

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Receives Perinatal Care Certification
from The Joint Commission**

LITTLE ROCK — The Joint Commission awarded its Gold Seal of Approval for Perinatal Care Certification to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), demonstrating that UAMS has met and exceeded strict standards of care for maternal, fetal and newborn health.

UAMS is the first hospital in Central Arkansas and one of 66 hospitals nationwide to receive the certification.

It recognizes UAMS' efforts to achieve integrated, patient-centered care for clinically uncomplicated pregnancies and births. The certification uses standards, guidelines and The Joint Commission's perinatal care core performance measures for managing and monitoring aspects of perinatal care that are critical to improving and maintaining the health of newborns and their mothers.

In July, a team from The Joint Commission visited UAMS to evaluate compliance with certification standards and conduct onsite observations and interviews. Joint Commission standards are developed in consultation with health care experts and providers, measurement experts and patients.

The Joint Commission is an independent, nonprofit organization that evaluates and accredits more than 22,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States.

“This is a beautiful reflection of our commitment to excellence for maternal, fetal and newborn care,” said Nirvana Manning, M.D., associate professor and chair of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. “It was a huge group effort.”

Other leaders at UAMS who were instrumental in obtaining the certification include Sara Peeples, M.D., associate professor in the UAMS College of Medicine Department of Pediatrics' Division of Neonatology, medical director of the UAMS neonatal intensive care unit and co-director of Women and Infants Health services; Dora Smith, M.D.,

associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology and director of inpatient obstetric services; Michelle McFail, MSN, senior nursing director for Women and Infants Health services and medical/surgical services; Rebecca Sartini, DNP, RN, assistant director of nursing for Women and Infants Health services; and Michael Smith, an associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, and quality officer for Women and Infants Health services.

“Perinatal Care Certification recognizes health care organizations committed to fostering continuous quality improvement in patient safety and quality of care,” said Mark Pelletier, RN, MS, chief operating officer and chief nurse executive of Accreditation and Certification Operations at The Joint Commission. “We commend UAMS for using certification to reduce variation in its clinical processes and to strengthen its program structure and management framework for newborns and their mothers.”

“I am proud of our large team of multidisciplinary professionals who contributed to this achievement,” said Michelle Krause, M.D., interim CEO of the UAMS Medical Center and interim senior vice chancellor for UAMS Health. “We appreciate this recognition of the care and dedication that they put forth every day to ensure the mothers and newborns at UAMS are receiving the very best care.”

According to The Joint Commission, organizations that monitor and adhere to perinatal care core measures are more likely to demonstrate a reduction in infant mortality rates, maternal complications and mortality, unnecessary induction of labor, elective deliveries that can lead to an increase in admission rates to the neonatal intensive care unit, complications during deliveries, prematurity rates that can lead to infant mortality and costs associated with lengthy hospital stays due to pregnancy related complications.

For more information, please visit The Joint Commission website:

www.jointcommission.org.

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 3,240 students, 913 medical residents and fellows, and five 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](#).