



ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS: \$25,000 GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR FQHC VISION SERVICES

The [Association of Clinicians for the Underserved \(ACU\)](#) with the support of the Centene Foundation for Quality Health Care is now accepting applications from federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) and look-alikes (FQHC-LAs) to receive \$25,000 to assist with start-up costs and expansion of permanent and comprehensive eye health and vision care programs.

Project Background

Underserved populations continue to face barriers to accessing vision care and prescription glasses due to cost, transportation, and limited access to vision services. FQHCs are ideal for delivering vision care due to their focus on the delivery of integrated care for underserved populations. Vision care can be integrated into primary care visits to address the impact of poor health and disease on vision and to increase the quality of life.

Project Goals

- Increase the number of FQHCs nationwide providing comprehensive vision services. Five (5) FQHCs will be awarded \$25,000 grants for start-up or expansion of services.
- Raise awareness of the importance of providing comprehensive vision services to America's underserved population.
- Increase the success of health centers starting up or expanding services through direct training and technical assistance.

Grantees Receive

- \$25,000 for the start-up or expansion of services of permanent and comprehensive eye health and vision care programs.
- Direct training and technical assistance from members of ACU's Vision Services Committee and other subject matter experts who will be able to provide guidance around troubleshooting startup or expansion issues via three, one-hour webinars.
- Flyers to promote a patient-story program. Each participating patient will receive a \$100 gift card.



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- **The organization applying for the grant must be an FQHC or FQHC-LA.** If you are unsure if your organization is either of these, you can search for all FQHCs and FQHC-LAs on the [Health Resources Services Administration \(HRSA\) website](#).
- **The organization must provide [comprehensive eye exams](#)** as defined by the American Optometric Association. Grants will not be made available for programs that are limited to vision screenings and referrals or diabetic retinopathy.
- **The organization must use funds to establish permanent programs.** These are defined as programs that are located at the health center site and operate year-round on a regular schedule. Some health centers, particularly those in rural areas, may apply for portable equipment to operate a flexible clinical model where services are made available at more than one site on a regular schedule.
- **The organization must also fit into one of the following categories:**
 - **Starting-Up Services:** These organizations have never offered comprehensive eye exams in the past or have only offered vision screenings and referrals.
 - **Expanding Services:** These organizations already have an existing vision program offering comprehensive vision services and plan to set up a new vision lane in either the same location or a new location.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Must use funds to support the cost of new equipment and services necessary to establish or expand vision care programs. Funds may not be used to support salaries, contracted optometry or ophthalmology services, replacement equipment, or construction costs.
- Must be willing to provide direct vision services including vision exams and prescription glasses (not a referral program).
- Must have your vision care program operating and accepting patients within 6-months of receiving the grant.
- Must agree to share aggregated vision service data after 6- and 12- months of providing vision services. [Please review the reporting template](#).
- Must share an informational flyer with vision care patients to assist ACU in collecting success stories and recruit two (2) patients. Patients who volunteer to be interviewed by ACU will receive a \$100 gift card.
- Must have one (1) representative from the FQHC attend a total of three project calls throughout the course of the grant.

TIMELINE

- ACU will accept applications starting in October 2022 until December 31, 2022.
- Applicants will receive selection notifications by February 15, 2023.
- Grants will be issued by March 31, 2023.
- Grantees will be required to have their startup or expansion program operating no later than September 30, 2023.

[APPLY HERE](#)

To find out more about past grantees or to access resources, please visit our [Eye Health & Vision Care](#) webpage. For questions, please contact Luke Ertle, ACU's Program Director, at lertle@clinicians.org.