UAMS Oral Health Clinic Celebrates 10th Anniversary, Expansion

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) today celebrated the 10th anniversary of the opening of its Delta Dental of Arkansas Foundation Oral Health Clinic with a ceremony to mark its expansion into a newly remodeled space.

The renovated area adds 3,490 square feet to the clinic’s existing footprint. With the expansion, the 12,800 square-foot clinic now has four new dental hygiene operatories for a total of 15, supporting three full-time hygienists and enhancing patient appointment availability.

UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, led Friday’s ceremony and anniversary celebration.

“The UAMS Oral Health Clinic has, in 10 short years, grown exponentially in its impact across the university campus and the state, caring for Arkansans and training dental residents,” Patterson said. “This new space will allow us to maintain that high-performance standard and even raise it higher.”

The clinic first saw patients in January 2013. Since then it has provided more than 80,000 dental treatment appointments to about 18,000 patients.

“The critical need of dentistry to care for the medically complex and vulnerable populations has long been a void that needed to be filled,” said Ashley McMillan, DDS. “The clinic and its state-of-the-art technology and equipment has been the ideal training ground to elevate the standard of care for dentists entering the workforce. As an Arkansas dentist, I am proud to say I trained here and work here.”

McMillan is the director of the General Practice Residency program and associate professor in the UAMS College of Health Professions. She was one of the two first residents to complete the General Practice Residency in Dentistry program in 2015.
The increase in dental operatories from the expansion also will enable the residency program to apply for two additional residency slots, potentially increasing the program from six residents to eight.

“More dentists and more space mean more access to care for our patients,” McMillan said. “It also decreases the wait time for our critically ill patients needing dental treatment to be able to have their medically necessary procedures.”

McMillan said the addition of a new conference room to the clinic has facilitated education and collaboration among residents and faculty, allowing for more patient care conferences, better presentations and communication.

In addition to Patterson, the celebration also included UAMS Provost Stephanie Gardner, Pharm.D., Ed.D.; College of Health Professions Dean Susan Long, Ed.D.; William Slagle, DDS, M.Ed., former director of the Center for Dental Education; and Billy Tarpley, DDS, executive director of the Arkansas State Dental Association.

“As Arkansas has retained some of the residents who trained at UAMS, the program has increased its visibility and built its own network of dentists,” Long said. “We look forward to see it continue to grow and develop into the future.”

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.

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