

UAMS News Bureau

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UAMS Named Top Performer in Healthcare Equality Index

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) was named a 2022 Top Performer in the Human Rights Campaign’s Healthcare Equality Index.

The survey is used to evaluate health care facilities and measure their support for the needs of LGBTQ+ patients and employees. UAMS, which was named a Top Performer in 2020 as well, currently holds a rating of 95 out of 100 in the index. That score indicates that UAMS goes beyond the basics in its policies and practices in LGBTQ+ care.

Five criteria are measured to determine how inclusive a health care facility is: nondiscrimination and staff training; patient services and support; employee benefits and policies; patient and community engagement; and responsible citizenship.

Brian Gittens, Ed.D, MPA, vice chancellor of the UAMS Division for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, said his employees work hard to ensure all Arkansans receive quality care, regardless of a patient’s gender identity or sexual orientation.

“UAMS is committed to creating an environment that exemplifies diversity — in our classrooms, in our workforce and in our clinical spaces,” Gittens said. “We believe that diversity goes hand-in-hand with health equity and by committing to diversity we can help reduce health disparities in Arkansas.”

The UAMS LGBTQ+ Subcommittee advocates for equitable health care services for students, employees and patients. It promotes a welcoming campus climate by increasing inclusion, awareness and education for the LGBTQ+ community. The group has worked to add pronoun placards to nametags and advocated for unisex bathrooms across the campus.

The campus is also home to a Gender Clinic, which provides surgical and hormonal treatment to transgender and gender-nonconforming patients. Additionally, the UAMS 12th Street Health and Wellness Clinic hosts Rainbow Night monthly to provide safe, free, nonjudgmental care for LGBTQ+ patients.

“Our recognition speaks to the quality of care we provide at UAMS,” Gittens said. “We always strive to do our best and will continue to push for equality and inclusivity.”

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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