

**News Release**  
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## **Free Family Caregiver Workshop to be March 21 in Fort Smith**

FORT SMITH – The Schmieding Home Caregiver Training Program of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) will hold a free family caregiver workshop March 21 for those who would like to learn about caring for an adult with dementia or Alzheimer’s disease.

The workshop, which is open to the public, will be held 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Butterfield Place at 8420 Phoenix Ave in Fort Smith. For more information or to register, please call 479-424-0055 or email [kcowell@uams.edu](mailto:kcowell@uams.edu). Desserts and drinks provided. Space is limited.

The program is sponsored by UAMS’ Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative and AARP Arkansas.

Taught by Kristi Cowell, B.S., R.N., the workshop will present an overview of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease and provide caregiving tips that maintain respect, dignity and quality of life for the person living with dementia. Information will also be presented on nutrition, behavior, communication techniques and activities.

About 452,000 family caregivers in Arkansas provide an estimated \$4.7 billion in unpaid care each year, helping their loved ones with bathing and dressing, cooking meals, transportation, finances and complex medical tasks like wound care and injections.

AARP Arkansas State Director Herb Sanderson said support for family caregivers, including making available free training opportunities, is a top priority for AARP, which has more than 310,000 members in Arkansas age 50 or older.

“Family caregivers are the backbone of our care system, serving a crucial role in helping older Arkansans and other loved ones remain in their own homes and communities,” Sanderson said. “Because of their tireless efforts, older parents, spouses and other loved

ones are able to live independently at home and in the community — where they want to be. It’s a labor of love, and often more than a full-time job.”

AARP is the nation’s largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the world’s largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit [www.aarp.org](http://www.aarp.org) or follow @AARP and @ARAARP on social media.

The Arkansas Geriatric Education Collaborative is funded by a federal Health Resources and Services Administration grant of \$2.4 million for a Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program. The program improves the quality of care for older adults through education by offering programs for health professionals, first responders, family caregivers and direct care workers.

UAMS is the state’s only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. It is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 2,727 students, 870 medical residents and five dental residents. It is the state’s largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children’s Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit [www.uams.edu](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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