

**UAMS News Bureau**

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**News Release**  
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**UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute's  
Radiation Oncology Center Becomes First and Only Center  
in Arkansas to Earn APEX Accreditation**

LITTLE ROCK — The [Radiation Oncology Center](#) at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received the highest national accreditation from the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO).

The center, which is part of the [UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute](#), is the only radiation oncology center in the state to be granted full accreditation by the Society's [ASTRO Accreditation Program for Excellence](#) (APEX<sup>®</sup>). The accreditation is voluntary and granted by ASTRO for a four-year term ending in November 2025.

Accreditation was awarded after a site visit in November 2021 and a review of the center's modalities, techniques, equipment, information and treatment planning systems for compliance with APEX safety and quality standards. APEX is the society's highest honor, recognizing centers that meet the most rigorous standards for safety and performance.

"APEX accreditation ensures patients that our radiation therapy treatment is safe and provided by a team of highly trained professionals," said Fen Xia, M.D., Ph.D., radiation oncologist, professor and chair of the UAMS Department of Radiation Oncology in the College of Medicine.

According to the American Cancer Society, radiation is one of the most common treatments for cancer and is needed by half of all patients. The Radiation Oncology Center at UAMS is the only center in the state that treats both adult and pediatric cancer patients.

UAMS provides comprehensive, state-of-the-art radiation therapy including brachytherapy, intensity modulated radiation therapy, surface guided radiation therapy, radiosurgery for brain tumors and stereotactic body radiation therapy for lung, liver, prostate, pancreas, spine and other body sites.

"This accreditation is so well deserved," said Michael Birrer, M.D., Ph.D., UAMS vice chancellor and director of the Cancer Institute. "Having come from cancer centers in other

states, this radiation therapy center is state of the art in every way and offers the broadest range of cutting-edge therapies to treat virtually every type of cancer.”

For the full list of accredited facilities, visit this [site](#).

An expanded 52,249 square-foot Radiation Oncology Center is under construction on the UAMS campus in Little Rock. When the facility opens in 2023, it will house the state’s only proton center in partnership with Baptist Health, Arkansas Children’s and Proton International. An alternative to radiation therapy, proton therapy is a state-of-the-art technology that uses a precisely focused high-energy beam to target tumors, often in hard-to-reach areas without affecting surrounding tissue. Proton therapy is particularly effective in treating solid cancer tumors, including tumors of the brain, spine, head and neck, lung, prostate, colon and some breast tumors. It is ideal for pediatric patients.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a 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. 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 3,047 students, 873 medical residents and fellows, 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](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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