

News Release
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UAMS Offers Free Music Workshops for Patients with Neurodegenerative Disorders

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), in collaboration with Arts Integration Services, is offering free music workshops for patients with neurodegenerative disorders, beginning Oct. 26.

All the workshops will be held on Wednesdays from noon to 12:30 p.m. in the UAMS Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Room G1180-1190, at 629 Jack Stephens Drive in Little Rock.

The dates for the workshops are Oct. 26, Nov. 2 and 16, Dec. 7 and 21, Jan. 4 and 18, March 1 and 15, April 5 and 19, May 3 and 17, and June 7 and 21.

These workshops will address cognitive, physical and emotional needs of patients, according to Arts Integration Services, whose trained musician, Patty Oeste, will lead them in coordination with the UAMS Movement Disorders Clinic. The workshops are designed to teach patients how the voice works, and how to exercise the vocal apparatus and practice breath control.

“This opportunity to explore vocal music can help patients process the physical and mental challenges they face,” according to the clinic.

The idea for the workshops arose after participants in ongoing art and cooking workshops for Parkinson’s disease patients requested additional opportunities for social interaction and emotional stimulation, said Suzanne J. Dhall, DrPH, a research associate in the UAMS College of Medicine Department of Neurology, which operates the clinic. The clinic teamed up with Arts Integration Services to put on the art workshops for Parkinson’s patients.

Funded through a 2021 UAMS Chancellor’s Circle grant to the Department of Neurology, the music classes are available for people that have neurodegenerative

UAMS Offers Free Music Workshops for Patients with Neurodegenerative Disorders
Page 2

disorders including Parkinson's disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Huntington's disease and Lewy body dementia, as well as their caretakers.

Parkinson's is a progressive nervous system disorder affecting dopamine-producing areas in the brain. ALS is a disease affecting motor neurons of the spinal cord. Huntington's disease is an inherited condition in which nerve cells in the brain break down over time, causing movement, cognitive and psychiatric symptoms. Lewy body dementia is characterized by dementia, mild parkinsonism and fluctuations in attention and alertness.

No singing or musical experience is required to participate. However, participants must register by contacting Dhall at sjdhall@uams.edu or by calling or texting her at 602-635-0739.

Participants are encouraged to attend as many workshops as they wish.

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. 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](#).

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