

UAMS News Bureau

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**Mohamed O. Elasri, Ph.D., Named
Associate Vice Chancellor for Research at UAMS**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) recently appointed Mohamed O. Elasri, Ph.D., as the associate vice chancellor for research.

Elasri is an active researcher in infectious diseases and has established a highly innovative research program that includes antibiotic resistance, biofilm development, advanced material imaging and new regulatory ribonucleic acids (RNAs), a long, single-stranded chain of cells similar to DNA, which provides the code for a cell's activities. RNAs convert that code into proteins to carry out cellular functions. His work is highly translational toward improving human health and medical practice.

“As Arkansas No. 1 public research institution, we are thrilled to have Dr. Elasri join us at a time when our research is growing at an accelerating pace,” said Shuk-Mei Ho, Ph.D., vice chancellor for research & innovation at UAMS. “He brings a wealth of leadership and administrative experiences that will expand our capacity to coordinate and enhance support for innovative, interdisciplinary research programs across campus.”

Elasri previously served at the University of Southern Mississippi as a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and the inaugural director of the Center for Molecular and Cellular Biosciences, and the principal investigator and director of the Mississippi IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence (INBRE). While at the Hattiesburg, Mississippi, university, Elasri also served as the associate dean of research and graduate affairs in the College of Science and Technology and the College of Arts and Sciences.

He received his Ph.D. in microbiology and molecular genetics from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma. Elasri completed his postdoctoral training at the National Institutes of Health and at UAMS under the mentorship of Mark Smeltzer, Ph.D., professor in both the Department of Microbiology & Immunology and the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in the College of Medicine. Smeltzer also holds the Endowed Chair in Sciences Basic to Medicine and is director of the Center for Microbial Pathogenesis and Host Inflammatory Responses, a Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) funded by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS).

Elasri also focuses on addressing health disparities for underserved communities, leading several interdisciplinary research projects in this field. He co-founded a community health clinic for underserved residents in south Mississippi and an annual conference in Mississippi to address health equity issues. When the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, he developed an emergency COVID-PCR testing facility for south Mississippi, allowing regional health care providers to continue their essential surgeries and care.

Elasri's recent honors include receiving the Multidisciplinary Research Innovation and the T.W. Bennett Distinguished Professor of Microbiology awards from the University of Southern Mississippi and the Outstanding Contribution to Health Disparity and Diversity Research Award from the Mississippi Academy of Sciences.

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 or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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