

Vision and Eye Health Initiative

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INTRODUCTION

- In 2016 and 2017, NACDD provided funding from CDC's Vision Health Initiative to three state agencies (two public health departments and one department of aging). Each of these state agencies applied through a competitive process to receive a NACDD Opportunity Grant to engage in strategic initiatives and activities designed to improve vision and eye health.
- The funded state agencies include the Alabama Department of Health, the Nebraska Department of Health, and the Ohio Department of Aging. Each of these state agencies initiated work on their funded projects on March 1, 2016, and were awarded additional funds to support the continuation of their work with NACDD through June of 2018.

OBJECTIVES

- A. Characterize the public health burden of eye disease and vision loss.
- B. Promote systems change to prevent vision loss and enhance access to eye care.
- C. Implement promising interventions related to vision and eye health.



IMPACT

Although projects are still underway, grantee accomplishments already included the following:

- All grantees collaborated with Ohio State University to conduct vision and eye health needs assessments and findings from the needs assessments have been shared at numerous vision meetings/summits.
- In Nebraska, the health department began implementing three questions from the BRFSS Vision Module in 2016 and the full Vision Module in 2017.
- Numerous activities have been undertaken to develop fact sheets and other materials to educate stakeholders about the burden of vision impairment and the importance of early detection and treatment of eye problems.
- Several legislative briefings and educational summits have been held to communicate with stakeholders about age-related eye diseases, low vision and cognition, public health surveillance, and access to vision and eye care.

OUTLOOK

This project has demonstrated that even relatively small amounts of funding provided to state agencies can help grantees characterize the burden of vision impairment and support state-based efforts to advance vision and eye health as public health priorities. NACDD looks forward to continuing to support state-based activities to promote partnerships at all levels, enhance professional education for public health practitioners, and sustainably integrate vision and eye health into state public health plans.