

# Improving Vision and Eye Health in the Addiction Recovery Community

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## Outcomes

- Screened residents of the Foundry Farm and CLCC for ocular disease and preserved best corrected vision via corrective eyewear.
- Educated target population on importance of comprehensive eyecare and the ocular effects of systemic conditions
- Established relationship between UAB Eyecare and the UABSON CLMC

## Outputs

- Provided vision services to over 200 >patients including target and non-target populations.
- Dispensed 32 pairs of prescription eyewear

## Activities

- Performed comprehensive eye exams, dispensed free glasses, and provided an educational proponent to participants of selected sites. Referrals were made to retina specialists, and primary care when needed

## Inputs

- Partnership between UAB Eye Care and CLCC Birmingham /Foundry Farm, equipment to provide eye exam, pamphlets for education material, supervising Doctor of Optometry, VSP vouchers/donated glasses.

## Introduction

The Foundry Ministries and Changed Lives Christian Center (CLCC) are organizations that house individuals in substance use recovery who vary widely in age and with a variety of chronic health conditions and mental illnesses that have been untreated for many years. Our mission was to connect UAB Eyecare with these organizations to serve the vision and eye health needs of the community.

The project aimed to provide eye exams and subsequent care to create visible improvement in residents' quality of life through their vision, which is often overlooked in terms of general wellness and systemic health. The project foundation was aided by the SON Changed Lives Mobile Clinic (CLMC) and past ASF fellows.



Lydia Smith, a partner of this project, analyzing the retina of a participant through a Binocular Indirect Ophthalmoscope..

## Impact

Through comprehensive eye exams and the provision of free eye glasses, we were able to restore and reserve patients' vision, and provide referral to an eye specialist and primary care provider if warranted. Additionally, we educated participants on the 3 silent killers: Glaucoma, Hypertension, and Diabetes along with proper care of their glasses via direct interaction and pamphlets.

We established sustainability of our project by instituting Foundry Farm (FF) as a BlackBelt site, meaning a team of students doctors, doctors, and staff will provide yearly comprehensive eye exams and distribute free eyeglasses. Similarly, we have established Changed Lives Christian Center (CLCC) as a annual screening site for UAB's NOSA chapter.

## Critical Assessment

The most difficult challenge was finding time slots that worked for majority of the partakers. This included attending doctors, site mentors, site participants, academic mentor, and CAB members. Additionally, we had to expand our target population to increase our direct hours. There were several homeless shelters that had partnership with eyecare providers, so we had to adjust our project to cater to other communities that were in need of vision services.



The team of students, professors, and staff who assisted with providing comprehensive eye exams at Foundry Farm.

## Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Dr. Brown, Dr. Bowers, Dr. Sims, Dr. Kent, Jeff Gilliland, Keaton Johnson and Kristin Boggs for their instrumental role in ensuring the success of our community project.

## References

