of death in nursing homes: pneumonia.
- » Poor oral health can cause oral cancer, which results in nearly 8,000 deaths each year. More than half of these deaths occur among persons 65 years of age and older.

## Mouth Care Matters Project

Mouth Care Matters is an initiative of the Lifelong Smiles Coalition supported by the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation. Mouth Care Matters will develop and test an Oral Health Specialty Training for direct care professionals over the next two years.

Through a partnership with the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and the College of Nursing, the Oral Health Specialty Training curriculum will be developed and will become the first state recognized specialty under the State’s new Prepare to Care curriculum designed for those who work in direct care. This training will increase access to and improve oral health care of older Iowans who are homebound or living in nursing homes, improving their overall health, comfort, and dignity. Iowa CareGivers was awarded funding for this project from Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation, Mid-Iowa Health Foundation, and the Iowa Department of Public Health through a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cooperative Agreement (#DP13-1307).

**Learn more about Oral Health Specialty Training for Direct Care Professionals at:**

<http://www.iowapreparetocare.com/>

**For more information on oral health for older adults, visit:**

<http://www.toothwisdom.org/care/state/iowa>

**Supported by the Lifelong Smiles Coalition**



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