



Iowa's Nursing Homes the Topic of July 1 Forum

"A Crisis of Care: Nursing Homes in Iowa" is the topic of the next Plain Conversation, an educational forum sponsored by the Sioux County Democrats that will stream live Monday, July 1, at 7 p.m. on the Sioux County Democrats Facebook page (facebook.com/siouxcountymocrats).

In 2022 and 2023, 28 nursing homes closed in Iowa, and most were in rural communities. In addition, the number of complaints about the quality of care throughout the state increased, as have the penalties assessed for not meeting care standards. Iowa has the second-highest rate of penalties per capita. Iowans want to trust that their loved ones in nursing homes are receiving care and attention, but the severe shortage of workers raises serious concerns.

On July 1, a panel of experts will discuss the issues nursing homes are facing, what legislative actions could be taken to help, and how care for Iowa's seniors can be improved. John Hale, Claire Celsi and Margarida Jorge will join moderator Sue Dinsale, executive director of Iowa Citizen Action Network.

Hale is co-owner of the Hale Group and has worked in the long-term care sector as a consultant, lobbyist and consumer advocate in Iowa for 17 years. He knows the nursing home world as a professional and as someone who has experienced the care that family members and friends have—and have not—received in nursing home settings.

Celsi was elected to the Iowa Senate in November 2018. As an advocate for those in nursing homes, she believes there is a need for bipartisan cooperation to solve the severe staff shortage and long-term care crisis facing Iowa.

Jorge, the executive director of Health Care for America Now, was the chief architect of the state field program that helped design and pass the Affordable Care Act. She brings nearly three decades of experience in health care advocacy at the national and state level.

Following their presentation, the panelists will take questions from the audience submitted through the Sioux County Democrats' Facebook page.