



News Release
April 29, 2020

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Baptist Health-UAMS Family Medicine Residency Program Receives Full 10-Year Accreditation

LITTLE ROCK — The [Baptist Health-UAMS Family Medicine Residency program](#) has received a full 10-year accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).

The program was started in 2019 to provide more positions to train medical school graduates and address the physician shortage in Arkansas, especially in rural areas. Studies show that physicians are more likely to practice close to where they did their residencies: 75% stay within 75 miles of where they trained.

"Baptist Health has been a leader in providing care to Arkansas residents for nearly 100 years. When the opportunity arose for Baptist Health to help train more of the physicians needed in the state, we enthusiastically endorsed the program," said Troy Wells, president and CEO of Baptist Health. "We are grateful for the partnership with UAMS and appreciate the tremendous help they are providing to the continued success of these programs."

"It is gratifying to see that this spirit of teamwork between UAMS and Baptist is enabling us to successfully fulfill our mission to train future family medicine physicians and increasing the pool of doctors who may choose to remain in Arkansas to practice," said Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA.

Baptist Health is the largest nonprofit health care system in Arkansas, and UAMS is the state's only medical sciences university. Both have a statewide footprint. This joint residency project is the first time the two major systems have collaborated on this scale.

The family medicine residency launched in summer 2019 and trains up to 12 residents per year over the course of the three-year program. Twelve new residents have matched into the program for 2020 and will begin in July. When full of trainees at the three-year point, it will be one of the larger family medicine residency programs in the nation.

"The 10-year accreditation and glowing report from the ACGME is a phenomenal accomplishment for a community hospital-based residency program," said Christopher T. Westfall, M.D., executive vice chancellor of UAMS and dean of the College of Medicine. "This is a strong testimony to the residency's leadership, faculty and staff as

well as their supportive teams at UAMS and Baptist Health. We couldn't be more pleased.”

In a further sign of dedication to the project, Baptist Health opened a new building in January 2020 in North Little Rock built specifically for the medical education program.

Julea Garner, M.D., of UAMS is program director of the Family Medicine Residency. She said the 10-year accreditation drew only positive remarks from the accrediting agency.

“The review committee said it was evident from touring the program that this was a huge collaborative effort from top to bottom at both institutions, and the commitment to the program on all sides was evident,” Garner said. “The words they heard all day long from the residents and faculty were things like ‘family’ or ‘team’ to describe how people felt about the program.”

Arkansas lacks an adequate number of family medicine physicians, ranking 46 out of the 50 states in physicians per capita. Studies project these trends will worsen in the coming decades.

While Arkansas graduates a large number of medical students, there are not enough residency slots for those students to stay in Arkansas. Projects like this Baptist-UAMS partnership aim to address that gap.

The program is designed to inspire residents to stay in Arkansas. Setting it in a community hospital like Baptist, organizers hoped to create a day-to-day environment that would more closely mirror where the physicians will one day practice, while still providing them with the full backing of an academic medical center like UAMS and all the academic, research and technological opportunities that brings.

“We are training family docs to practice comprehensive family medicine in any community they choose to serve,” Garner said.

Accreditation ensures that graduate medical programs across the United States meet common quality standards. The process includes written documentation and site visits for in-person evaluation by a review team made up of volunteers from the specialty.

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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