

UAMS News Bureau

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**Distinguished Cancer Researcher, Yong Zhu, Ph.D., Joins
UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute Leadership**

LITTLE ROCK — Prominent cancer epidemiologist, Yong Zhu, Ph.D., has joined the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute as associate director for population and translational sciences.

He also holds an appointment as professor of epidemiology in the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health.

Zhu joins UAMS after serving for more than 20 years in leadership roles at Yale Cancer Center and Yale University School of Public Health. He was the co-leader of the Yale Cancer Center’s Cancer Prevention and Control Program from 2010 to 2015 before being appointed as the assistant director of Global Cancer Epidemiology at Yale Cancer Center.

“We are so fortunate to have Dr. Zhu,” said Michael Birrer, director of the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute and UAMS vice chancellor. “He will help us fill a critical need for state-specific cancer research. The NCI [National Cancer Institute] expects this type of research, and it’s essential in helping us understand what’s contributing to cancer rates in Arkansas.”

As the associate director of population and translational sciences, Zhu will coordinate research across UAMS to foster broad interdisciplinary collaborations among basic research scientists, clinicians, epidemiologists, biostatisticians and public health experts.

“This is a great opportunity for me to join UAMS,” said Zhu. “I hope that my multidisciplinary research approaches and leadership experiences will bring complementary expertise to advance population-based cancer research by promoting interdisciplinary research and partnerships with the goal of reducing the cancer burden and health disparities in Arkansas.”

Zhu's personal research focuses on identifying biomarkers associated with cancer risk, progression and survival, and exploring their translational implications. His lab at UAMS will continue the pioneering work he initiated at Yale on the role of circadian factors and small noncoding RNAs in tumorigenesis.

Zhu has led eight National Institutes of Health (NIH) grants totaling more than \$5 million. He has also served as a co-investigator on 18 additional NIH grants.

His published research has garnered more than 10,600 citations encompassing 120 peer-reviewed publications, three book chapters and one patent. He is the associate editor of *Human Genomics*.

Zhu has delivered more than 45 presentations at notable universities and cancer centers, including MD Anderson Cancer Center, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Comprehensive Cancer Center, Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center, Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center, Eppley Cancer Center. He is a frequent speaker at the American Association of Cancer Research annual meetings.

Zhu graduated from Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China, and then earned a master's degree in molecular systematics and a doctorate in molecular biology from Rice University. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship in molecular cancer epidemiology at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

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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