

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Joins Consortium to Advance Blending Complementary
with Conventional Health Care Methods**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has joined the Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine & Health as part of its effort to improve evidence-based integrative health research and patient care for Arkansans.

Integrative health treats the whole patient by blending conventional and complementary health care methods to create a holistic, patient-focused approach to wellness. This can include cognitive behavioral therapy, acupuncture, massage, yoga, tai chi, chiropractic manipulation, nutrition and other physical and behavioral therapies as complements to traditional health care approaches.

The Academic Consortium includes over 70 highly esteemed academic medical centers and health systems from across North America. The Consortium advances the principles and practices of integrative health care by providing its membership with a community of support and a collective voice for influencing change.

These efforts include:

- Supporting and mentoring academic leaders, faculty and students to advance integrative health care education, research and clinical care.
- Disseminating information on rigorous scientific research, educational curricula in integrative health and sustainable models of clinical care.
- Informing health care policy.

UAMS' membership was approved by the Consortium's Membership Committee and by member institutions.

Pearl McElfish, Ph.D., MBA, vice chancellor for the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus in Fayetteville, and Jeanne Wei, M.D., Ph.D., director of the UAMS Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, will serve as UAMS' representatives for the Academic Consortium.

“There is a growing interest in the use of integrative health therapies to treat the whole patient and avoid issues like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and opioid addiction,”

McElfish said. “UAMS is committed to integrating evidence-based complementary therapies into our clinical care. UAMS will contribute to the evidence based by conducting research on integrative health, and UAMS will educate current and future health care professionals.”

“Integrative medicine is about more than keeping people from being sick, it’s about enabling them to thrive throughout each stage of their life,” Wei said.

UAMS is already engaged in these goals in several ways. For example, UAMS faculty have published 150 peer-reviewed articles on integrative health. At its Northwest Regional Campus, UAMS has received \$20 million in extramural research funding to evaluate and implement holistic solutions for the prevention of chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, hypertension and cancer.

UAMS is partnering with Brightwater and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art for educational programs on culinary medicine and the arts in health. The UAMS Interventional Pain Management Clinic offers a holist approach to speed healing and eliminate dependence on opioids.

Additionally, programs like AR-IMPACT (Arkansas Improving Multi-disciplinary Pain Care and Treatment) enable physicians from across the state to interact directly with UAMS experts in pain management and integrative treatments for pain available for education and case consults.

For more information on the Academic Consortium, visit imconsortium.org.

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. *U.S. News & World Report* named UAMS Medical Center the state’s Best Hospital; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide; and named six areas as high performing — cancer, colon cancer surgery, heart failure, hip replacement, knee replacement and lung cancer surgery. 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 or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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