



Helping Iowans Like Fran

Every day for 18 years, Fran M. has worked tirelessly to maintain the health and dignity of those in his care at Stonehill Care Center in Dubuque. As a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and trainer at the care community, Fran is always looking for new ways to help the residents he serves.

Fran recently attended a training session on oral health care for aging adults at a regional conference sponsored by the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation. Dental hygienist and trainer Carol Van Aernam led the training, which focused on the importance of oral health care to a person's overall health.

“It was one of the best training sessions I’ve ever had on oral health care,” Fran said. “After the session I had a stronger sense of how serious oral health care is, and I remember vowing to renew my own effort and commitment to making sure this important health care work is being done.”

The Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation helped make this training – and many other sessions for direct care workers across the state – possible as part of its mission to support and improve the oral health of Iowans. Carol is a leader in developing training sessions for those on the front lines of care, and her message is definitely getting through to professionals like Fran.

“As a person ages, their priorities change,” Fran said. “It’s easy to fall into thinking that when people get older, oral health isn’t as much of a priority anymore compared to other things that might be going on. But neglecting oral health care can have serious consequences, including infections spreading to the bloodstream and more.”

“The bottom line,” Fran said, “is making sure residents’ health and dignity are preserved. When we can provide this important care on a regular basis, we’re not just improving their health – we’re improving their lives.”