

UAMS News Bureau

Office of Communications & Marketing
4301 West Markham # 890
Little Rock, AR 72205-7199

uamshealth.com/news



**News Release
June 1, 2023**

Media Contacts:

Leslie W. Taylor, 501-686-8998
Wireless phone: 501-951-7260
leslie@uams.edu

Yavonda Chase, 501-686-8994
Wireless phone: 501-416-0354
Yavonda@uams.edu

**UAMS Huntington’s Disease Clinic Receives
Renewed Designation as a Center of Excellence**

LITTLE ROCK — The Huntington’s Disease Clinic at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) recently received a three-year designation as a Center of Excellence by the Huntington’s Disease Society of America (HDSA), signifying that it provides the best possible care for patients and families.

It is the only HDSA Center of Excellence in Arkansas and one of just 56 nationwide.

HDSA Centers of Excellence provide a multidisciplinary team approach to Huntington’s disease care, enabling patients and their families to benefit from the combined expertise of neurologists, psychiatrists, physical therapists, speech pathologists, social workers, nutritionists, geneticists and genetics counselors.

UAMS was first designated as an HDSA Center of Excellence in 2021 and again received the designation in 2022. The re-application process has now switched to a three-year cycle.

In addition to the renewed designation, the UAMS clinic will receive \$19,987 from the HDSA to support medical and social services for patients and their families in Arkansas and the surrounding area.

Hillary Williams, M.D., an assistant professor in the UAMS College of Medicine Department of Neurology, recently became co-director of the clinic with Tuhin Virmani, M.D., Ph.D. She said the continued designation “allows us to continue to expand our medical and social services to more Huntington’s disease patients across the state.”

Research is also being done at UAMS to improve outcomes for Huntington’s patients.

There are an estimated 200 people in Arkansas with the disease.

UAMS Huntington's Disease Clinic Receives Renewed Designation as a Center of Excellence

Page 2

“People with Huntington’s disease who obtain care at a Center of Excellence can rest assured that they are obtaining the best possible care for themselves and their caregivers,” Virmani said.

Huntington’s disease is a fatal disorder that causes the progressive breakdown of nerve cells in the brain, leading to the deterioration of physical and mental abilities. Symptoms vary but often include personality changes, mood swings, depression, forgetfulness, impaired judgment, an unsteady gait and involuntary movements, slurred speech, difficulty in swallowing and significant weight loss.

While there is no cure, there are resources and medications available to help manage symptoms and improve patients’ quality of life.

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](#).

Like us, we're social:



###