

UAMS News Bureau

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**News Release
June 30, 2020**

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**UAMS Awarded \$940,000 by FCC to Help
with COVID-19 Response Across the State**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received \$940,000 from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for digital health technology to treat patients for COVID-19 and deliver medical information to patients and providers across the state.

The funds also will help compensate UAMS for past and current health care costs related to COVID-19 and allow purchase of a smart phone application to allow UAMS staff to self-screen before starting work each day, including temperature checks.

“We greatly appreciate this financial support from the FCC,” said UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA. “It will equip Arkansas’s only health sciences university with the digital health equipment, software and devices necessary to address COVID-19 needs statewide.”

Administered through the UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation — led by Curtis Lowery, M.D., the institute’s director — the money will allow more than 8,000 Arkansans to receive COVID-19 screenings by UAMS through a digital health portal.

It also will enable UAMS to provide access to digital health consultations to more than 300 medical facilities on COVID-19 best practices in the delivery of patient care.

In addition to treating COVID-19 patients, UAMS will use the money for virtual visits for patients who require multiple trips to a clinic such as pregnant women who have 12 to 17 prenatal visits to a UAMS hospital or clinic.

“By allowing the vast majority of these visits to be replaced with virtual services, mothers and other patients and their families will be less likely to be exposed to COVID-19,” Patterson said.

The self-screening smart phone application also will allow UAMS’ more than 10,000 employees to more quickly and safely pass through points of entry when they report to work.

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“As the state’s only academic medical center, UAMS is the epicenter of clinical response for COVID-19 in Arkansas,” said UAMS Medical Center CEO Steppe Mette, M.D. “Since March, UAMS has incurred a number of digital health equipment and software expenses to respond to statewide needs. Many of these expenses had to be shouldered quickly with near instantaneous deployments to respond to our rural, medically underserved areas.”

Since March, the costs related to COVID-19 have included digital health-enabled COVID-19 screening through an online-portal, medical advice delivered over live video to providers and nurses across the state, and digital communication between providers and patients in negative pressure patient rooms to reduce the use of personal protective equipment.

Also, UAMS has sent out a mobile unit to provide COVID-19 screenings, bought intensive care unit software to manage the surge of COVID-19 patients, and bought other digital health applications to extend pulmonology, infectious disease and other medical services important for the care of COVID-19 patients.

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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