

**UAMS News Bureau**

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

[uamshealth.com/news](http://uamshealth.com/news)



**News Release**  
**Nov. 27, 2023**

**Media Contacts:**

Leslie W. Taylor, 501-686-8998  
Wireless phone: 501-951-7260  
[leslie@uams.edu](mailto:leslie@uams.edu)

Yavonda Chase, 501-686-8994  
Wireless phone: 501-416-0354  
[yavonda@uams.edu](mailto:yavonda@uams.edu)

**UAMS Receives \$17.6 Million Grant Renewal to Support Efforts to Recruit, Train Students in Primary Care**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received a \$17.6 million federal grant renewal to further its goal of increasing the number of practicing primary care physicians in the state, particularly in rural and medically underserved communities.

Administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the four-year Medical Student Education program award will allow UAMS to continue and enhance efforts undertaken through a HRSA grant that spanned from 2019-23.

“I’m excited about the opportunities that this grant will help us create for the aspiring physicians who receive their medical education through UAMS,” said Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, chancellor of UAMS and CEO of UAMS Health.

The objective of the renewed grant is to recruit and retain medical students who are from rural or underserved communities and who are interested in practicing in those areas after their residencies. The funding will support a variety of UAMS Regional Campuses initiatives throughout the state, including:

- Recruitment and outreach programs for prospective students
- Scholarships for medical students interested in primary care specialties (family medicine, internal medicine, obstetrics/gynecology or pediatrics)
- A faculty mentorship program to connect students with primary care physicians
- Community immersion rotations for students in rural and medically underserved areas
- Faculty development for community physician preceptors

## UAMS Receives \$17.6 Million Grant Renewal to Support Efforts to Recruit, Train Students in Primary Care

Page 2

“These efforts allow us to highlight the significant value that primary care physicians bring to their communities, specifically communities in rural Arkansas,” said Marcia Byers, Ph.D., RN, senior director of UAMS Regional Campuses.

The Association of American Medical Colleges in 2020 ranked Arkansas at No. 13 among states with the greatest need for primary care physicians. The organization found that Arkansas had 83 active primary care physicians per 100,000 people, compared with a nationwide rate of 94.7 physicians per 100,000 people.

Lack of primary care has a significant effect on health outcomes, according to a 2023 report by the Arkansas Center for Health Improvement. The center’s “Profile of the Primary Care Physician Workforce in Arkansas” noted that physician shortages have been associated with higher rates of preventable emergency department visits. Conversely, a larger primary care physician workforce has been associated with fewer avoidable hospitalizations, earlier diagnosis of disease, lower mortality and reduced costs.

“It’s important that we train more physicians in primary care, knowing that we’ll also see an increase in access for patients in their communities,” said Richard Turnage, M.D., vice chancellor for UAMS Regional Campuses.

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$17,600,000 with 10% financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. government.

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](#).

Like us, we're social:    