



News Release

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The American Diabetes Association and Genentech Team Up to Bring Eye Health Equity Program to the DC Region

ARLINGTON, Virginia (Aug. 7, 2024) — Today, the American Diabetes Association® (ADA) and Genentech, a member of the Roche Group, announced a program to increase equitable access to eye health care in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. The program, an extension of the [Health Equity Now®](#) initiative, will focus on identifying and removing barriers to care facing Black and Hispanic/Latino communities in the DC region.

Diabetes-related eye disease affects nearly 8 million Americans and is the [leading cause of vision loss](#) in people 18–64 years old. Black, Native American/Alaska Native, Hispanic/Latino, and older adults living with diabetes are at higher risk of losing their vision or going blind [compared to non-Hispanic white adults](#). Comprehensive eye exams play a crucial role in the prevention, early detection, and intervention of eye disease and vision loss caused by diabetes, yet many in these communities either don't receive or don't have appropriate access to eye health care. Every year, an estimated 3,300 adults in DC are diagnosed with diabetes. Citywide, [about 7.8% of the adult population has diagnosed diabetes](#), yet prevalence rates vary greatly by neighborhood. In some wards, between 11.8% to 13.5% of residents have diagnosed diabetes.

“Regular eye screenings and treatment can prevent vision loss caused by diabetes. We’re excited to partner with Genentech to bring this program to the Washington, DC area to support people in accessing the care they need,” said Charles “Chuck” Henderson, the ADA’s chief executive officer.

The program builds on insights from the 2023 pilot program in Birmingham, Alabama. The pilot involved 85 community outreach activations and 50 educational and screening events, providing insights into barriers faced by under-resourced communities and expanding access to eye screenings and treatment to more than 4,100 community members. In the Washington, DC area, the program will similarly work alongside community partners to identify and lower barriers to eye health care for people living with diabetes in the region.

“We know that inequities in health outcomes and access to care are deep-rooted and must be addressed at the local level. We also recognize that it will take thoughtful collaboration and community engagement to one day eliminate these disparities,” said Ashley Magargee, chief executive officer of Genentech. “We look forward to our continued work with the ADA, and with local organizations advocating for community members, to tackle systemic barriers and improve eye care for all patients.”



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The ADA and Genentech share a dedication to health equity and a long-standing commitment to people living with diabetes-related eye disease.

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About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive. For 84 years, the ADA has driven discovery and research to treat, manage, and prevent diabetes while working relentlessly for a cure. Through advocacy, program development, and education we aim to improve the quality of life for the 136 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Diabetes has brought us together. What we do next will make us Connected for Life®. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at diabetes.org or call 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](https://www.facebook.com/AmericanDiabetesAssociation)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](https://www.facebook.com/AsociaciónAmericanaDeLaDiabetes)), LinkedIn ([American Diabetes Association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/american-diabetes-association)), Twitter ([@AmDiabetesAssn](https://twitter.com/AmDiabetesAssn)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](https://www.instagram.com/AmDiabetesAssn)).