

**UAMS News Bureau**

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**UAMS, AR Health Ventures Partner to Strengthen  
Diabetes Self-Management Education in Arkansas**

FAYETTEVILLE — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Office of Community Health & Research and AR Health Ventures are partnering with other institutions in the state to help rural, diabetic Arkansans better understand and manage their diabetes.

Funded by the U.S Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), the program — named Reaching Every Arkansan by Connecting Health (REACH) Resources to Reduce Diabetes Disparities — will improve access to diabetes self-management education and support for rural and underserved populations in 61 high-need counties in Arkansas. The REACH program will allow partners to support rural pharmacies in the development of such diabetes self-management programs and train community health workers to support diabetes patients.

The UAMS Office of Community Health & Research, AR Health Ventures, the Arkansas Community Health Worker Association and the Arkansas Community Pharmacy Enhanced Services Network support the program.

“Our goal is to ensure every Arkansan has the opportunity for optimal health, and this program will allow us to reach more people with diabetes to support their well-being,” said Pearl McElfish, Ph.D., division director of the UAMS Office of Community Health & Research.

Since its founding in 2012, the UAMS Office of Community Health & Research has worked with clinics, churches, community organizations and community members to research diabetes and to implement culturally tailored diabetes self-management programs, including a family-model program.

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AR Health Ventures is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the health, health care and well-being of Arkansans by fostering commercial investment in inventions, discoveries and work products arising from research at UAMS.

According to the American Diabetes Association, more than 300,000 Arkansans — nearly 14% of the state's population — have been diagnosed with diabetes, while an additional 70,000 Arkansans are believed to have undiagnosed diabetes.

The 61 counties in Arkansas that were identified by the CDC as being high need are Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Clark, Clay, Cleveland, Columbia, Conway, Craighead, Crawford, Crittenden, Cross, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Franklin, Fulton, Garland, Greene, Hempstead, Hot Spring, Howard, Independence, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Lafayette, Lawrence, Lee, Lincoln, Little River, Logan, Madison, Miller, Mississippi, Monroe, Montgomery, Nevada, Ouachita, Perry, Phillips, Pike, Poinsett, Polk, Pope, Prairie, Pulaski, Randolph, Scott, Sebastian, Sevier, Sharp, St. Francis, Stone, Union, Van Buren, Washington, White, Woodruff and Yell.

The UAMS Northwest Regional Campus includes 356 medical, pharmacy, nursing and health professions students, 76 medical and pharmacy residents, and two sports medicine fellows. The campus has 13 clinics including internal and family medicine, a student-led clinic, orthopaedics and sports medicine, behavioral health/psychiatry, geriatrics, genetics counseling, transplant follow-up, and physical, occupational and speech therapy. Faculty conduct research to reduce health disparities.

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 3,275 students, 890 medical residents and fellows, and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 12,000 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](http://www.uams.edu) or [www.uamshealth.com](http://www.uamshealth.com). Find us on [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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