

# UPMC COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

---

2024-2025

January 12, 2026  
Prepared by Zeila Hobson

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## CORAP Sponsors

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# ANNUAL REVIEW 2025

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

### Overview

Over the past year, UPMC Community Ophthalmology & Remote Access Programs (CORAP) have undergone transformational growth. With funding support from multiple foundations and private donors, CORAP established a sustainable, equity-focused mobile vision care infrastructure that now spans **more than 20 partner organizations and 40+ community locations**, reaching over **2,000 patients** in 13 months, many of whom are new to UPMC Ophthalmology.

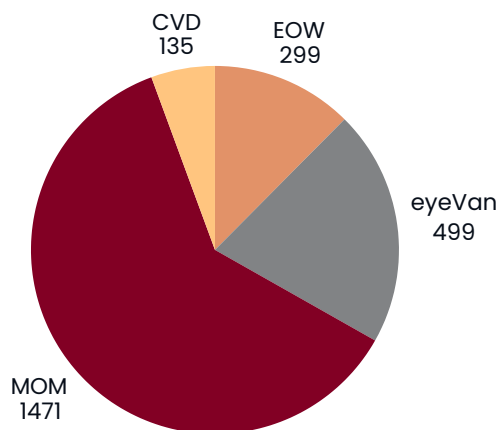
What began as a newly onboarded program manager in September 2024 has evolved into a robust model of community-based ophthalmic care that improves access, accelerates diagnosis, strengthens follow-up rates, and builds durable pathways into the UPMC Vision Institute.

This progress report highlights accomplishments across four pillars:

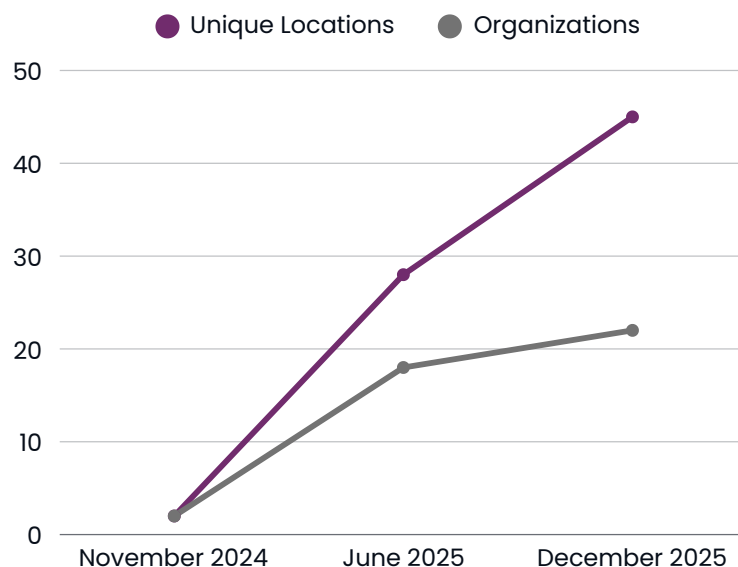
- **Mobile Clinic Implementation: eyeVan + Eyes on Wheels (EOW)**
- **Diabetic Retinopathy Screening (DRS) Optimization**
- **Research, Data, and Academic Output**
- **Sustainability and Strategic Planning for 2025-2026**

The impact made possible through mobile vision clinics and large-scale events like Mission of Mercy (MOM) and Community Vision Day (CVD) is profound: early vision-threatening disease detection, restored sight through surgical intervention, increased community trust, and expansion of mobile services to new neighborhoods, counties and now, states.

### Annual Review: CORAP Total Patients Served September 2024-December 2025



### UPMC eyeVan Partnerships 2024-2025



In November 2024, CORAP operated with one partner organization and two clinic locations. Today, the eyeVan initiative has engaged with dozens of partner organizations and locations, including:

- Assisted living facilities
- Community engagement centers
- Faith-based organizations
- Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC)
- Senior housing communities
- Schools and youth-serving sites
- UPMC clinical partners

This level of scale within a single year demonstrates both the overwhelming community need and the strong infrastructure developed with philanthropic support sourced by the Eye & Ear Foundation.

In 2025, CORAP hosted a total of **42 eyeVan mobile vision clinics** and **7 diabetic retinopathy screening events**, including PA Eye Day and CVD. A total of **360 pairs of glasses** were ordered for eyeVan patients, including **136 pediatric pairs**. At Eyes on Wheels events led by student volunteers, **246 patients** were served, and **153 pairs of glasses** were ordered for them. Special thank you to the eyeglasses sponsor, [Essilor Luxottica Changing Life Through Lenses](#), for providing those no-cost frames and lenses.

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

### eyeVan Infrastructure

Inspired by existing EOW workflows, CORAP built every component of their mobile vision clinic system in 2025. Distinct workflow templates were designed for each facility and clinic type, including but not limited to indoor, outdoor, and hybrid models at schools, places of worship, apartment buildings, and community centers. Patient education via Lunch & Learns scheduled at partner sites was also prioritized.

Older adults remained a target population in 2025. Additionally, CORAP pivoted into **pediatric care** after stakeholder feedback across the region indicated gaps in those services. CORAP shouldered a lengthy waitlist of uninsured children to support via regular clinics at Casa San Jose and partnered with UPMC Family Care Connections locations to meet children and their families where they are with vision screenings and no-cost eyeglasses.

### Scheduling & Documentation Systems

- Patient scheduling pipeline (Calendly → EPIC)
- Partner-facing scheduling protocols
- Clinic activation checklists
- Iterated consent and intake documentation
- Integrated referral scheduling into all eye specialties

The mobile clinics created a pipeline into the UPMC Vision Institute for high-risk and underserved individuals of all ages:

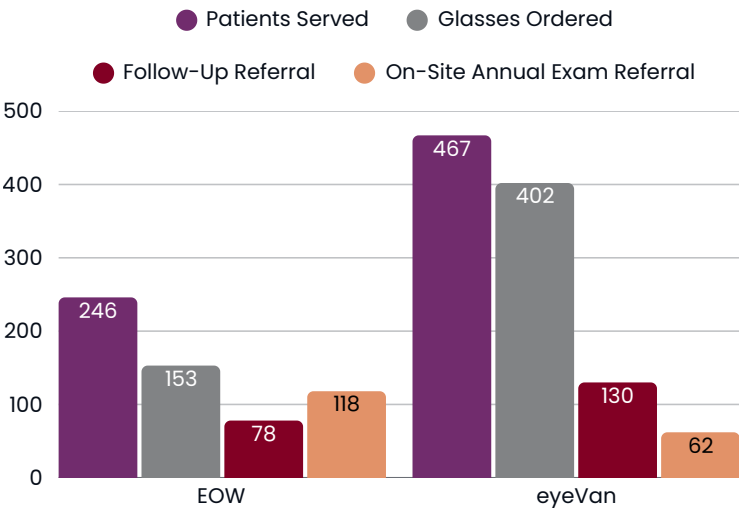
- More than 40% of patients seen at eyeVan clinics were referred to a specialist for imaging or surgical follow-up
- ~14% of eyeVan patients were referred for annual visits at their partner site in 2026, ensuring continuity of care

### Billing Workflows

In collaboration with UPMC operational staff, CORAP developed tentative billing structures to bill at ~20% of their partner sites, namely those managed by Pennrose Property Management (3), Southwood Psychiatric Residential Treatment (1), and UPMC Family Care Connections (3). The residential facilities have a preexisting contract with Health Plan, allowing CORAP to bill for indoor clinic services.

Exams facilitated inside the eyeVan can be billed like a typical satellite practice; this workflow will be trialed at pediatric events hosted at multiple UPMC Family Care Connections locations in 2026.

### Mobile Clinic Metrics: Q1-Q4 2025

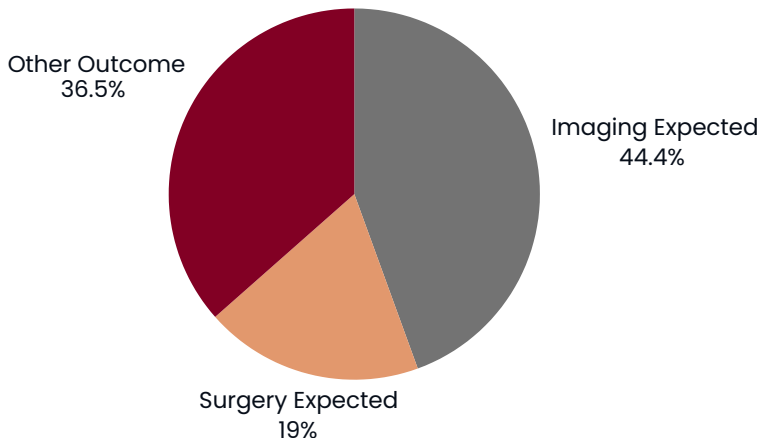


### Eyes on Wheels (EOW) Infrastructure

While developing eyeVan protocols from the ground up, CORAP supported the existing student-led, mobile clinic initiative, Eyes on Wheels, formerly known as the Guerilla Eye Service. EOW underwent a minor rebrand and integrated CORAP as support staff for event catering and follow-up scheduling.

CORAP streamlined documentation for EOW, improving metrics gathered at EOW mobile clinics set up at Federally Qualified Health Centers and supporting uninsured patients referred for follow-up with insurance navigation and tracking of patient outcomes. CORAP also took over equipment and van maintenance for EOW student leaders and volunteers.

### Expected eyeVan Referral Outcomes 2025



# LARGE SCALE EVENTS

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

### CORAP Event Highlights

#### Washington High School Glasses Drive

On September 3, 2025, CORAP partnered with UPMC Optometry and volunteers from the Vision Services of Washington Greene Counties (VSWG) to facilitate visual acuity screenings and glasses selection for students at Washington High School, where 60% of the student body failed their initial vision screenings.

**122 children were seen** using 5 refraction lanes, some of which consisted of Snellen charts taped to various surfaces to expand patient volume. **102 pairs of glasses were ordered for WHS students.**

The next event at Washington High School is scheduled for Friday, October 2, 2026. Special thanks to Dr. Ellen Butts and her Optometry team for quickly generating accurate prescriptions for dozens of students, to Changing Life Through Lenses for providing free glasses, and to the volunteers from the VSWG who helped with patient flow and glasses orders.

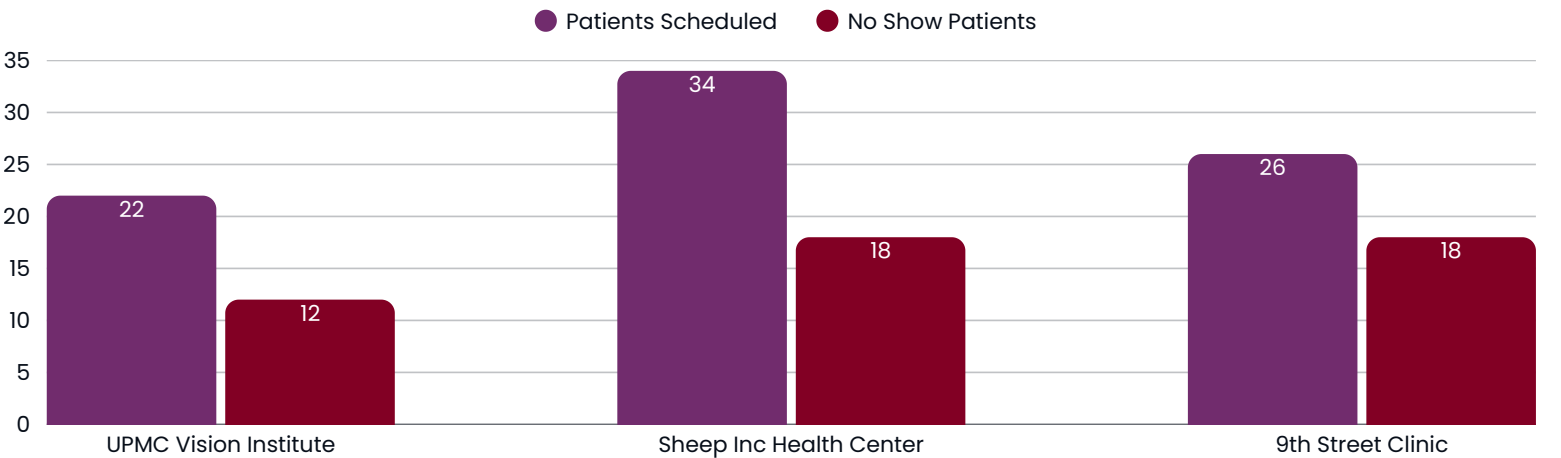
#### Pennsylvania Eye Day: April 26, 2025

As part of a state-wide initiative, CORAP partnered with UPMC Health Plan and two FQHCs – 9<sup>th</sup> Street Clinic and Sheep Inc Health Center – to facilitate a mass screening event for patients in need of their annual diabetic retinopathy screening.

UPMC Health Plan targeted diabetic patients with open care gaps, scheduling them at the UPMC Vision Institute Urgent Eye Care Clinic and a Sheep Inc. Health Center location in Penn Hills. Diabetics screened at the 9<sup>th</sup> Street clinic were uninsured patients of the McKeesport FQHC and were not billed for their screenings. Images from all locations were produced by ophthalmic technicians operating several top-of-the-line devices being trialed for ophthalmology telehealth, like the Optain Resolve mentioned on Page 8 of this report. Images were reviewed remotely, in real time, by UPMC Ophthalmologists.

No-show rates in Pittsburgh matched the state-wide average of 50-60%. **Of the 84 patients scheduled, 45% were screened for diabetic retinopathy. Nearly 10% of patients seen were referred for prompt follow-up appointments.** Thank you to all the volunteers who supported Pennsylvania Eye Day!

#### PA Eye Day 2025 Appointment Metrics





# MISSION OF MERCY 2025

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

Friday, October 24-Saturday, October 25 2025

The annual **Mission of Mercy** event hosted at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center (DLLCC) offers no-cost dental, vision, and hearing services to any patient willing to wait their turn. The line to enter DLLCC begins to form in the middle of the night and wraps around the building, with thousands of Pennsylvania residents waiting to receive care they cannot otherwise afford.

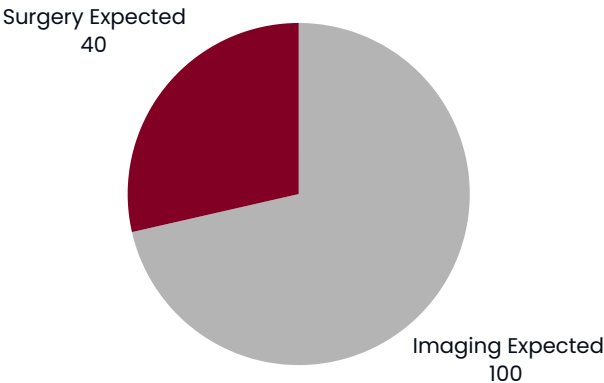
The Vision Section was led by CORAP and supported by **175 volunteers** comprised of UPMC Ophthalmology and Optometry staff, UPitt School of Medicine students, and eye specialists with private practices in the Pittsburgh region.

Volunteers arrived early and stayed late to provide vision screenings, order free eyeglasses, take retina photos, and facilitate comprehensive eye exams for **768 patients**. Workflow improvements based on volunteer feedback and patient outcomes from the 2024 event allowed the section to serve nearly 100 more patients than the previous year.

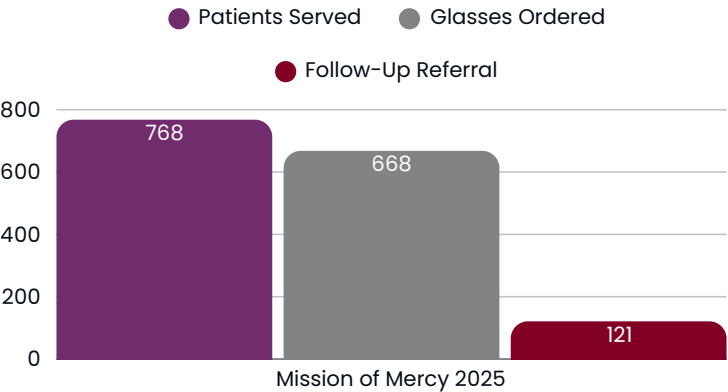
**668 pairs of glasses were ordered** via [Changing Life Through Lenses](#) for adults and children served at the two-day event; glasses were shipped directly to patients' homes or to the UPMC Vision Institute for pick-up on December 6 at the inaugural UPMC Community Vision Day.

18% of patients seen at MOM25 were referred to the UPMC Vision Institute for specialist follow-up appointments and insurance navigation. **Of the 121 patients referred for follow-up care, 83% expect imaging and 33% expect surgical outcomes.**

Expected MOM25 Referral Outcomes



MOM25 Patient Metrics



# UPMC COMMUNITY VISION DAY

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

Saturday, December 6 2025

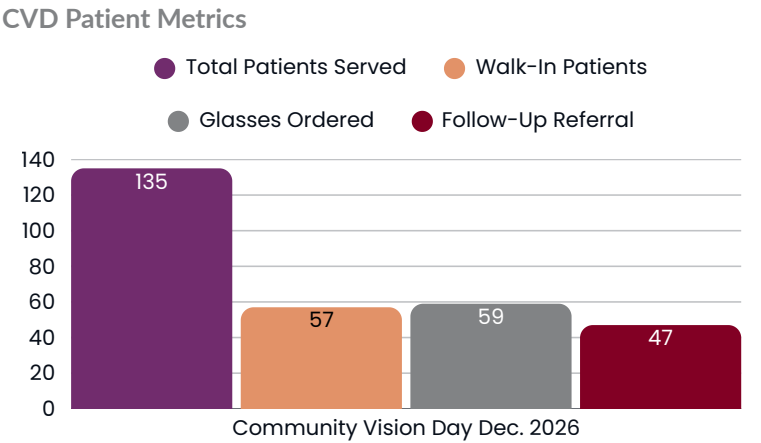
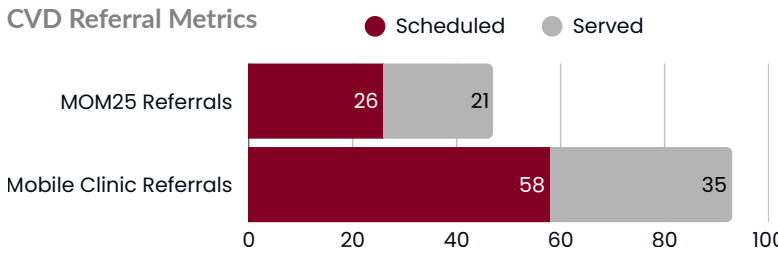
The UPMC Community Vision Day (CVD) pilot event was a smashing success at the UPMC Vision Institute (UPMC VI). More than 75 volunteers (including clinicians, support staff, translators, insurance representatives and community partners) experienced the “good trouble” of significantly higher patient volumes than expected. More than 200 patients walked in or pre-registered for low to no-cost vision services. Operational buy-in at every level of UPMC was needed to host this pilot event, and every team member at the UPMC VI rose to the occasion and supported CORAP. Christened by UPMC CEO Leslie Davis and championed by UPMC VI Director Dr. José-Alain Sahel, **CVD is the largest low to no-cost clinic initiative ever attempted within the UPMC ecosystem.**

The event served **135 total patients**, most of whom were local uninsured. Patients represented a wide age range — from children to older adults. Insurance counseling and referral pathways were integrated into the event, supporting long-term care continuity.

Patient needs reflected the significant barriers to ongoing care that CORAP attempts to mitigate. Several individuals presented with complex ocular conditions including glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, cataract, dry eye, refractive error, and a rare case of cone-rod dystrophy.

**CORAP expects to facilitate UPMC Community Vision Days quarterly in 2026, targeting Saturday events from 9AM-1PM: February 21, May 30, August 22 and December 5.**

With a strong turnout, high patient complexity, and meaningful downstream care connections, this pilot validated both community interest and clinical need. Planning is underway for expanded offerings in 2026 with iterations to clinic workflows based on feedback from patients and volunteers.



Thank you to Margo Dominicis, Talisha Richardson, Mary Pitcher, and the many other operational leaders that made CVD possible!





## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)



### CORAP Patient Outcomes

These case studies capture CORAP's human impact across mobility, socioeconomic, and insurance barriers.

#### Patient S - Sight-Saving Detection

A middle aged, uninsured patient reporting no symptoms, S was found to have a macular hole requiring urgent intervention—an early detection only possible through onsite imaging at an eyeVan clinic.

#### Patient T - Homebound Senior Reconnected to Care

A wheelchair bound patient seen in March 2025 who rarely leaves her apartment due to lack of mobility, Patient T became emotional when expressing thanks for CORAP's on-site presence. Her gratitude for the mobile vision services was tangible. Patient T related that she felt "cared for" & was delighted that CORAP can provide her annual eye exams at her senior care facility.

#### Patient J - Vision Restored

A 62-year-old, Patient J was referred from an Eyes On Wheels clinic at an FQHC and was flagged for bilateral diabetic retinopathy. The patient had run out of insulin weeks prior and was hesitant to apply for Medicaid due to their lack of a Social Security number. CORAP collaborated with the FQHC to secure insurance for Patient J and renew their insulin.

#### Patient C - High-Risk Diabetic Retinopathy

Uninsured and undocumented, Patient C was found to have proliferative diabetic retinopathy at an EOW event. To prevent blindness, CORAP coordinated:

- Emergency Medical Assistance
- Laser therapy
- Follow-up care
- Support via family the Pennsylvania Health Advocacy Network (PHAN)

#### Patient W - Cataracts Identified & Addressed

An elderly patient referred from an eyeVan event in early Summer 2025, Patient W attended his follow-up at the Vision Institute in Fall 2025 and was confirmed as needing cataract surgery in both eyes.

Surgery is scheduled and expected to significantly improve patient W's vision. New to UPMC Ophthalmology, Patient W did not regularly visit the eye doctor prior to June, 2025.



# DIABETIC SCREENINGS

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

### Remote Access Project Updates

#### Remote Screening: Early Detection of Eye Disease

CORAP aims to close the CMS-identified care gap (50%+) in diabetic eye screening by integrating remote imaging into primary care offices, enabling early detection and treatment of asymptomatic diabetic retinopathy before vision loss occurs. Currently, 40+ screening cameras are deployed in primary care and endocrine offices in and outside the UPMC network. These sites generate images, then securely transfer them to remote ophthalmologists who expertly interpret them within 48 hours. This workflow reduces unnecessary in-person exams, decreasing the burden on patients without retinopathy and freeing specialists to focus on patients in need of treatment.

#### Progress

CORAP started the year reviewing the current state of the DRS program and outlining next steps. In collaboration with the current project specialist, a human-centered approach was outlined to audit all locations and gather qualitative feedback from camera site stakeholders to inform workflows. Early intervention outcomes include increased image generation, improved cross-site consistency, and quality improvement of metrics dashboards.

#### Step 1: Preliminary Interviews

Quick, structured interviews were implemented with practice managers to gather basic information about camera usage, condition, training practices, and continued program participation. All locations were audited to confirm the address and primary contact information. Camera serial numbers and feedback about barriers and operational needs were collected, as were observations of best practices at high-performing sites. In-Depth Qualitative Interviews are in progress at all locations to better highlight trends in feedback and inform further protocol iterations.

#### Stakeholder interviews revealed recurring challenges:

- High staff turnover results in a constant need for refresher training
- Outdated or inconsistent training materials cause learning deficits
- Difficulty identifying patients with open diabetic eye care gaps
- Camera underutilization at specific locations
- Workflow confusion and uncertainty around follow-up

#### Step 2: Training Enhancements & Performance Accountability

- Conducted onsite training refreshers at each location, including cleaning and troubleshooting tips
- Developed YouTube training videos
- Provided EPIC-based guides for targeting and scheduling patients due for diabetic retinopathy screening
- Updated the metrics tracking database to ensure accuracy
- Began generating and sharing monthly utilization reports with all locations, highlighting sites with the most improved metrics

#### Step 3: Camera Reallocation

Four camera sites reported they're unlikely to further engage; those cameras were reallocated to UPMC locations eager to participate in Brentwood, Turtle Creek and rural Susquehanna.

**Most excitingly, a camera was reallocated to UPMC Western Maryland, officially expanding the UPMC Vision Institute DRS program across state lines!** The Maryland practice has purchased 2 additional retina cameras for multiple departments in their ecosystem, further expanding CORAP's reach.



#### Quarterly Events

CORAP has partnered with East Liberty Family Care Center to augment patient volume at the site's quarterly diabetic retinopathy screening events by fielding additional cameras (pictured above) and staff.

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

As part of its mission to innovate ophthalmic care delivery in nontraditional settings, the CORAP team is actively evaluating remote diagnostic devices from multiple vendors. By trialing different models in real-world outreach environments—such as mobile clinics and community sites—we aim to identify the equipment and workflows that function best across varied settings to inform remote care delivery in Primary Care offices, Emergency Departments, mobile clinic setups, the UPMC “eyesuite” and DRS partner sites.

### 2025 - 2026 Device Trials

| Device           | Description                                 |
|------------------|---|
| Topcon Tempo     | Visual Field / Perimetry                    |
| Topcon NW500     | Automated Fundus Retina Camera              |
| *Topcon Maestro2 | Automated OCT                               |
| Essilor VS700    | Automated Refraction / Keramotry            |
| *Optain Resolve  | Portable / Automated Fundus Imaging Camera  |
| Topcon Harmony   | EMR integration software for Topcon devices |

*\*Trials In Progress*

### Optain Resolve Tabletop Retina Camera Device Trial: Phase 1

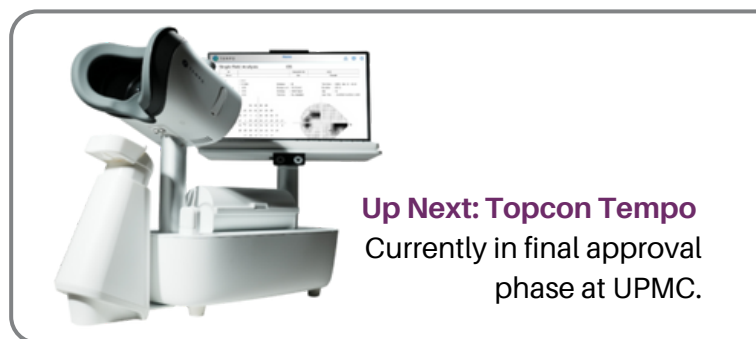
Trials of the Optain Resolve Tabletop Retina Camera (pictured above), initially stymied by device approval workflows, became a concrete reality as UPMC Enterprise, IT, and CORAP collaborated with Optain stakeholders to develop a two-phase trial for implementation at the UPMC Vision Institute Urgent Eye Care Center (UECC) and Comprehensive Eye Service (CES) in Fall 2025.

Phase 1 wrapped in December 2025 at the UPMC Vision Institute. The usability and image quality of the retina camera were assessed by primary users in CES and UECC. Phase 2 is expected to launch in 2026 to assess Optain’s backend capabilities and network integrations in addition to the usability of the device in a primary care setting.



### TopCon NW400 Trial

In February 2025, CORAP collaborated with Topcon to embed NW400 fundus imaging cameras at two of the highest-performing partner sites. The trial was paused due to UPMC electronic health record connectivity issues. CORAP expects to reboot the trial in 2026 with the newer NW500 Fundus imaging camera (pictured to the left) when software approvals and integrations are completed by Topcon, Ophthalmology IT teams and the Health Technology Advancement Program (HTAP) led by Ophthalmology Dept. Chair and UPMC Vision Institute Director Dr. José-Alain Sahel.



**Up Next: Topcon Tempo**  
Currently in final approval phase at UPMC.



## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

### Presentations & Manuscripts

In Q2 2025, two of CORAP's original research projects were presented at the 2025 Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO) Conference in Salt Lake City, Utah:

- *Social Determinants of Health and Insurance Disparities in Eye Care Access: Insights from a 2-Day Community-Based Event*
- *Opportunities for Remote Ophthalmology: Patient and Operator Experience Using an Automated Refractor*

By Q4 2025, the following manuscripts were published in a special issue of the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, Special Issue: *Advances and Trends in Mobile Healthcare*:

- *Complexity and Barriers to Vision Care: A Narrative Review Informed by a Mobile Eye Program*
- *Mobile Eye Units in the United States and Canada: A Narrative Review of Structures, Services and Challenges*

These articles, created in collaboration with University of Pittsburgh statisticians and student researchers, focus on the individual and systemic barriers to ophthalmic care, and the role of social work and community-based outreach in overcoming those barriers.



**EOW Student Leader James Whitely & CORAP Program Manager Zeila Hobson pose with their research awards.**



**Dr. Villabona Martinez engages with an interview about her research regarding a vendor's automated refraction device at ARVO 2025.**

Speaking of student researchers, Eyes On Wheels student leader James Whitely, alongside his CORAP mentors Dr. Valeria Villabona-Martinez and Zeila Hobson, was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Recipient of the **Dr. Jeanette South-Paul Social Determinants of Health Enrichment Award** for his submission, *"Why Patients Don't Show Up: Comorbidities & Follow Up at a Free Eye Clinic,"* presented at the 2025 DSRP/SDoH Research Symposium at Scaife Hall in Q3 2025. CORAP also presented research at the UPMC Ophthalmology research retreat in Q3 2025:

- *When Eye Care Isn't the Priority: Missed Follow-Up After Community-Based Ophthalmologic Referrals*

In 2026, CORAP expects to submit implementation science papers that reflect the iterations and outcomes of their initiatives, namely the operations of the UPMC eyeVan and the Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Project. Sample titles include:

- *A Real-World Model for Mobile Eye Care Delivery: Development, Implementation, and Sustainability of the EyeVan Program*
- *Improving Engagement in Community-Based Diabetic Retinopathy Screening Programs: Strategies and Implementation Outcomes*

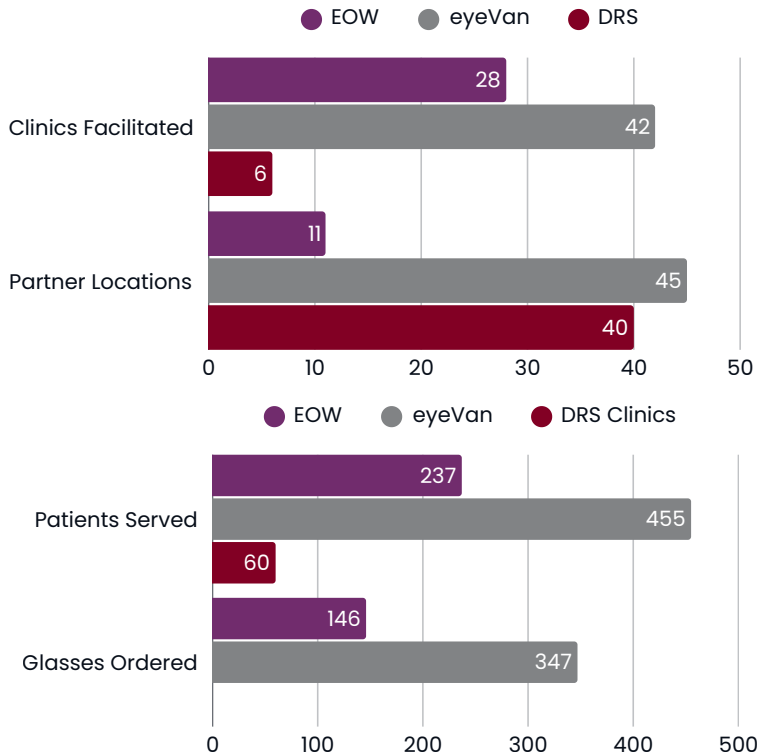


# TL;DR ANNUAL REVIEW 2025

## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)

### CORAP 2025 High-Level Metrics

Excludes Mission of Mercy Data



### Key Accomplishments

- CORAP provided services to over 2,000 patients via large-scale clinics and mobile vision clinics in the Pitt region since Sep '24
- Ordered 493 pairs of glasses from mobile vision clinics, including 136 for children. Excludes MOM/CVD data
- Built UPMC eyeVan mobile clinic infrastructure
- 24x increase in eyeVan site partnerships
- Developed mobile clinic billing workflows for 2025
- Expanded Diabetic Retinopathy Screening (DRS) to multiple UPMC depts, including Western Maryland
- Created DRS training videos and improved workflows based on stakeholder feedback
- Implemented and improved metrics dashboards
- Conducted social determinants/implementation science research & published original research manuscripts
- Presented at ARVO & UPMC Oph. Research Symposium
- Received Dr. Jeanette South-Paul SDOH Enrichment Award (3<sup>rd</sup> Place) for student research
- Implemented clinical device trials to assess the usability of high-end retina cameras in the field



### CORAP Patient Impact & Outcomes

- Early detection of sight-threatening pathology
- Sight-restoring surgery for seniors
- Mobile access for homebound individuals
- Care coordination for uninsured/undocumented patients
- Increased community trust in UPMC eye care

These case studies capture CORAP's human impact across mobility, socioeconomic, and insurance barriers:

#### Patient S - Sight-Saving Detection

An uninsured patient reporting no symptoms, S was found to have a macular hole requiring urgent intervention—an early detection only possible through onsite imaging.

#### Patient T - Homebound Senior Reconnected to Care

A wheelchair-bound patient shared her gratitude with tears, saying the mobile clinic made her feel "cared for" after years of isolation.

#### Patient J - Vision Restored

Identified through an eyeVan event, J was diagnosed with cataracts and glaucoma, underwent successful bilateral cataract surgery, and now enjoys improved vision.

#### Patient C - High-Risk Diabetic Retinopathy

An uninsured, undocumented patient was found to have proliferative diabetic retinopathy. CORAP coordinated:

- Emergency Medical Assistance
- Laser therapy
- Follow-up care
- Emergency Medical Assistance
- Laser therapy
- Follow-up care
- Support via family and PHAN

#### Patient W - Cataracts Identified & Addressed

Referred from an early summer clinic, W is confirmed to have severe cataracts and is now scheduled for surgery after years without eye care access.



## COMMUNITY OPHTHALMOLOGY & REMOTE ACCESS PROGRAMS (CORAP)



### Patient Navigation

**CORAP supports uninsured patients in need of specialist follow-ups to secure coverage and/or financial aid for their medical bills.**

Dozens of patients currently rely on CORAP, namely Dr. Valeria Villabona Martinez, to track and maintain their coverage processes in collaboration with partner site social workers and the Pennsylvania Health Access Network (PHAN).

As CORAP's mobile clinic initiative increases in scale, the deficits in patient navigation services for underserved patients seeking coverage for vision services further reveal themselves; to mitigate financial barriers to care, CORAP seeks additional social work partnerships and earnest, sustainable collaboration with UPMC Health Plan in 2026.

### What's our vision for 2026?

- Pilot compliance / billing protocols for mobile vision clinic services
- Continued refinement of eyeVan clinic protocols: partner scheduling & patient follow-ups
- Continued optimization of the multi-state DRS program
- DRS expansion to Magee Women's Hospital
- Ophthalmic device integration into EDs and PCPs
- Integration of full-service, on-site ophthalmology telehealth suites at Primary Care locations in Allegheny County



#### **Dr. Jake Waxman**

Program Director & Vice Chair of Ed.

[waxmane@upmc.edu](mailto:waxmane@upmc.edu)

Vision Institute Comprehensive Eye Clinic  
G.180



#### **Zeila Hobson**

Program & Research Project Manager

[hobsonz@upmc.edu](mailto:hobsonz@upmc.edu)

Vision Institute Telemedicine  
Suite G.346



#### **Dr. Valeria Villabona-Martinez**

Outreach Coordinator & Research Fellow

[villabonamartinev@upmc.edu](mailto:villabonamartinev@upmc.edu)

Vision Institute Telemedicine  
Suite G.341

**Contact the CORAP Team**  
**[csremoteaccess@upmc.edu](mailto:csremoteaccess@upmc.edu)**  
**412-642-5415**



#### **Brenda Kirk**

Ophthalmic Technician & Clinical Lead

[kirkb2@upmc.edu](mailto:kirkb2@upmc.edu)

Vision Institute Telemedicine  
Suite G.341



#### **Tyler Banash**

DRS Project Specialist

[banasht@upmc.edu](mailto:banasht@upmc.edu)

Vision Institute Telemedicine  
Suite G.341