

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS' Institute for Digital Health & Innovation
Receives \$1.5 Million Grant to Enhance
Traumatic Brain Injury Resources**

LITTLE ROCK — The Institute for Digital Health & Innovation at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) received a grant to fund a \$1.5 million project to enhance clinical and educational resources for Arkansans living with a traumatic brain injury (TBI).

The Administration for Community Living, under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, awarded the five-year grant in an effort to expand the reach and impact of Arkansas' TBI programs, including the TBI State Partnership Program and the Trauma Rehabilitation Resources Program (TRRP), both of which are housed at the UAMS institute.

For the duration of the grant, the programs will receive more than \$200,000 annually, and the Arkansas Department of Health will contribute an additional \$100,090 to the grant each year.

“Digital health tools have allowed UAMS and our stakeholders to better serve Arkansas communities and provide quality health care throughout the state,” said institute Director Joseph Sanford, M.D. “As our teams increase access to specialists and resources through digital health, we can enhance services that our community members need in every part of the state.”

The grant aims to add expert case management and new screening tools to better assess the individual needs of TBI survivors, in addition to helping them re-enter the workforce and increase their community engagement. The grant will also expand the TBI state registry to include persons with mild TBI. Previously, the registry only tracked Arkansans with a moderate to severe TBI.

Additionally, the TBI programs at UAMS will implement a Return-to-Learn initiative to train education professionals in the state's public school system. The statewide program will work with school nurses, psychologists and therapists to enhance recognition and intervention for children living with a TBI.

“We continue to see a real shortage of rehabilitative services for persons living with TBI. This leads to an increased use of costly emergency services, reduced community engagement, less employment opportunities and ultimately a reduction in the quality of life,” said Danny Bercher, Ph.D., assistant director of TRRP.

“If they get adequate rehabilitation and other community supports, then they have a chance to be productive and active members in our communities,” he continued. “We believe everybody should have the opportunity to get back on their feet, and that is what our programs are all about.”

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* recognized UAMS Medical Center as a Best Hospital for 2021-22; ranked its ear, nose and throat program among the top 50 nationwide for the third year; and named five areas as high performing — colon cancer surgery, diabetes, hip replacement, knee replacement and stroke. *Forbes* magazine ranked UAMS as seventh in the nation on its Best Employers for Diversity list. UAMS also ranked in the top 30% nationwide on *Forbes*' Best Employers for Women list and was the only Arkansas employer included. UAMS has 2,876 students, 898 medical residents and six 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, 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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