The modular, comprehensive, Diabetic Retinopathy Unit (DRU) will include personnel and equipment to diagnose, document and treat proliferative retinopathy and macular edema associated with background diabetic retinopathy during a single patient visit. The Unit will see patients locally one day every two weeks.

Personnel will include an ophthalmologist with specialized training in the management of diabetic retinopathy and an ophthalmic technician trained in fundus photography and fluorescein angiography. Resident ophthalmologists from the Department of Ophthalmology, Dean A. McGee Eye Institute will participate in the evaluation and management of patients.

The DRU will be equipped with a Zeiss FF4 fundus camera (Carl Zeiss) linked to a 1024 line resolution digital camera (Eastman Kodak) to provide immediate availability of fluorescein angiograms. By using a digital fundus camera, the additional equipment, personnel, complexity and time associated with traditional film based angiography are eliminated. A computer based image database will archive and retrieve fluorescein images and patient information.

An Alcon Argon/Krypton Ophthalas laser (Alcon Surgical) will be used for panretinal and focal macular photocoagulation. Although argon green or blue-green wavelengths are most commonly used, the longer krypton wavelength is necessary in patients with advanced disease, including significant intraretinal or vitreous hemorrhage.