



**News Release**  
**Sept. 18, 2020**

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## **UAMS, Baptist Health, Arkansas Children's Working Together To Expand Cancer Treatment in Arkansas**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas Board of Trustees today approved joint ventures between the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), Baptist Health and Arkansas Children's to expand access to radiation therapy as well as to establish the state's first proton therapy center.

The UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute and Baptist Health have formed a joint venture to locate a radiation therapy center at Baptist Health Medical Center – North Little Rock, where UAMS physicians will provide radiation therapy starting in January 2021.

The Board of Trustees also approved a joint venture between UAMS, Arkansas Children's and Baptist Health to develop and operate a proton therapy center on UAMS' Little Rock campus.

Proton therapy is a highly sophisticated radiation-based technology for cancer treatment that has the capability to deliver safer, high-dose radiation to cancer patients compared to traditional X-ray radiation treatment. It is widely used to treat children with cancer, as children are particularly sensitive to the effects of radiation therapy.

“The UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute provides exceptional cancer care in all areas, including state-of-the-art radiation therapy,” said UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA. “By working with Baptist Health and Arkansas Children's, we will ensure that more Arkansans have access to the state's most advanced treatment options and highly trained radiation oncologists.”

“This is another example of how strategic collaboration with other leading health care providers can improve the health of Arkansans. Baptist Health has a long history of bringing innovative technologies to our state and to join forces with UAMS to expand access to cancer care on our North Little Rock campus is extremely exciting,” said Troy Wells, president and CEO of Baptist Health.

“Arkansas Children’s is pleased to play a role in bringing proton therapy to Arkansas. This effort is part of our continuous commitment to the children of Arkansas to provide state-of-the-art care. Pediatric cancer patients will benefit greatly through this collaborative venture,” said Marcy Doderer, president and CEO of Arkansas Children’s.

The proton therapy center will be the first in Arkansas and one of only about 40 in the country. It will be located in a building to be constructed on the east side of the UAMS campus.

“Not only will these joint ventures provide vital cancer therapies for the people of Arkansas, they also will expand the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute’s statewide reach and advance our efforts to achieve National Cancer Institute Designation,” said UAMS Cancer Institute Director Michael Birrer, M.D., Ph.D., who is also a UAMS vice chancellor.

Achieving National Cancer Institute Designation would provide multiple benefits, including a significantly increased ability to receive federal research funding; improved access to clinical trials unavailable elsewhere in the state; and the creation of new, high-paying health care jobs.

The Department of Radiation Oncology in the UAMS College of Medicine has active clinical, educational and research programs. The department is home to Arkansas’ first radiation oncology residency program, which provides specialized training beyond medical school for physicians interested in radiation therapy. Fen Xia, M.D., Ph.D., is director of the Department of Radiation Oncology.

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](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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