

UAMS News Bureau

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

uamshealth.com/news



**News Release
July 18, 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 Opens New Radiation Oncology Center;
Proton Therapy Coming Soon**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute opened a new [Radiation Oncology Center](#) today with expanded capabilities to provide advanced radiation treatments for children and adults with cancer, including the state’s first Proton Center.

The \$65 million, 58,000-square-foot structure at 3900 W. Capitol Ave. in Little Rock was built to accommodate three new linear accelerators that customize radiation delivery based the type and stage of a patient’s cancer.

“The opening of this facility marks an unprecedented commitment to the future of cancer treatment in Arkansas and the region,” said UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA. “The innovative therapies and advanced technology available here place UAMS among the top centers worldwide at the forefront of cancer treatment.”

The UAMS Radiation Oncology Center is the only cancer center in Arkansas to offer Ethos Adaptive Therapy, a unique form of X-ray radiation that adapts to daily changes in a tumor’s shape and position over the course of treatment.

Two other linear accelerators deliver Edge Radiosurgery, a specialized nonsurgical technique used to destroy tumors in the brain and spine with end-to-end accuracy of less than one millimeter, and radiotherapy with motion management, which controls radiation directed at tumors that move as patients breathe.

The center will open for adult and pediatric patients needing X-ray radiation July 24.

UAMS already provides radiation therapy for children and adults with a broad range of cancers and is the only provider of pediatric radiation therapy in Arkansas. About half of all cancer patients need some form of radiation during the course of their illness.

“This is the most sophisticated, cutting-edge radiation delivery technology available in the U.S.,” said Fen Xia, M.D., Ph.D., director of the UAMS Radiation Oncology Center, part of the UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute. “Each machine is specialized and designed to treat specific types of cancer in the body.

“The most effective cancer treatment is not a one size fits all. It should be customized to a patient’s cancer type and stage. That’s what this technology allows us to do more of.”

The three-level center features new treatment technology, including the first Philips Spectral Computed Tomography (CT) scanner in the U.S. Also known as dual energy CT, the highly sophisticated scanner provides greater tumor visibility and tissue information than a conventional CT and reduces the number of CTs required for a patient.

The second floor of the new center will house the 9,000-square-foot Proton Center of Arkansas, which is a collaboration between UAMS, Baptist Health, Arkansas Children’s and Proton International. It is set to open in October and will also support the UAMS-Baptist Health Cancer Network. Proton therapy is an innovative form of radiation treatment that harnesses proton particles that can be precisely targeted to destroy solid tumors in hard-to-reach areas. Proton radiation reduces the amount of healthy tissue exposed to radiation and minimizes side effects.

“This center will provide the most advanced cancer radiation medicine in the world that will give patients the best chance of survival and quality of life,” said Michael Birrer, M.D., Ph.D., UAMS vice chancellor and director of the Cancer Institute. “We now have everything a patient needs right here at home without them having to leave the state for these cutting-edge treatments.”

The expansion will also support the Radiation Oncology Center’s active clinical research and clinical trial programs. UAMS radiation oncologists currently have nine active clinical trials that are testing treatments for breast, prostate, head and neck and non-small cell lung cancers. Eleven additional studies, including three involving proton, are in progress. The trials include national cooperative group studies that collect information on new treatments from multiple cancer centers, as well as trials originated by UAMS radiation oncologists.

Designed by Wittenberg, Delony & Davidson, the new center features a massive glass exterior that brings in natural light in the waiting rooms to support physical and emotional health. A large skylight in the center of the building allows in natural light.

The UAMS Radiation Oncology Center is ranked nationally as a Program of Excellence by the American Society of Radiation Oncology. The center employs 75 people, including board-certified radiation oncologists, licensed medical physicists, radiation therapists, dosimetrists, nurses and support staff who are experienced in treating children and adults with a broad range of cancers. Center director Fen Xia, M.D., Ph.D., is a fellow of the American Society of Radiation Oncology, a designation awarded to only 4% of the organization’s 10,000 members.

UAMS previously offered radiation therapy at a building located at 4130 Shuffield Drive on the main UAMS campus in Little Rock.

The Radiation Oncology Center is open from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Appointments for new patients are available by calling 501-664-4568.

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: 