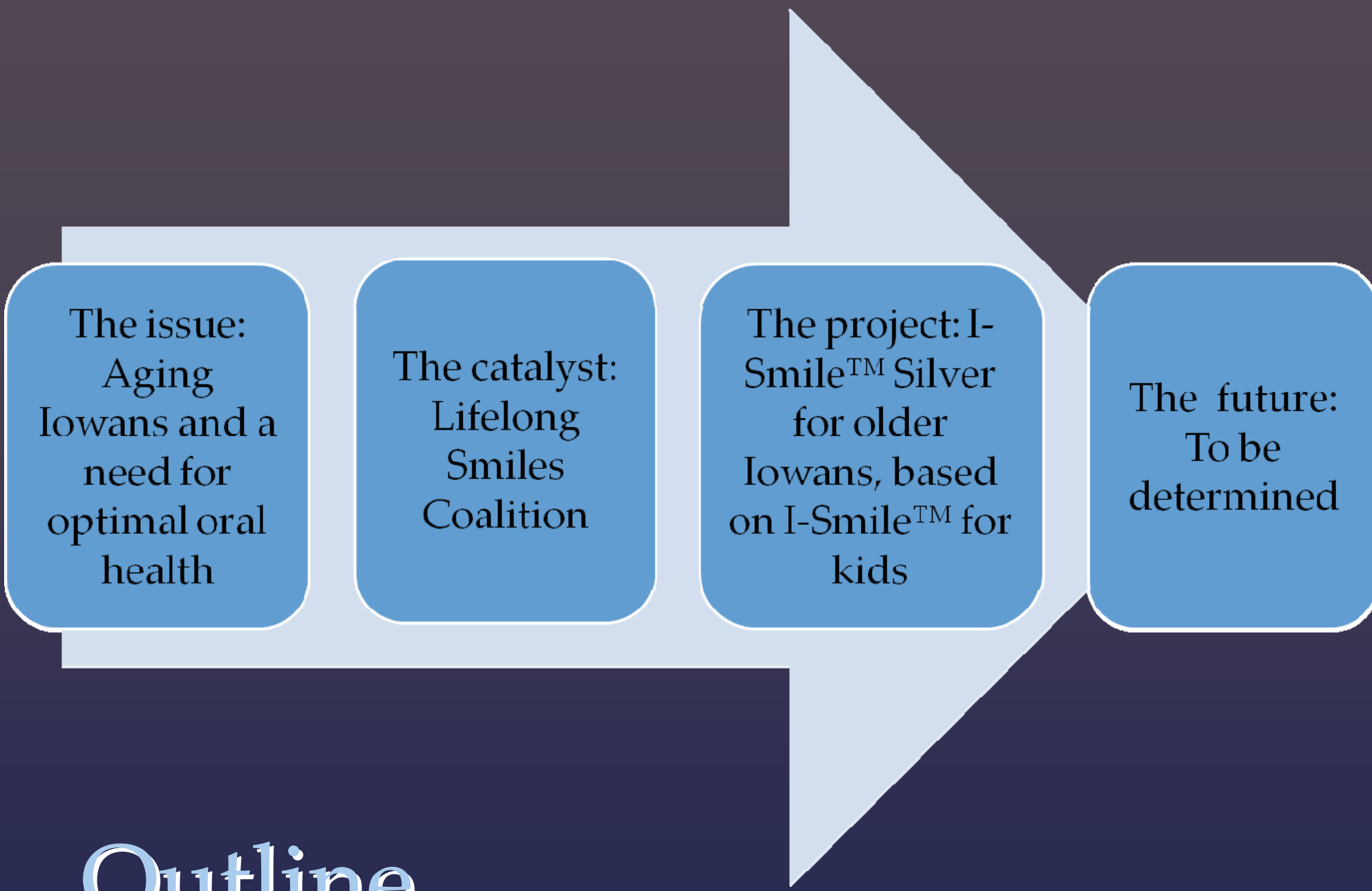


# I-Smile™ Silver:

Using the Lessons Learned Helping Iowa's Kids to Develop a Pilot Project for Iowa's Seniors



{ Tracy Rodgers, Iowa Department of Public Health  
National Oral Health Conference, 2015



The issue:  
Aging  
Iowans and a  
need for  
optimal oral  
health

The catalyst:  
Lifelong  
Smiles  
Coalition

The project: I-  
Smile™ Silver  
for older  
Iowans, based  
on I-Smile™ for  
kids

The future:  
To be  
determined

# Outline

- ⌘ Iowa ranks 11th for states with the highest percent of population age 60 and older and 9th for age 65 and older
  
- ⌘ In 16 years, 22% of the state population will be  $\geq$  age 65
  
- ⌘ 2012 BRFSS:
  - ⌘ 17% of Iowans  $\geq$  age 65 reported having had all their teeth extracted (16% nationally)
  - ⌘ 31% reported they had not visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past year (33% nationally).
  
- ⌘ In 2011:
  - ⌘ 74% of Iowans on the Medicaid Elderly Waiver program **did not** receive a dental service.
  - ⌘ 84% of Medicaid-enrolled Iowans age 65 and older who were **not** on the waiver program did not receive a dental service

The Issue



# The Catalyst



**LIFELONG SMILES**

Oral Health Access for Aging Iowans

& Organizations and individuals interested in the oral health of Older Iowans

& Organizations represented include:

Iowa Dept. on Aging

Iowa Dept. of Public Health

Iowa Health Care Assoc.

Iowa Dental Hygienists' Assoc.

Leading Age Iowa

Iowa Assoc. of Area Agencies on Aging

Iowa Dept. of Human Services

Iowa Caregivers Assoc.

University of Iowa

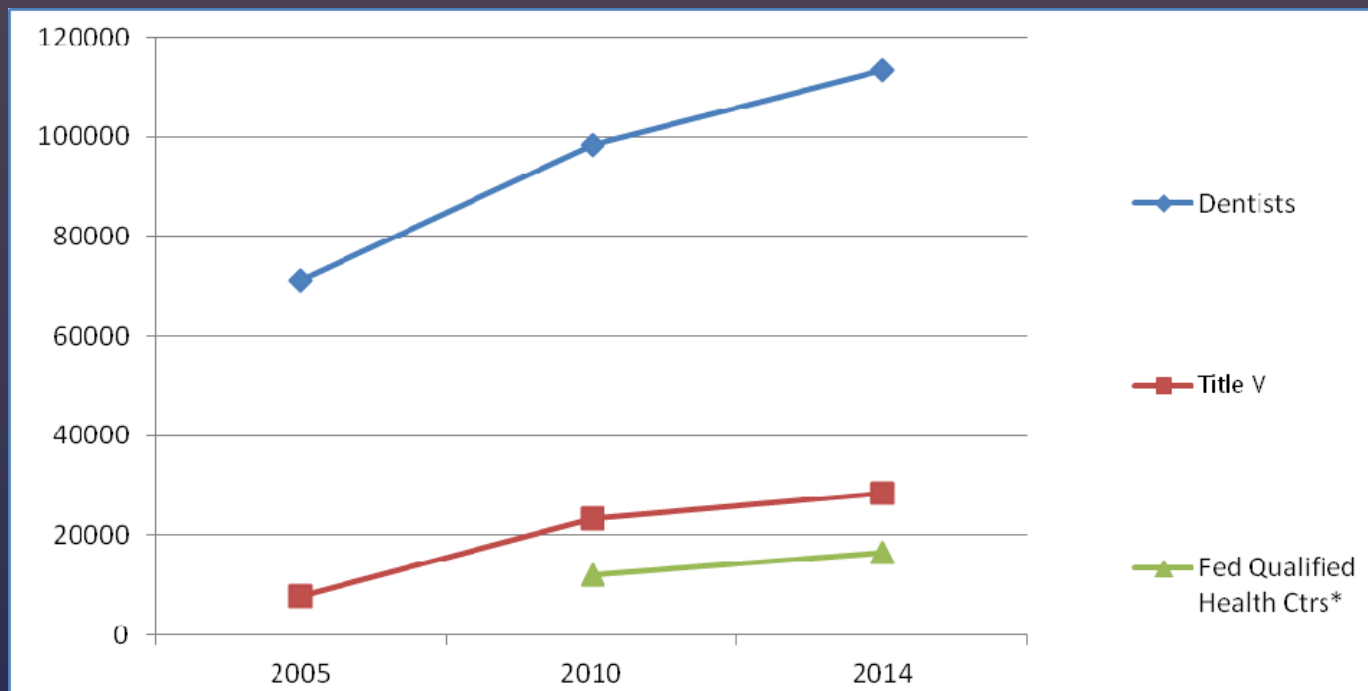
Iowa Public Health Assoc.

Iowa Primary Care Assoc.

Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation

**The Catalyst**

# Coalition members recognized successes of I-Smile™ program for children



## The Project

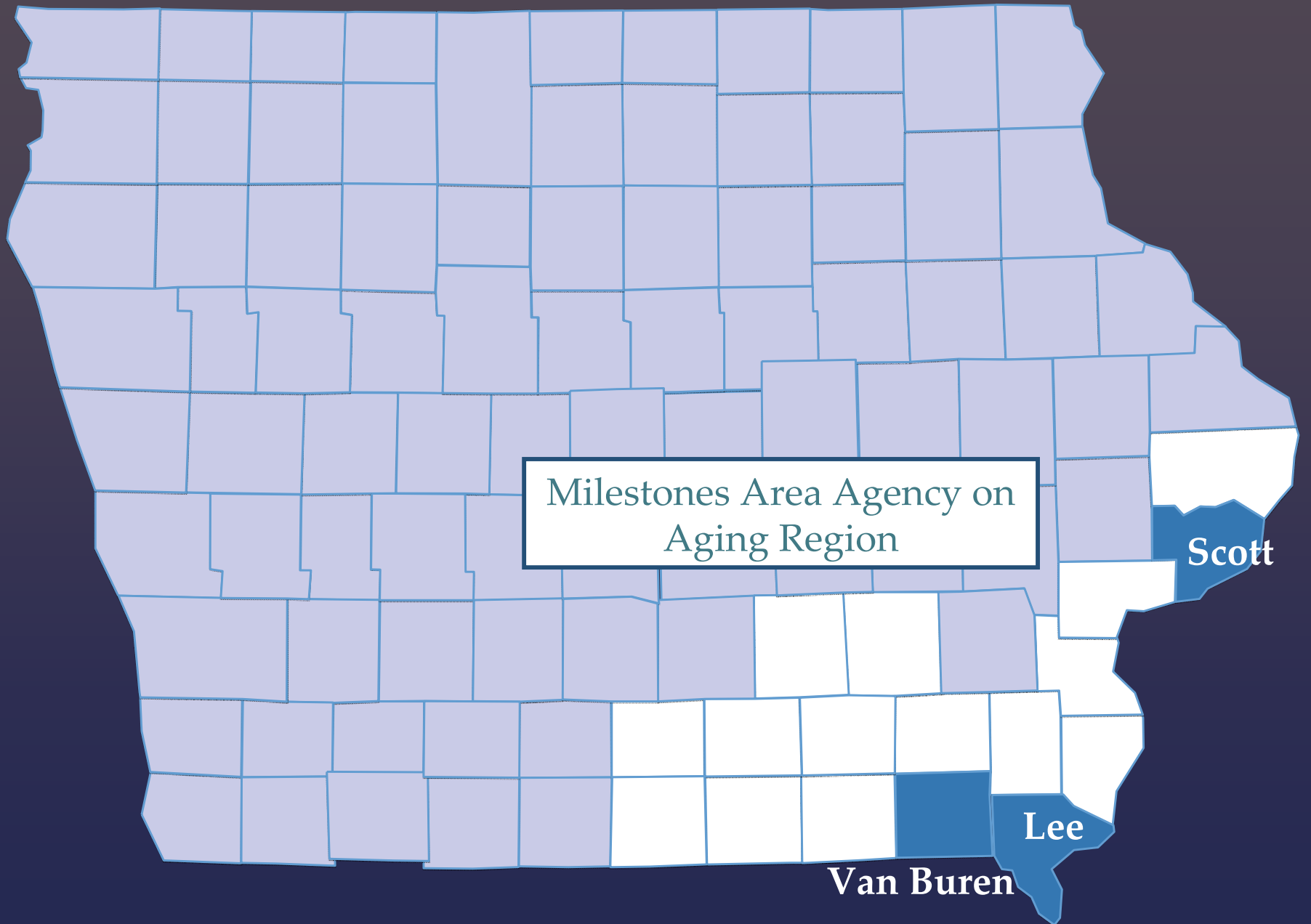




- ⌘ Backed by the coalition, Iowa DPH submitted a proposal to Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation
- ⌘ I-Smile Silver and 2 other coalition projects were funded

# The Project





Milestones Area Agency on  
Aging Region

Scott

Lee  
Van Buren

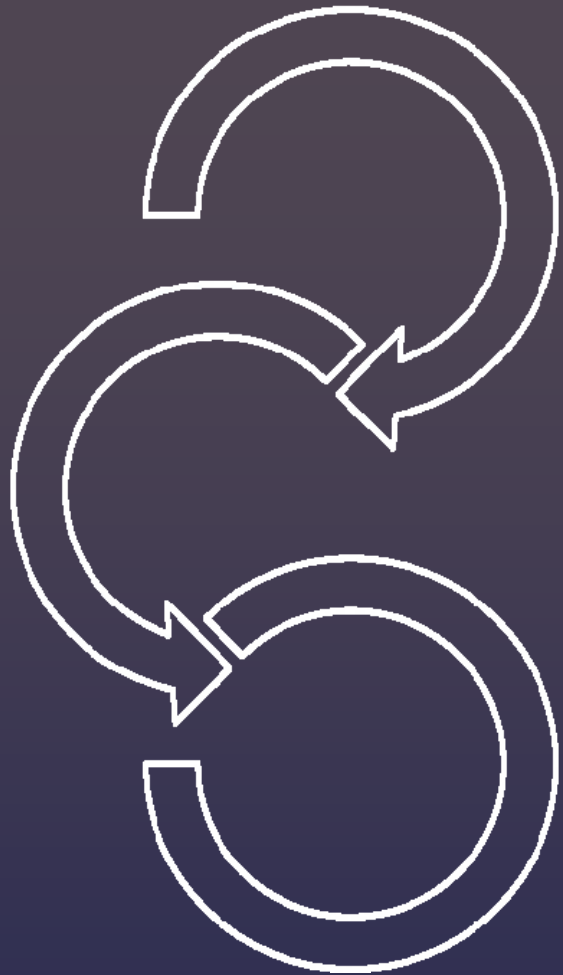


Target Population: Iowans age 60 and older who are

- ❑ Residents of nursing facilities,
- ❑ Clients of the Medicaid Elderly Waiver Program,
- ❑ Receiving home and community-based services (including nursing visits and assistance with activities of daily living), and
- ❑ Living in Scott and Lee Counties (and eventually Van Buren County)

# The Project





Develop community-based systems that improve the ability of Iowans  $\geq$  age 60 to prevent dental disease, access oral health care, and maintain overall health

# The Project



& Initial Strategy: Hire I-Smile™ Silver Coordinators in each county



# The Project



## & Responsibilities:

- ∅ Build relationships with Milestones Area Agency on Aging, community organizations, nursing facilities, businesses, and dentists
- ∅ Develop referral systems with dentists
- ∅ Link dental professionals with training opportunities (through the University of Iowa College of Dentistry)

# The Project



## & Responsibilities (cont.):

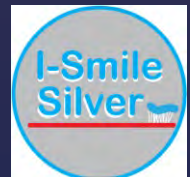
- & Train nursing facility staff and direct care workers about oral health

- & Promote oral health through articles, displays, and distributing materials

- & Distribute oral hygiene aids

- & Provide care coordination and facilitate access to dental treatment

# The Project



# 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Progress Reports:

## Successes:

- ∅ Partnerships developed with nursing facilities and Milestones AAA
- ∅ Community interest and positive feedback

## Challenges:

- ∅ Some reluctance from the dental community
- ∅ Affordability of dental care for older Iowans

The Project



# 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Progress Reports::

## Barriers:

- ∅(lack of) payment for dental care
- ∅(Lack of) payment for services provided by public health (e.g. by dental hygienists)
- ∅Small number of dentists in community and few who take Medicaid
- ∅Direct caregivers already feel overworked
- ∅Transportation to dental offices
- ∅Short project timeline – it will be difficult to make this sustainable in 2 years

# The Project



# 1<sup>st</sup> quarter Progress Reports:

## Policy Recommendations

- ∅ Dental coverage as part of Medicare
- ∅ Allowable billing for services provided by a dental hygienist in public health setting

The Project





The Lifelong Smiles Coalition  
was critical for consideration  
and pursuit of an I-Smile™  
lookalike – the coalition will be  
critical for success and replication of  
I-Smile™ Silver.

The Future



# I-Smile™ Silver

I-Smile™ Silver can help link Iowa seniors with oral health resources, education, and dental care.

Our program assists:

- Nursing home residents
- Medicaid Elderly Waiver recipients
- Seniors receiving home & community-based services



Healthy Smiles for Iowa Seniors

Tracy Rodgers

1-866-528-4020

[tracy.rodgers@idph.iowa.gov](mailto:tracy.rodgers@idph.iowa.gov)