



NEWS

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PBT Opens New Vision Services Center for Uninsured Tennesseans

NASHVILLE—Prevent Blindness Tennessee (PBT) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house on August 24 to commemorate the grand opening of its new on-site vision services center. The vision center, located in west Nashville, provides vision services which include vision screenings, eye exams, and eyeglasses to uninsured adults age 40 and older and underinsured seniors age 55 and older who don't qualify for services through other social service programs. Services to clients are administered free or on a sliding fee basis according to income. The vision center also offers support group meetings for families dealing with vision loss and educational seminars on eye health issues.

Prevent Blindness Tennessee's Vision Services Center presents a multitude of vision services in one location. Volunteer eye care professionals conduct vision examinations to diagnose eye problems, prescribe eyeglasses, make referrals for treatment, and simultaneously identify related medical conditions. Additionally, if eyeglasses are needed, the client may see an on-site optician, who will measure and fit for glasses. "Our goal is to provide a place for working, uninsured adults who can't afford eye healthcare to receive vision services that help prevent unnecessary blindness," said Donna Miller, PBT President and CEO. "In the process we will also work to empower at risk populations to make better health decisions and live healthier lives, and use vision care as an entry point for uninsured adults to connect with primary healthcare."

Capital support for the vision center is provided by a one-time grant from The HCA Foundation and The Frist Foundation. Prevent Blindness Tennessee has started a pledge drive to raise funds to support the vision center's operating expenses and its related program services.

In addition to the on-site adult services offered, Prevent Blindness Tennessee will continue to provide vision screenings and eyeglasses to school children ages 6-18. In 2005-06, PBT served more than 100,000 individuals in 78 out of 95 counties across the state. Ninety percent of adults served by PBT are living below 200% of poverty, and 60% are African American. Eighty percent of the preschool children screened by PBT are living below 200% of poverty, and approximately 40% of the children are African American.

If you would like to make a donation to support Prevent Blindness Tennessee's programs and services visit the website at www.preventblindnesstn.org or call (615) 350-0450.

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Established in 1978, Prevent Blindness Tennessee is a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing blindness and preserving sight across the state of Tennessee through vision screenings, public and professional education, community services, programs, referrals, information, and research.