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**UAMS Launches Program to Provide
At-home COVID-19 Test Kits to Communities in Need**

FAYETTEVILLE — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Office of Community Health & Research is working with community organizations throughout Northwest Arkansas to distribute at-home COVID-19 test kits to populations in need.

Through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Rapid Acceleration of Diagnostics (RADx) initiative, 1,400 COVID-19 test kits are being distributed to UAMS to disperse among community organizations who work with Marshallese and Hispanic populations in Northwest Arkansas. RootED Northwest Arkansas, Arkansas Immigrant Defense, the Marshallese Educational Initiative and the Republic of the Marshall Islands Consulate General's Office are all distributing tests as part of the project.

“This collaboration between UAMS and other community partners gives our community the right to participate in their health by giving them access to free COVID-19 tests, which will help community members make healthy choices about their care as it relates to the ongoing pandemic,” said Larissa Navarrete, a UAMS community health worker embedded at RootED Northwest Arkansas, a Springdale-based nonprofit.

While COVID-19 infections are declining in Arkansas, preventative efforts, such as testing and vaccination, are still essential to defeating the pandemic. Providing access to reliable tests can allow people to learn of their infection sooner and take appropriate quarantine and isolation precautions to prevent further spread.

As of May 5, the Arkansas Department of Health has reported more than 11,400 deaths from COVID-19. About 56% of the state's eligible population is fully immunized. According to the ADH, more than 80% of the state's COVID-19 hospitalizations since February 2020 are among unvaccinated patients.

“We're excited to work with our community partners to continue to lower COVID-19 infection rates in Northwest Arkansas,” said Betsy O'Connor, associate director of research for UAMS Community Health & Research. “Providing easy access to tests and vaccines is crucial to defeating this pandemic.”

For a list of locations where at-home tests are available through the RADx program, or to find COVID-19 services and education, visit nwa.uams.edu/covid/nwatesting.

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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. 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 11,000 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](#).

The UAMS Northwest Regional Campus includes 288 medical, pharmacy, nursing and health professions students, 64 medical and pharmacy residents, two sports medicine fellows, and 1,000 community-based faculty. The campus has nine clinics including a student-led clinic and physical, occupational and speech therapy. Faculty conduct research to reduce health disparities. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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