

UAMS News Bureau

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**News Release
March 18, 2024**

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New UAMS Clinic to Treat Youth, Adolescents for Substance Use

LITTLE ROCK — A bridge is defined as a means of connection or transition. The newest clinic at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) hopes to serve as a transition for the numerous young people in Arkansas dealing with substance use disorders.

The Six Bridges Clinic is the first of its kind at UAMS, treating patients between the ages of 12 and 21 for dependency on substances like opioids, alcohol and marijuana. The outpatient program, developed in conjunction with Arkansas Children’s Hospital and funded by a grant from the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas, is located in UAMS’ Psychiatric Research Institute.

According to the 2020 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 4% of Americans ages 12 to 17 suffer from a substance use disorder — about 1 million adolescents. The rates of substance use in Arkansas youth are highly concerning, especially for alcohol (12%) and marijuana (14%), which are higher than the national average.

The clinic, whose name honors the six bridges that span the Arkansas River between Little Rock and North Little Rock, offers screening and evaluation services in addition to treatment for substance use disorders and provides up-to-date recovery resources.

“We are currently in a serious public health crisis. In Arkansas, there are only a handful of providers that treat substance use disorders in adolescents,” said Srinivasa Gokarakonda, M.D., the clinic’s medical director. “I profusely thank the Blue & You Foundation for a Healthier Arkansas for their support to help establish an outpatient substance use treatment program at UAMS for youth and young adults.”

The vision of the Six Bridges Clinic, added Gokarakonda, is to provide comprehensive assessment and treatment of adolescents and young adults with substance use disorders and to provide a broad range of community outreach efforts to raise awareness and enhance prevention, screening and referral to treatment.

The Six Bridges Clinic is open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Tuesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Anyone wanting to schedule an appointment with the clinic should call (501) 526-8487.

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 eight 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, Institute for Digital Health & Innovation and the Institute for Community 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 or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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