



News Release
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UAMS Medical Center Recognized as Center of Excellence for Childbirth Complication Placenta Accreta Spectrum

LITTLE ROCK — The Maternal Safety Foundation has named the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Medical Center an Accreta Center of Excellence, recognizing its superior care for a life-threatening childbirth complication called placenta accreta spectrum disorder.

UAMS Medical Center is the first hospital in the nation to receive the designation, which indicates that UAMS has both the technology and multidisciplinary expertise to treat the condition — in which the placenta is unable to detach from the uterus after childbirth — with safe, high-quality care.

The Maternal-Fetal Medicine Program at UAMS features the most highly trained and experienced specialists in treating high-risk pregnancy in Arkansas. The program has more board-certified maternal-fetal specialist staff, more statewide coverage through UAMS-initiated advances in digital health, and more maternal-fetal physician experience than any other institution in the state.

“Research has shown that women who develop placenta accreta spectrum disorder and their babies have better outcomes when treated at facilities with the type of multidisciplinary teams, equipment and training to react quickly to what is a potentially fatal complication,” said Adam T. Sandlin, M.D., an assistant professor of maternal-fetal medicine in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology in the UAMS College of Medicine and leader of the Placenta Accreta Spectrum (PAS) Care Team at UAMS.

Women who have had a previous cesarean section birth are at risk for placenta accreta, which occurs when the placenta grows too deeply into the uterine wall and is unable to detach after childbirth.

Previously uncommon, this potentially fatal condition has increased an estimated 400% in the last four decades alongside the increase in cesarean section births. A woman’s risk

for developing accreta increases according to the number of her prior cesarean births. About 1 in 272 pregnancies in 2016 were associated with an accreta diagnosis.

The Maternal Safety Foundation's goal is to identify specific areas of need in patient safety and quality and create a means of recognizing health care institutions that provide a superior level of care.

The Foundation Advisory Board's decision to focus on accreta as an area of focus was data-driven. The number of women giving birth after a previous cesarean in the United States is 600,000 — or 15% — annually.

“It's often a question of access to the right level of care for the population with a previous cesarean birth,” said Jill Arnold, executive director of the Maternal Safety Foundation. “We are grateful that Arkansas families have access to high-quality care here at home when they need it and proud to offer our first COE recognition to UAMS.”

The foundation worked with national experts in obstetric safety and quality over the following year to explore strategies and solutions for this population. They created a patient safety bundle (set of evidence-based practices) and the Accreta Center of Excellence recognition. They also offer a VBAC Center of Excellence recognition. Both fall under the foundation's umbrella program called the Maternal Centers of Excellence program.

ABOUT MATERNAL SAFETY FOUNDATION

Maternal Safety Foundation, founded in 2018 in Rogers, Arkansas, is a nonprofit patient advocacy and safety organization dedicated to maternal health. To support this mission, the foundation launched the Maternal Centers of Excellence in 2019, beginning with Accreta Center of Excellence and VBAC Center of Excellence as voluntary recognition programs with a goal of helping patients and families find safe, risk-appropriate care for vaginal birth after cesarean and placenta accreta conditions. More information is available at www.maternalcoe.org.

ABOUT UAMS

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. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise including its hospital, regional clinics and clinics it operates or staffs in cooperation with other providers. UAMS 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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