

UAMS News Bureau

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UAMS Receives Grant to Promote Car Passenger Safety

FAYETTEVILLE – The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received a \$25,000 grant to promote child passenger safety in Northwest Arkansas.

The grant program, called Buckle Up for Life, is a national child passenger safety education program created by Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center and Toyota to encourage all families to buckle their seatbelts and use car seats.

The project will focus on reaching out to the region’s 200,000 Pacific Islander and Hispanic residents through the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus and its Office of Community Health and Research (OCHR). OCHR focuses on addressing disparities in health outcomes and risks that are related to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, primary language and health literacy.

OCHR will provide education sessions in English, Spanish and Marshallese in Benton, Carroll, Madison and Washington counties, and will provide a limited number of car seats to the community.

“While our efforts will largely be focused on the Marshallese and Hispanic communities, all communities in Northwest Arkansas will be equally served and all will have the potential to increase their knowledge and understanding of child passenger safety,” said Krista Langston, director of research programs with OCHR.

OCHR employs four Child Passenger Safety (CPS) technicians. Three of the four CPS technicians are bilingual, speaking Spanish and/or Marshallese in addition to English. OCHR team members attend community events to assist with child safety seat checks where parents and caregivers receive education and hands-on assistance. Team members also provide child passenger safety education when working with clients through various OCHR programs.

In addition to outreach programs, the grant will allow OCHR to ensure that all Buckle Up for Life education materials are translated into Marshallese and Spanish.

“The availability of translated safety and injury prevention materials will be a sustainable and valuable resource far beyond the grant period,” Langston said. “Materials will be distributed through home visits, community events, parental support groups and through local school districts.”

OCHR has already prioritized injury prevention in the region through the Health Resources & Services Administration’s Healthy Start program, which is the only Healthy Start program in Arkansas. The program promotes positive birth outcomes and improves the health and well-being of mothers and babies before, during and after pregnancy. OCHR will ensure that Buckle Up for Life becomes a required component of the Healthy Start program and will include child passenger safety efforts in all community events that are focused on children and families.

In addition, OCHR has partnered with several local school districts in Northwest Arkansas to reinforce health promotional activities. OCHR will use these current partnerships to offer a Buckle Up for Life curriculum to teenagers in the local school districts. The curriculum will be taught in English, Spanish and Marshallese.

“We want to help ensure that every car ride is safe for every child by educating people about safe travels – one family, one car seat, one lesson at a time,” said Pearl McElfish, Ph.D., vice chancellor for the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus.

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.

The UAMS Northwest Regional Campus includes 250 medical, pharmacy, nursing and health professions students, 50 medical and pharmacy residents, and 1,000 community-based faculty. The campus has nine clinics including a student-led clinic and physical, occupational and speech therapy. Faculty conduct research to reduce health disparities. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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