



# Helping Visually-impaired Seniors Live Independently

In Oklahoma, more than 650,000 adults age 55 and older live with vision impairment or eye disease that significantly impacts their quality of life and can limit their ability to live independently. Thanks to a Services for Elderly iFund grant, NewView Oklahoma is providing orientation and mobility training to this population that will help them navigate around their home safely and with confidence.

Established in 1949 as the Oklahoma League for the Blind, NewView Oklahoma provides visual rehabilitation services and employment opportunities for blind and visually-impaired Oklahomans. Through its Older Blind Adult Vision Rehabilitation Program, clients receive hands-on mobility training in their own home at little to no cost. A certified orientation and mobility instructor first evaluates the safety of the client's home to reduce potential risks such as uneven walkways that might cause falls or injury. The instructor then provides in-home safe travel training over a seven-week period to help individuals perform common daily tasks such as getting the mail or taking out the trash.

"As the population ages, these services are vital to helping older Oklahomans remain independent and living at home," says Lauren Branch, NewView Oklahoma president and CEO. "The iFund grant will enable us to add an exercise component to our orientation and mobility training that is designed to improve coordination, balance and flexibility."

NewView's orientation and mobility instructors will train clients to safely perform basic exercises including arm and leg raises to help improve their sense of balance and train their muscles for movements such as climbing stairs and turning corners. Lauren says their goal is to develop an exercise program tailored to the client's specific needs, allowing them to engage in physical exercise on a daily basis.

"The exercise program has been very warmly received," says NewView mobility instructor Okono Okono. "The clients love it. They look forward to the exercises and many say they can already see improvements in their balance and stability."

The Services for Elderly iFund is one of three iFunds at the Oklahoma City Community Foundation through which individual gifts are combined to award grants to worthy projects such as NewView Oklahoma's Older Blind Adult Vision Rehabilitation Program. To learn how you can help make a difference through iFunds, visit [www.ifundokc.org](http://www.ifundokc.org) or contact us at 405/235-5603.



*A NewView Oklahoma client practices balance and coordination exercises with an orientation and mobility instructor.*

Learn more about NewView Oklahoma through its profile at [GiveSmartOKC.org](http://GiveSmartOKC.org).

Through a Services for Elderly iFund grant, NewView Oklahoma is helping visually-impaired senior Oklahomans live independently in their homes through in-home orientation and mobility training and exercises. For older adults with vision impairment, balance and coordination exercises can help to reduce their risk of falling and restore their confidence in their ability to navigate safely around their home.



You can help make a difference in our community through iFunds with a minimum gift of \$25. We'll combine your gift with others to award grants to support deserving projects such as NewView Oklahoma's Older Blind Adult Vision Rehabilitation Program. To make a gift or learn more about iFunds, visit [www.ifundokc.org](http://www.ifundokc.org) or contact us at 405/235-5603.



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