



News Release
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UA Board of Trustees Approves UAMS Plan to Lease, Operate Encore Medical Center in Bryant

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas Board of Trustees approved today a plan by the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) to lease and operate the Encore Medical Center, a 53-licensed-bed, 108,055-square-foot hospital in Bryant.

The facility will become the newest hospital in the UAMS Health system, increasing UAMS's overall bed capacity and extending its clinical footprint into Saline County.

"The addition of the Encore facility represents an important step in UAMS' commitment to expanding access to high-quality, specialized healthcare for Arkansans," said UAMS Chancellor C. Lowry Barnes, M.D. "This facility will allow us to better meet the healthcare needs of patients closer to where they live, strengthen our statewide presence, and advance our mission of improving the health and well-being of all Arkansans."

UAMS will lease the facility from The Landes Group, a Dallas-based real estate investment firm that is expected to acquire the Encore Medical Center property from Arkansas Heart Hospital by late summer.

"We are incredibly proud of the physicians, nurses, staff, and leaders who have cared for patients at Encore Medical Center and helped establish it as a trusted resource for Saline County and central Arkansas," said Jacob Robinson, president of Arkansas Heart Hospital. "As we looked ahead, we recognized an opportunity for UAMS to build on that foundation and continue serving the community in a meaningful way. Arkansas Heart Hospital remains committed to our mission and will continue to provide care in Saline County through a local clinical presence."

Encore Medical Center is an acute care facility at 1901 Encore Way in Bryant. The facility was constructed by Arkansas Heart Hospital and opened in 2021 with a focus on bariatric weight loss surgery and peripheral vascular disease. The center includes emergency services, inpatient medical-surgical beds, intensive care, surgical suites, diagnostic imaging and laboratory services.

The lease agreement is expected to be finalized in the coming weeks. Encore Medical Center will continue to be operated by the Arkansas Heart Hospital through Sept. 30, 2026. Patient care at Encore will continue throughout the transition. UAMS will assume full operational authority and control on Oct. 1, 2026.

“Our goal is a seamless transition for Saline County,” said Barnes. “The team currently at Encore Medical Center is experienced and dedicated, and we look forward to working closely with them during this transition.”





According to the World Population Review, Saline County’s population has increased by 25% since 2010, adding more than 27,000 residents and making it one of the fastest-growing counties in the state.

UAMS’ expansion into Saline County aligns with its mission to provide access to healthcare beyond its Little Rock campus. UAMS currently operates regional campuses and clinical sites across Arkansas, including facilities in Fayetteville, Springdale, Bentonville, Fort Smith, Pine Bluff, Jonesboro, Texarkana, Batesville, Helena-West Helena, and El Dorado.

“The addition of 53 beds will also allow UAMS to accept more transfers of critically ill patients from other hospitals throughout the state,” Barnes said. “UAMS cannot currently meet patient demand at our main campus. These additional beds are critical to our mission of caring for the sickest patients in Arkansas.”

About UAMS

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’s 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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About Arkansas Heart Hospital

Arkansas Heart Hospital is a nationally recognized, award-winning hospital dedicated to preventing, diagnosing and treating cardiovascular and related diseases. Named one of Newsweeks’ World’s Best Specialized Hospitals and Forbes Best Employers, it offers advanced technology and the latest in health care services—all provided by leading cardiologists and surgeons. It currently operates one hospital and community clinics across Arkansas and Texas. For more information, visit arheart.com.