

**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**  
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**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 Opens Satellite Transplant Clinic in Helena-West Helena**

HELENA-WEST HELENA — Community health providers and members of the public gathered today in Helena-West Helena to celebrate the recent opening of the newest University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) transplant clinic.

Located inside the UAMS East Family Medical Center at 1393 Arkansas 242 South in Helena-West Helena, the clinic is the sixth satellite center statewide in which UAMS provides monthly follow-up care for transplant patients.

UAMS has long been the home of Arkansas' only adult kidney and liver transplant programs, having performed more than 1,800 kidney transplants since 1964 and more than 400 liver transplants since 2005.

The transplants themselves are done at UAMS' main campus in Little Rock, while preliminary, ongoing and follow-up care is provided in Little Rock as well as at satellite clinics sprinkled across the state. In addition to the newest clinic, the other five satellite clinics are located in existing UAMS Family Medicine Clinics in Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Texarkana, Fort Smith and Pine Bluff.

"We want to have the whole state covered, to make it easy for our transplant patients to obtain necessary care without having to travel long distances," said Lyle Burdine, M.D., Ph.D., a board-certified transplant surgeon and director of solid organ transplants at UAMS.

Phillips County, where the clinic is located, is the birthplace of Samuel Lee Kountz Jr. M.D., a physician and pioneer in organ transplantation who in 1961 helped perform the first kidney transplant between a recipient and a donor who were not identical twins. Kountz received his medical degree from UAMS in 1958 and was a surgical resident at Stanford Service, a San Francisco hospital, at the time. He died in late 1981.

"We hope that this clinic in a small way honors his Arkansas legacy," Burdine said.

Today's event gave providers and the public a chance to tour the inside of the newest transplant satellite clinic, as well as to listen to a 15-minute presentation by Burdine about the current state of transplantation in Arkansas.

The Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR), which evaluates transplant programs for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has included UAMS' kidney and liver transplant programs among the highest-ranked programs in the nation in categories that have the largest impact on patients' survival.

The UAMS kidney transplant program recently ranked third among 256 programs, while the UAMS liver transplant program ranked fourth among 149 programs.

Both programs received five bars — the highest ranking possible — for the speed at which patients obtain transplants after being listed. In addition, the UAMS kidney transplant program received five bars for patient survivability one year after transplant, while the liver transplant program scored four bars in the survivability category.

The types of care provided at the satellite clinics include dialysis access evaluation; liver, pancreatic and cancer evaluation and care; management of disorders of the bile ducts; and care for liver failure and liver dysfunction.

UAMS physicians travel to the outlying clinics once a month, on a regular schedule.

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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