

Financial Assistance Program Improvement Initiative

ICAHN Rural Health Fellowship 2026

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Graham Health System



Graham Health System Overview

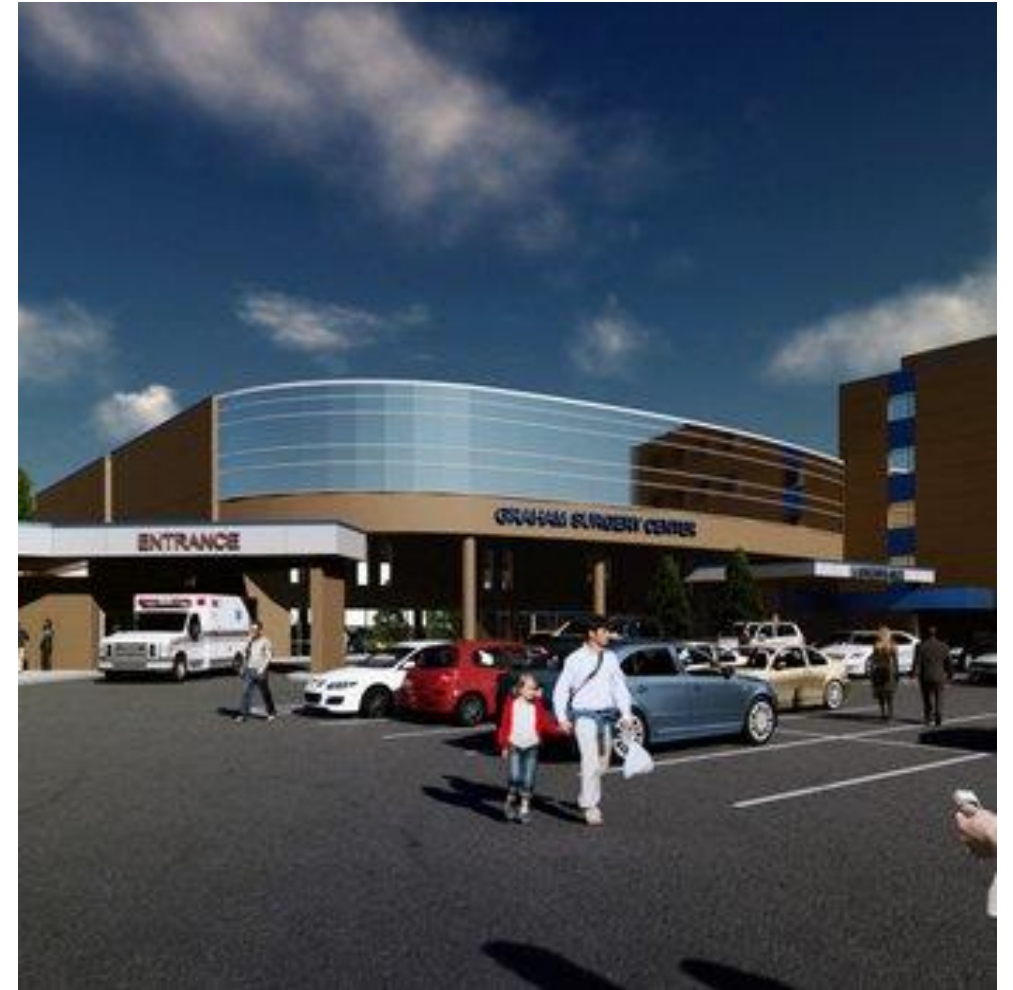
- **Past:**
 - Located in Canton IL
 - Graham Hospital originated in 1909 when Alice and Carol Graham donated the hospital to the community.
- **Present:**
 - 12 clinics across 5 counties
 - College of Nursing
 - Ambulatory Surgical Center in Galesburg, IL
- **Future:**
 - Remain a strong and independent health system



Project Overview

Core Statement:

Our team is developing a process to optimize our Financial Assistance Program at GHS by streamlining workflows and increasing program accessibility to enhance patient satisfaction and strengthen financial outcomes.



Project Objectives & Importance

- Enhance accessibility and knowledge of Financial Assistance Program
- Improve communication and collaboration across departments

Why is it important?

- High underinsured or uninsured population
- Remain compliant with 501r regulations
- Reduce bad debt and strengthen financial outcomes
- Stay aligned with the mission of GHS

OUR Mission Statement

To provide compassionate, quality health services, in a responsible and charitable manner, to the people and communities we serve.



Project Development

Phase 1

Streamline efforts and simplify workflows

- Develop a new data tracking platform
- Update letters to be unified across both departments and EHRs

Phase 2

Make the application more assessable to all patients

- Review & update application to ensure items are attainable for all patients
- Online application & Eligibility check – Vendor Implementation

Phase 3

Increase outreach to patients

- Utilizing text messages and email communication
- Marketing on social media platforms
- Patient Access Training

Project Activities – Phase 1

- Reviewed current workflows & policies
- Identified areas of improvement
- Updated tracking platform: Excel ➔ Sharepoint
- Updated Financial Assistance letters
- Met with Patient Financial Advocates
- Implemented new process – Live April 1, 2026



GHS Patient Financial Advocates

Private group Not following 7 members

- Home
- Conversations
- Documents
- Notebook
- Pages
- Financial Assistance App...**
- Expired FA Apps
- Site contents
- Recycle bin
- Edit
- Return to classic SharePoint

Keep Lists fully optimized. Select Allow to connect to local devices to keep things speedy. [Learn more](#) Allow

+ Add new item Edit Edit in grid view Undo Share Copy link Comment Delete Automate 1 selected

Financial Assistance Applications

Name	Date of Birth	Date Sent	Date Return...	Status	Spouse & Depend...	Missing Docu...	Missing Document ...	Approval Letter S...	Expiration Date	Notes	Added in Meditech	Added in
Test test	01/01/2001	2/18/2026	2/19/2026	Missing Documents	NA	Tax Returns Pay stubs	3/5/2026	Yes		Following up on missing documents		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Test test	01/02/2002	2/18/2026	2/20/2026	Approved	NA			Yes	3/5/2026		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Test Test	01/03/2003	2/25/2026	2/26/2026	Approved	Test Test Test Test			Yes	2/25/2026			
Test Test	01/04/2004	3/2/2026	3/5/2026	Follow Up Needed						Need to reach out to patient to inquire about tax forms		



Item properties

Name

Test, test

Date Sent

2/18/2026

Date Returned

2/20/2026

Date of Birth

01/02/2002

Status

Approved

Missing Documents

Enter value here

Missing Document Letter

Enter a date

Expiration Date

3/5/2026

Notes

Enter value here

Spouse & Dependents

NA

Approval Percentage

100%

Sign-off status

PF

Added in Meditech

Yes

Added in EcW

Yes

Attachments

Add attachments

Save

Save

Cancel

3/10/2026

Why?

- Streamline workflows between two systems and teams
- Reduce duplicate work and become more unified
- Stay compliant with 501r regulations
- Increase patient satisfaction by organizing and simplifying our program

What is changing?

- Tracking method: Excel → Sharepoint
- Recording patient info when you send out an application
- Scanning the entire application and supporting documents to Sharepoint and link to correct patient
- Track expired applications and reach out to patients to renew
- Letters
 - All letters changed to 'Graham Health System' and in sharepoint
 - Sending one letter instead of two
 - If you approve the application, you are mailing the approval letter
 - If you deny the application, you are sending the denial letter

What is next?

- Review of required documents
- Review of calculation method
- Increase outreach and notification about Financial Assistance

What ideas do you have to improve our Financial Assistance Program?

Implementation Meeting Agenda 3/10/2026



Barriers/Risks

- Budgetary constraints
- Secure platform to store sensitive data
- Staff buy in
- Regulatory requirements

Stakeholders

- Patients
- Business Office staff
- Patient Financial Advocates
- IT
- Patient Access Staff
- Administration
- Board of Trustees



Next Steps

- Implement an online application on our website
 - Vendor Analysis
- Increase outreach to patients
 - Email/text communication
 - Marketing
 - Patient access training

Acknowledgements

- My mentor – Jennifer Venable, CFO Washington and Clay County Hospitals
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