

UAMS News Bureau

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UAMS Expands Group Prenatal Care to Phillips County

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) and the Boys, Girls, Adults Community Development Center are partnering to offer group prenatal care to pregnant women in Phillips County.

CenteringPregnancy® is facilitated by the UAMS Institute for Community Health Innovation and is a group prenatal care program that includes a pregnant woman’s routine prenatal visit, along with extra time for group learning and sharing. Women who participate in educational sessions may also receive wellness benefits, such as breast pumps, portable cribs and car seats.

“Our group prenatal program will not only address the issue of access for women in Phillips County, but it will also connect them to social support networks in their community,” said Krista Langston, executive director of community programs at the institute. “By utilizing our mobile health units to expand services into such towns as Helena-West Helena and Marvell, we can provide unique solutions to the immediate need for prenatal care in Arkansas.”

CenteringPregnancy® is also currently offered in select areas in northwest and south Arkansas. The institute aims to expand its group prenatal care program to 15 rural counties over the next two years by deploying mobile health units — units that are equipped to provide prenatal medical care and other health services — to medically-underserved regions across Arkansas. Specifically, the institute is targeting “maternal health deserts” — areas that lack adequate resources and health care for mothers before, during and after pregnancy.

“To improve maternal health outcomes in the state, we have to meet women where they are,” Langston said. “That means going to their communities and partnering with organizations that are experienced in serving the needs of their community.”

In addition to offering group prenatal sessions to mothers, UAMS is also providing training to rural providers to facilitate group prenatal care. UAMS is looking to train more than 50 rural providers.

Arkansas has the worst maternal mortality rate in the country — according to a report released last year by the National Center for Health Statistics — with more than 43 deaths per 100,000 births, nearly twice the national average.

To learn more about the institute’s prenatal care programs, visit uams.info/healthystart.

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 3,485 students, 915 medical residents and fellows, and seven dental residents. It is the state’s largest public employer with more than 11,000 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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