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Stoughton Hospital Receives International Recognition for Dementia Friendly Work

Stoughton Hospital's journey as a Dementia Friendly hospital was recently highlighted in Germany at the International Conference of the Gerontological Society of America, September 6th through 8th, 2018. The presentation was given by Mary F. Wyman, Ph.D. from the Department of Veterans Affairs Healthcare and Clinical Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin, Madison. Wyman had consulted with Heather Kleinbrook, BSN, RN-BC, CDP, Stoughton Hospital's Geriatric Psychiatry Inpatient Manager and champion of the hospital's Dementia Friendly initiative. Kleinbrook shared her dementia knowledge and Stoughton Hospital's experience to assist the Veterans Hospital in Madison in becoming Dementia Friendly. Wyman's presentation highlighted the path of both hospitals and what dementia friendly looks like at a small community hospital and a large facility.

Stoughton Hospital became the first Dementia Friendly hospital in Dane County in 2016. "Stoughton Hospital works to provide a safe and supportive environment for individuals affected by dementia and their caregivers," shared Kleinbrook. The hospital's Dementia Friendly environment includes signs with simple language, effective lighting, simple decorations, low contrast and low shine flooring and quiet places to rest. All hospital employees also participated in dementia training to learn how to best work with affected individuals and their caregivers.

"We are thrilled to have our dementia friendly story shared internationally," states Kleinbrook. "Dementia affects people all over the world and we hope our experience can provide the inspiration to other hospitals to embrace dementia friendly changes."