

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Receives Initial Accreditation
for Preventive Medicine Residency Program**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received initial accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education to form the Dr. Joseph H. Bates Preventive Medicine Residency Program, a blend of public health and general preventive medicine.

It will be the only preventive medicine residency program in Arkansas.

Recruitment will begin this fall with a class of two residents per year expected to start July 2027. The residents will complete the Master of Public Health program in the UAMS Fay W. Boozman College of Public Health as part of their residency curriculum.

The residency program’s mission is to train physicians in public health to prevent disease and improve health for Arkansans at individual and population levels. The program will work toward eligibility for American Board of Preventive Medicine certification in the specialty of public health and general preventive medicine after completing residency training. The program will also help connect trainees with potential areas of practice.

The new program is a joint venture between the Arkansas Department of Health, the UAMS College of Medicine’s Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, and the UAMS College of Public Health. It is funded by the Arkansas Department of Health through state tobacco tax dollars.

“This is a big step toward bridging the chasm between medicine and public health in Arkansas,” said Bala Simon, M.D., founding director of the residency program.

“Physicians trained in preventive medicine are well-equipped not only to address individual patient care but also to address the policy, system, and environmental issues that hinder the health of the population.”

Simon is also the deputy chief medical officer with the Arkansas Department of Health and an associate professor with the UAMS College of Medicine and College of Public Health.

“The program and its accreditation are a testament of our efforts to build a bridge between health care and public health in Arkansas,” said Shashank Kraleti, M.D., chair of the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine.

Mark Williams, Ph.D., dean of the UAMS College of Public Health, added, “This is an exciting opportunity for UAMS College of Public Health to engage in graduate medical education and to train future public health physician leaders of Arkansas.”

Molly Gathright, M.D., the executive associate dean of graduate medical education at UAMS, said the new residency will help Arkansas’ communities meet the public health challenges they face.

“The accreditation of the Dr. Joseph H. Bates Preventive Medicine Residency Program reflects UAMS’ continued leadership in graduate medical education and our commitment to training physicians who can meet Arkansas’ evolving health needs,” she said.

The Dr. Joseph H. Bates Preventive Medicine Residency Program is named in memory of Joseph H. Bates, M.D., M.S., an internationally known tuberculosis researcher, pulmonologist, and proponent of preventive medicine for more than 50 years. He was vice chair of the UAMS Department of Internal Medicine, chief of medical services for the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System, deputy state health officer at the Arkansas Department of Health, and associate dean for public health practice at the UAMS College of Public Health.

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 3,553 students and 1,015 medical residents and fellows. It is the state’s largest public employer with about 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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