



2022



NURSING REPORT

UAMS Health

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From the CNO



In the following pages, we offer a glimpse at all that UAMS Nursing accomplished in a busy year from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023.

As the newly appointed Chief Nursing Officer for UAMS Health, I am in awe of this phenomenal work and honored to be in this role as we move forward in our journey to excellence.

As you can see by reading this report, UAMS nurses were busy in 2023. As COVID vaccinations and treatments reduced the number of COVID-positive patients in the medical center, patient care returned to more pre-pandemic norms, but, like health care institutions across the country, UAMS continued to face staffing and supply chain challenges. Our nurses forged on and found ways to meet these challenges head-on.

They led several important initiatives, including telemedicine programs to support patients with traumatic brain injuries, stroke patients and victims of sexual assault. In Little Rock, UAMS nurses began a program to provide care for adults with childhood developmental and physical disabilities at Easterseals Arkansas.

UAMS nurses continued to grow in their education and training, completing advanced degrees and certification programs. UAMS welcomed LPNs back to the hospital, and APPs received special training to help them succeed in their clinical roles.

The May 2023 Nurses Week activities included celebrations and ceremonies honoring outstanding nurses, and our nurses were honored by UAMS and state organizations for their compassion and leadership and nursing skills. Our nurses demonstrate every day that “Nurses AR the Future!”

Through community service, research and shared governance, nurses have helped improve the lives of others through volunteer activities, research designed to improve patient outcomes and efforts to improve the care they deliver to our patients.

You will also see in this report that quality and patient satisfaction indicators reflect the outstanding dedication of UAMS nurses.

I hope you enjoy reading the annual report and reflecting on all that has been accomplished as much as I have. This work certainly makes me proud to be a UAMS nurse, and it also excites me about what is in store for UAMS nursing. The future is bright and with this team, there is no doubt the next annual report will be even more spectacular!

To keep up with everything going on beyond 2023, follow us at UAMShealth.com/nurses.

All the best,

Tammy King-Jones, PhD, RN, NE-BC
Chief Nursing Officer
Associate Vice Chancellor for Patient Care Services & Clinical Operations

Our Mission

Nursing at UAMS is committed to patient-and-family-centered care. We provide evidence-based care with compassion, respect and unconditional acceptance.

Our Values

We believe empowered, professional staff are essential to achieve our mission. We value a practice environment which promotes the following things:

- Shared Decision Making
- Accountability
- Continuous Learning
- Respect
- Collaboration/Cooperation
- Diversity
- Commitment to Excellence
- Integrity
- Customer Service
- Honesty
- Open Communication

Our Vision

Together we set the pace to create a culture of nursing excellence.

Our Philosophy

Professionalism

We are committed to professional practice and collaboration with the interdisciplinary team to provide innovative and exceptional patient-and family-centered care to impact the overall health of our community.

Accountability

(Through ADVOCACY and AUTONOMY) We believe the professional nurse is the foundation of nursing practice. We are committed to being strong patient advocates. We accept responsibility for professional practice and willingly commit to strive to create optimal outcomes for the patient and family. We believe appropriate outcomes are reached by the development and application of evidence-based practice standards which utilize state-of-the-art knowledge to provide high-quality care in the most efficient manner.

Communication

We believe communication is the power to share ideas and concepts as the basis for effective team work. We believe effective communication promotes positive outcomes when executed with enthusiasm and optimism. We believe trust and cooperation are the keys to maintain communications between patient, family, nurse and all members of the health care team. We support any initiative which serves to improve overall communication.

Excellence

We support a professional practice model as the basis for delivery of nursing care. We value an environment in which the scope of practice promotes innovative and compassionate patient care delivery and encourages continuous improvement. We ensure excellence through aggressive recruitment and retention of RN staff whose professional expertise qualifies them to serve as role models for the hospital and the community.

Prevention and Treatment of Stroke: A Continuum of Care at UAMS

UAMS is home to two excellent stroke programs with nurses as the driving forces of success — the Institute for Digital Health & Innovation (IDHI) Stroke Program, which provides acute ischemic stroke treatment and awareness across the state, and the Comprehensive Stroke Center (CSC), which offers treatment for patients with ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes.

The IDHI Stroke Program provides community education focused on recognizing the signs and symptoms of stroke using the “BE FAST” acronym. The stroke team trains emergency medical services to quickly transport stroke patients to a nearby stroke-ready hospital, effectively reducing door to CT and needle times, and trains nurses in emergency departments in rural hospitals in specialized National Institutes of Health Stroke Scale (NIHSS) video consult processes that lead to fast thrombolytic treatment and decreased disability. Seven outreach nurses in the program are responsible for 65 sites across the state. *continued on page 6.*

IS IT A STROKE?

	B	Balance Difficulties Is there a sudden loss of balance?
	E	Eyesight Changes Is there a change in vision in one or both eyes?
	F	Face Weakness Does their face look uneven?
	A	Arm Weakness Does one arm drift down?
	S	Speech Difficulties Does their speech sound strange?
	T	Time to Call 911 Time is Brain

Do you know the sign and symptoms of a stroke?
BE FAST, call 911 and report to the nearest
Emergency Department to receive stroke care.

Strategic Plan

Strategic Objectives/Strategy Map (Vision 2029 1.0/2.0 Alignment)	Measures/Data Sources	2025 Targets
External Stakeholder		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve patient/partner satisfaction C2; C4; C5/ES1 Improve community impact in all mission areas S2; C1/ES4 Improve research and development reputation R2 3/ES3 Improve student satisfaction success E4/ES2 	ANCC Magnet	Achieve ANCC Magnet Designation
	Patient Experience	51% of units and clinics outperform vendor benchmark in 5 of 8 quarters for 4 Patient Experience Survey Domains (Achieved as of 08/31/23)
Financial		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grow margin to invest in mission F1; F3-5/FN2 Improve performance in evolving healthcare finance models F2/FN1 	Short Term Labor Contract	Reduce expense related to short term contracts, alternate staffing resources
	Staffing and Productivity Levels	PCS SL will maintain staffing and productivity levels at the 35th percentile.
Internal Processes		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand digital health: D1/IP1 Improve all aspects of clinical care C5/IP2 Increase student recruitment/ retention success to meet AR needs E4/IP3 Expand Research R2-3/IP4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurse Sensitive Quality Indicators (Inpatient) Nurse Sensitive Quality RN Certification RN BSN Rate Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51% of inpatient units outperform vendor benchmark in 5 of 8 quarters for Falls with Injury, Hospital Acquired Pressure Injuries and 2 other Nurse Sensitive Quality Indicator (Achieved as of 08/31/23 for HAPI II, CLABSI and CAUTI. Continue to work on Falls with Injury) 51% of ambulatory clinics outperform vendor benchmark in 5 of 8 quarters for 3 Nurse Sensitive Quality Indicators (Achieved as of 08/31/23 for Falls with injury, Surgical Errors, and Patient Burns) Increase nationally certified nurses 1% per year (Continuing to maintain) Increase baccalaureate degreed nurses 1% per year (Continuing to maintain) Maintain 2 ongoing IRB approved studies per year (Continuing to maintain)
Organizational Capacity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase recruitment/retention of diverse, skilled, engaged workforce T1/OC1 Expand infrastructure to align with needs of the mission T2/OC2 Expand training and capacity for entrepreneurship and innovation R4/OC3" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly Staff Turnover Rate Staff Engagement Survey Transition to Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be at or below National Turnover 51% of units/clinics/departments outperform the vendor benchmark for 3 of 4 Staff Engagement Survey Domains (Achieved, email distributed on 10/21/2022) Achieve national accreditation of Transition to Practice Program (Achieved 8/22/22)

Brain Injury Program Offers Resources Statewide

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is often referred to as a silent epidemic. Historically, there's been very little attention given to TBI care compared to the enormous physical, emotional, and economic costs associated with it.

The **UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation's Brain Injury Program (BIP)** is a small team making a big difference in the lives of current and future TBI survivors. This team manages the Arkansas TBI registry for data collection and analysis, publishes a TBI resource guide and Brain Waves newsletters, provides statewide outreach and education, facilitates support groups and workshops, and advocates for individuals who have sustained TBIs.

"Our multi-pronged approach has resulted in some tremendous wins," said **Edward "Eddie" Williams BSN, RN, CBIS**, nurse educator for the BIP. "Our team was hosting a regional workshop to provide an opportunity for TBI survivors to network with each other and learn about available resources. I called a patient from the TBI Registry who lived in the area, and the patient's wife said she was very discouraged because people had been promising to help her for two years but no one had ever followed through.

"I made arrangements to visit their home the next day and found her husband in a back bedroom," he said. "He was in poor physical condition with severe contractures that confined him to the bed. He never received physical rehabilitation and had had very little follow-up care since his TBI and spinal cord injury two years earlier."

Williams brought his concerns to the team, and they arranged a telemedicine appointment with a physiatrist. This appointment led to inpatient rehabilitation and then surgeries to release some of

SIX TIPS FOR COMMUNICATION AFTER A BRAIN INJURY

Ordering food from a drive-thru restaurant, chatting with friends in a noisy lobby, and talking to family over the phone. These are all common social routines that rely on good communication skills. A brain injury can cause speech challenges that make communication and socializing harder. After a brain injury, it is common to have speech struggles like "slurred" speech, low volume, speech that is too fast or too slow, and mumbling.

Learning to use speaking tools and changing the environment can lead to easier conversations. If you are having trouble with clear speech after a brain injury, here are some tips that may help:

- 1. Slow Down.** Slow down your speaking rate and place longer pauses between words.
- 2. Pace Yourself.** Talking for long periods of time can lead to voice strain and use more effort or energy. This extra effort can also cause fatigue, which can in turn affect the clearness of speech. Take breaks to recharge.
- 3. Over-Articulate and Break It Down.** Practice over-articulating the sounds of each word. This means that you will practice exaggerating each sound in a word. You can also break down longer words into smaller pieces. Words can even be broken down syllable-by-syllable to make them easier to understand.
- 4. Consider Your Environment.** How loud or distracting is the current environment?

Try to reduce the noise or move your conversation to a quieter location. Is the room well-lit? Check to see if your listener can see your face as you speak because visual clues can be helpful.

- 5. Practice With Others.** Join a local community support group for a chance to practice new speaking habits in a supportive environment. Share your goals and ask for feedback from others.
- 6. See a Speech Therapist.** Some people need special strategies to help them overcome speech issues. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) are health care professionals who can listen to your speech and offer helpful treatment options for your speech troubles. Ask your primary care physician (PCP) for more information.

Resources
<https://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/dysarthria/>
<https://www.brainline.org/article/communication-effects-after-brain-injury>

Suggest a topic! Email us at tbiteam@uams.edu

the contractures. After the surgeries, a primary care provider at a UAMS Health regional clinic agreed to make house calls to continue the patient's care. Now the patient's physical condition has improved to the point that he can leave the house in a motorized wheelchair. The family is grateful for the efforts the BIP team made and, for the first time since his accident, are optimistic about their future.

One of the goals of the BIP is to help build a statewide system of care that will benefit future TBI survivors. The goal is to include education and support for minor TBI (mTBI) such as concussions and expert consults for moderate and severe TBIs that can be initiated soon after admission.

"If such a system existed four years ago, it's likely the patient we helped would have received acute rehabilitative care and had a much better quality of life after his injury," said Williams.



Rahling Road Clinic Serves Easterseals Patients

Randi Brown with a group of patients at the Easterseals of Arkansas Center for Training and Wellness in West Little Rock.

The UAMS Vision 2029 strategic plan includes objectives to build partnerships with private entities to expand access to care for medically underserved Arkansans. One such population is adults with childhood developmental and physical disabilities. Parents and guardians often struggle to find a primary care provider with the knowledge to care for an adult with a childhood developmental or physical disability.

A partnership between the Easterseals Arkansas' Adult Center for Training and Wellness (CTW) and dual-trained internal medicine and pediatric physicians at the UAMS Health Neighborhood Clinic on Rahling Road in Little Rock provides this medical skill set to this patient population. The partnership is further enhanced because the UAMS providers and nurses travel to the Easterseals center to see patients in a familiar environment. Center staff and the UAMS team work together to develop joint care plans. Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate in appointments in person or by telemedicine if they have other commitments.

Marie Guthridge, BSN, RN, clinical services manager at the Rahling Road Clinic, worked with **Shelley Moore**, director at CTW, and **Randi Brown, BSN, RN**, to build a clinic within the CTW. **Dr. Robert Hopkins, Jr.** and **Dr. Emily Holthoff** round out the medical team.

"Shelley and the CTW were very accommodating with facility space," said Guthridge. "Randi was instrumental in the set up. As our on-site RN familiar with this patient population, she worked to pull the space together for effective patient care. If patients need medical services between clinic days at the CTW, they can schedule an appointment with their provider at the Rahling Road clinic."

"Our CTW families are so thankful for such amazing medical care here on our campus," said Moore. "Our partnership with UAMS has been a game changer for many of our adults. Randi has the knowledge and experience to make our adults feel at ease throughout the visit, and Drs. Hopkins and Holthoff have been amazing and so willing to work with our staff to better serve our adults."

"In addition to better physical access, Randi has improved communication and built trust with our CTW patients," she said. "Randi is so kind and compassionate. She takes her time with her patients and comes up with creative ways to do any type of blood draw."

"One of our adults fears needles and needed a shot," she said. "We expected the worst, but it was a breeze, thanks to Randi. The patient said, 'She didn't even hurt.'"

"Being the nurse for the Easterseals CTW Clinic has been very rewarding," said Brown. "The patients and staff always put a smile on my face and are always welcoming. It is wonderful to be able to provide health care to this population in a setting that makes them feel comfortable and is also attainable."

"Through the CTW we were presented with a unique opportunity to reach patients who have barriers that can prevent engaging, quality continuity of care," said Guthrie. "I'm very proud looking at what this program has become. We have great expectations for what it will be in the future."



Prevention and Treatment, continued from page 2.

One of the outreach nurses is a licensed paramedic and is responsible for providing annual training to emergency medical services and other pre-hospital providers statewide. All of the outreach nurses prepare partnering hospitals to provide best practices and evidence-based care to acute ischemic stroke patients through training, performance improvement and community outreach. Training focuses on operation of tele-medicine equipment, NIHSS nursing bedside exam, and thrombolytic therapy. Quick and accurate treatment in the acute phase gives patients the best chance at a good outcome.

Outreach nurses also provide data-driven feedback to their assigned sites based on consult performance. Every consult is recorded, and the nurses score all the video consults, providing continuous process improvement recommendations when opportunities are noted.

"Our nurses, in partnership with community educators in the program, play a pivotal role in providing support to partnering sites and their communities with awareness campaigns," said Lori Berry, MNSc, RN, CNOR, director of operations for the Stroke Program. "The goal is to share the BE FAST message with every household in the state."

Nurses in the Comprehensive Stroke Center provide acute care in the UAMS Emergency Department (ED), procedural care in Interventional Radiology (IR), and specialized nursing care in the ICU and H8. The UAMS Comprehensive Stroke Center is an award-winning program of excellence, and its most recent accolades include the American Heart Association 2023 Stroke Gold Plus and Stroke Elite Honor Roll awards.

In the ED, nurses are key partners of the stroke team responding to stroke alerts. They accompany patients immediately to the CT and begin working them up in preparation for administering thrombolytics, if indicated. Recently they accomplished a door-to-needle time of 12 minutes. When a patient needs an urgent thrombectomy they find excellent care in Interventional Radiology. Nurses there respond to stroke pathways in the ED, provide support to the proceduralists and monitor sedation during thrombectomies. **Kenneth Lewis, RN**, is proud of his contribution to the shortest door to puncture time of 31 minutes.

ICU nurses on E4 are certified in stroke care such as CCRN, SCRN and CNRN, and they also earn eight hours of specialized stroke training annually. They care for acute ischemic stroke (AIS) patients for 24 hours after receiving thrombolytics and hemorrhagic stroke patients for two weeks or more.

The UAMS hospital's H8 unit serves as the Neuroscience Progressive Care Unit. The patient population is made up of progressive, general, post thrombolytic transfers and post procedural stroke patients. Nurses on this unit also earn eight hours of specialized stroke training annually and are often advocates for their patients while they await family arriving from rural areas. **Jeni Rooney, BSN, RN, SCRN**, followed her passion for neuro patients, first as a clinical care assistant and now an RN. She is currently working on her doctor of nursing practice degree and plans to graduate in May 2024.

APRNs in the Comprehensive Stroke Center care for stroke patients throughout their course in all of the units, and RN case managers round out the stroke continuum of care by coordinating discharge planning.

To complete the stroke continuum of care, post-hospital discharge care, education, and monitoring are in the planning stages with the development of a Transition of Care nursing team. The inpatient team and the IDHI Stroke Program have recently partnered to provide a Stroke Survivors Support Group that meets virtually every month to bring survivors and their family members together to share experiences and victories. Each month a healthcare-related professional attends the meetings and provides a curated presentation with stroke survivors in mind.



For the ninth consecutive year, UAMS received the American Heart Association's GoldPlus Get With The Guidelines-Stroke Quality Achievement Award for its commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment. UAMS also received Honor Roll recognition in the Target: Type 2 Diabetes category.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Restore Hope for Victims

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner-Adult/Adolescent (SANE-As) are registered nurses who have completed specialized education and clinical preparation in the medical-forensic care of patients who have experienced sexual assault or abuse. Arkansas has 19 SANE-As serving the state's 3 million residents. Although nearly half of the state's population lives in rural areas, these SANEs practice only in the few urban areas of the state, leaving many without in-person access to the specialized care that can help them recover from this traumatic event.

The U.S. Department of justice defines sexual assault as any non-consensual sexual act, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent. One in six women and one in 33 men in the United States will be the victim of an attempted or completed sexual assault in their lifetime, according to the National Institute of Justice and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The UAMS Institute for Digital Health & Innovation's (IDHI) TeleSANE program recognizes the responsibility to provide access and negate further trauma to survivors of sexual violence. The program celebrated its second anniversary of providing essential services and restoring hope by prioritizing immediate access to a SANE. IDHI uses telehealth technologies to reach health care facilities across Arkansas and also provides free forensic education, which directly increases patient access to nursing expertise in all areas of the state.

The TeleSANE program, which launched in 2021 with seven nationally certified SANE-A nurses and now has 19, uses telemedicine to connect facility site clinicians to consultants specifically trained in caring for patients who have experienced a sexual assault.

The program provides equipment, education, and guidance to providers across Arkansas to support a standardized care of practice. The consultants can be brought into the room with the site nurse and the patient for as much or as little as needed via a provided telecart.

At the end of fiscal year 2023, 22 TeleSANE Arkansas Spoke sites are capable for consults, including UAMS. There were 15 to 20 consults a month for a total of 290 TeleSANE consults to support victims and clinicians during the 12 months ending in June 2023.

More than 170 Arkansas nurses have completed 40 or more hours of SANE training, and more than 300 Emergency Room and clinic nurses are trained on TeleSANE.

A recent survey showed that 95% of 81 site nurses reported that TeleSANE consultation has had a positive impact on their ability to provide a quality forensic exam. All of the nurses surveyed said they are likely to use TeleSANE in the future. Likewise, all the patients who responded to a survey said they felt cared for by the nurses, felt in control of the exam, and would encourage others in the same situation to use this service. Almost 90% of the patients surveyed said they felt comfortable with the telehealth experience.

A rape crisis center advocate said, "I have been providing sexual violence advocacy for 10 years. The nurses in this case received prior SANE training from the UAMS TeleSANE program. The care they provided the patient was the most evidence-based and trauma-informed care I have ever seen. I feel HOPE again."

Patient surveys included comments such as "Everything went well," "I loved everything they did for me," "Keep having caring & understanding hearts," "We received top notch care here," and "It was amazing! No improvement needed."

The phone number for the 24/7 TeleSANE call center is 501-686-8500.

- 19** nationally certified **SANE-A** nurses
- 22** TeleSANE Arkansas Spoke sites are capable for consults, including UAMS
- 290** TeleSANE consults to support victims and clinicians
- 170+** Arkansas nurses have completed **40 or more hours of SANE training**
- 300+** Emergency Room and clinic nurses are **trained on TeleSANE**



(left to right) UAMS nurses Rhiannon Zerbe, Sherrie Searcy, Ashley Connors, Regina Welch and Lauren Wegener attended Nurses Day at the Capital, representing the SANE program.



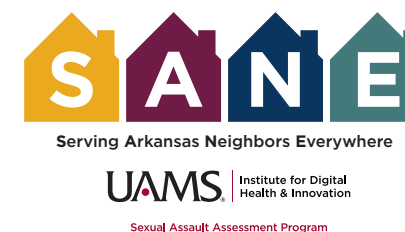
UAMS SANE nurses pose with participants in Arkansas Nurses Forensic Clinical Skills training



Ashley Connors provides information about sexual assault nurse examiner training at a community event.



Participants in a SANE course at UAMS use manikins as part of their education and training.



National Certification Earned between July 2022 and June 2023

Congratulations to the following UAMS nurses who earned the highest credentials in their specialty in order to contribute to better patient outcomes through national board certification in their field.

Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Certification – Adult Gerontology (ACNPC-AG)

- Pamela Woods, CASL Cancer Outpatient

Ambulatory Care Nursing (AMB-BC)

- Brenda Willett, Outpatient IR Clinic
- Tammara Murray, Family Medical Clinic, Pine Bluff

Certified Case Manager (CCM)

- Ardrianna Handy, Care Management
- Dawnshell Bunting, Patient Access
- Joseph William Hall, Care Management
- LaDena Sherman, Care Management
- Terry Ann Black, CASL

Acute/Critical Care Nursing (CCRN)

- Alexander Rottman, H4
- Alyssa Kirkpatrick, H4
- Chad Conder, E4
- Christian Rosenbaum, H4
- Devin King, E4
- Felicia Loya, E4
- Jodi Miles, E4
- Juan Carlo Caballero, F8
- Kendra McIntosh, H4
- Kristina Ong, H4
- Sean Moore, E4
- Tyler Gray, H4

Certified Diabetes Care & Education Specialists (CDCES)

- Connor Murphey, Patient Education

Certification in Electronic Fetal Monitoring (C-EFM)

- Erin Weeks, IDHI Clinical Education
- Lindsey Mashburn, Women’s Center
- Sarah Blakley, College of Nursing

Care of the Extremely Low Birth Weight Neonate (C-ELBW)

- Teresa Crutchfield, Primary Care Outpatient Center

Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN)

- Christian Hamilton, Emergency Department

Certified Medical – Surgical Registered Nurse (CMSRN)

- Helen Etheridge, F9

Certified Nurse – Midwife (CNM)

- Tamica Deanna Rhodes, Women and Infants Inpatient

Certified Nurse Manager & Leader (CNML)

- Kristen Burdette, H9

Certified Nurse Operating Room (CNOR)

- Connie Kochis, Periop Main OR

Certified Professional in Patient Safety (CPPS)

- Teresa Jeffus, Quality Management

Medical Surgical Nursing (MEDSURG-BC)

- LaShaley Tubbs, F8

Oncology Certified Nurse (OCN)

- Cassandra Mock, CASL Infusion Center
- Cimi Ward, F7
- Mitchell Mosley, Cancer Clinical Trials

Maternal Newborn Nursing (RNC-MNN)

- Amanda Lobbs, Float Pool
- Elizabeth Smith, E6
- Karina Leal, E6

Neonatal Intensive Care Nursing (RNC-NIC)

- Allison Simmons, F5
- Anna Ikard, F5
- Briana Hines, F5
- Christie Woodall, F5
- Connie Pugh, F5
- Jennifer Honda, F5
- Judith Young, F5
- Kristian Mohammed Lee, F5
- Patricia Arenas, F5
- Sheri Freeman, F5

Inpatient Obstetric Nursing (RNC-OB)

- Ashli Nicholas, E5
- Emily Ruehr, E5
- Rori Whittake, E5

Trauma Certified Registered Nurse (TCRN)

- Christian Hamilton, Emergency Department

New Graduate Program Receives ANCC Accreditation

August 22, 2022, marked a historic day for the UAMS Inpatient Transition to Practice (TTP) New Graduate RN Residency Program when it received a four-year accreditation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s (ANCC) Commission on Accreditation in Practice Transition Programs. This designation demonstrates a commitment to nursing excellence, quality patient outcomes, structured processes, and curriculum standardization based on evidence-based practices that support a newly licensed nurse’s seamless transition into clinical practice.

This national accreditation, acknowledged by healthcare industry leaders around the nation and the U.S. Department of Labor, publicly attests to UAMS new graduate nurses having a professional foundation that promotes effective clinical practice, engagement, job satisfaction, and quality patient outcomes to improve the health and healthcare of Arkansans.

Advanced Degrees Earned between July 2022 and June 2023

Congratulations to the UAMS nurses who completed the following degrees:

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

- Jamie Alexander, CASL
- Deonna Baney, E7
- Robin Banks, IDHI Stroke Program
- Kirsten Batts, Endoscopy
- Stephanie Blanchard, F5
- Karey Broach, Family Medicine Clinic
- Kristie Cervanties, Movement Disorders Clinic
- Jordan Clements, F5
- Aerica Franklin, F8
- Melissa Gibbs, E6
- Lindsey Goss, H8
- Daphne Leigh Greene, Gastroenterology Clinic
- Rebecca Hennon, NWA Campus in Fayetteville
- Maci Olivia Hill, F5
- Lisa Hooper, F5

Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP)

- Barbara McDonald, Pulmonary Clinic
- Gretchen Somer, PRI/CDU

Master of Business Administration in Healthcare Management (MBA – Healthcare Management)

- Denise Barton, Float Pool
- Ashley Boyce, F5

- Alethia Long, Lactation
- Jennifer McCurry, IDHI Stroke Program
- Cassandra Mock, Infusion A
- Seth Moon, Endoscopy
- Andrea Nichols, E5
- Jessica Pierce, H8
- Durga Sharma, H6
- Brady Taylor, F5
- Bailee Jo Thorn, F5
- Terence Thornton, Care Management
- Theresa Tiner, Neurology Clinic
- KeLontra Toombs, F8
- LaShaley Tubbs, F8
- Cimi Ward, E7
- Rori Whittaker, E5

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)

- Leslie Bourne, Clinical Specialist
- Kayla Curtis, Clinical Education
- Candice Henderson, F5
- Charlie Hogan, Clinical Education
- Natasha Hunter, Thomas and Lyon Longevity Center
- Krista Michelle Punto, E5
- Courtney Scroggins, Clinical Specialist
- Lydia Steele, F5
- Shannon Beth Wilkerson, H4



Pictured are new graduate RNs who participated in the Inpatient Transition to Practice Program. (Back row, from left) Emy Pascual, Michael Maxwell, Kim Sanders, Kearia Mack, Justin Brown, Rachelle Thomas-Batres, Blaine Keeling and Sarah Phillips. (Front row in back, from left) Hailey Gaddis, Jordan Lewis, O’Shaila Hightower (LPN), Kiara Taylor, Quineqa Johnson and McKenly Henshaw. (Back row in front, from left) Allie Atkins, Ginny Pryor, Kathryn Lafferty, Sarah Jon Taylor, Karen Caballero-Sierra, Courtney Ward, Abigail Caldwell, Taylor Sergeant, Matthew Rude and Taylor Jennings. (Front row, from left) Catharine McDaniel, Morgan Johnson, Courtney Staton, Jewell Kelly, Maddie Novotny, LaDonna Cox, Schampaigne McFarlin (LPN), Maci Hill, Jen Seo, Misty Healy and Zorianna Harrison

Pioneering New Heights: The Advanced Practice Provider Transition to Practice Program

The Advanced Practice Provider Transition to Practice Program helped 12 participants bridge the gap between academic education and real-world practice at an event on April 21, 2023.

The Transition to Practice Program (TPP) included advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and physician assistants (PAs) from diverse specialties and provided a unique opportunity for attendees to connect, exchange knowledge, and develop a deeper understanding of the evolving healthcare landscape. The program focused on empowering practitioners with the skills, knowledge and confidence required to excel in their respective fields.

Former Chief Nursing Officer **Trenda Ray, PhD, RN, NE-BC**, highlighted the critical role of leadership in shaping organizational excellence and emphasized the importance of optimized structures, strategic alignment, innovation and a culture of compassion.

In the realm of health care, the culture and vision of an academic hospital play a pivotal role in shaping the delivery of patient care and nurturing the professional growth of healthcare providers. Hospital Chief of Staff **Ron Robertson, MD**, shared his invaluable insights on cultivating a positive culture and fostering a compelling vision within an academic hospital setting. He emphasized the profound impact that the organizational culture has on the success and well-being of healthcare professionals and spoke on the significance of creating an environment



Participants in the Advanced Practice Provider Transition to Practice Program included (standing from left) Lori Hughes, Garth Bowman, Shakeyah Jackson, Reagan Muse, Daniel Green, LaSharon Tubbs and Jennifer Boyd and (seated from left) Tamica Rhodes, Hannah Martin, Anne Mwenda, Bethany Williams and Haley Quintana

that values collaboration, respect and open communication.

Staying abreast of regulatory changes and updates is crucial in today's evolving healthcare landscape. Compliance Auditor **Carla Elmore** shared auditing techniques and strategies to assess billing and coding compliance. Addressing the complexities of coding systems, documentation challenges, and auditing compliance strategies, Elmore empowered advanced practice providers to navigate the intricate world of billing and coding with confidence and integrity.

Associate General Counsel **Catherine Corless** spoke about the legal issues pertaining to advanced practice providers, including malpractice and liability concerns, risk management, documentation and best practices for minimizing legal exposure.

Director of Patient Experience **Gina Boshears, MA, BSN, RN, CPXP**, highlighted the significance of measuring and monitoring patient experience metrics to drive continuous improvement. She discussed the importance of patient surveys, feedback mechanisms and data analytics in gaining insights into patients' perspectives. Boshears shared strategies for using this feedback to identify areas for improvement, implement quality improvement initiatives and drive positive change in patient care delivery.

Former Chief Quality Officer **Troy Schmit, BA, MHA**, helped participants navigate quality metrics, highlighting the critical role of advanced practice providers in driving improved healthcare outcomes. Emphasizing the importance of understanding key quality metrics, using data analytics and technology, and embracing continuous quality improvement, Schmit encouraged attendees to actively contribute to enhancing the quality of patient care.

The Advanced Practice Provider Transition to Practice underscores the commitment of UAMS to advancing patient care and enhancing the capabilities of advanced practice providers. Participants left the event with expanded networks and a shared vision for the future of advanced practice.

Inpatient LPNs Play an Essential Role

UAMS has used licensed practical nurses (LPNs) as essential team members in outpatient clinics for many years. In the fall of 2022, the hospital began recruiting LPNs to work in inpatient care areas as well. The goal is to allow every nurse to work at the top of their licensure and free time up for RNs to do essential tasks that can be done only by an RN.

The first LPNs were assigned to H6, H7 and H8, the units which had the biggest hiring challenges at the time.

"I remember working at a doctor's office prior to being a nurse," said Senior Nursing Director for the Medical/Surgical and Women and Infant Service Lines Michelle McFail, MSN, C-ONQS, RNC-OB, CLSSGB. "I worked with a very special LPN named June. She had been a nurse for many years and encouraged me to pursue my dream of becoming a nurse. She encouraged and allowed me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and love for the field of nursing. She also celebrated with me as I was accepted into a BSN program."

"Fast forward to my very first job after nursing school," said McFail. "I, like many others, was excited and a bit scared about starting my nursing journey. Fresh out of school, I moved across the country and started my career in a new city. When I arrived on the unit, I was welcomed by my preceptor,

Charlotte. She had worked on the unit for approximately 20 years as an LPN. Charlotte introduced herself and told me I would be successful. She would see to it.

"She was the perfect mixture of teacher and cheerleader and exuded all the qualities of a true team player," said McFail. "Her philosophy was to make sure we were all supported and worked together for our patients and each other. As we know from experience, teamwork can either make or break a shift.

"Here we are many years later. We have dealt with many obstacles in health care over the last few years that have caused a shift in the workforce. With this shift, we needed to look at how we could support our current employees and onboard new highly skilled team members. We looked at many different care models," she said. "The one that kept rising to the top was bringing LPNs back into the inpatient workforce. This was an exciting adventure for me, as they are trained nurses who can partner with our RNs and patient care technicians (PCTs) to help ease the workload for all. I have seen this in action firsthand throughout my career.

"Working as a team is especially important when you have three people working together to provide patient care," she said. "Communication is key. Each



Rebecca Ledbetter was hired as an LPN on H6, one of the first units to begin using a blended nursing structure.

person needs to understand their role for the day and how they can support each other. Our first unit to welcome LPNs back to the inpatient setting was H6. They currently have five LPNs on their team. I sat down with two of the H6 team members to see how the new care model is functioning for them."

Stacy Worthington, RN, said she prefers to work in a triad with the RN, LPN and PCT because it helps ensure the patient's needs are met and makes the flow of her day better. **Rebecca Ledbetter, LPN**, said clear communication and a willingness to work as a team makes all the difference in how the day goes.

"As we forge on and expand our LPN workforce, we should remember the quality of teamwork is associated with the quality and safety we provide to our patients," said McFail. "We should all work together to ensure everyone is successful. Let's all be like my preceptor Charlotte — a teacher, cheerleader and mentor — to improve both the work environment for employees and outcomes for our patients."



DAISY is an acronym for Diseases Attacking the Immune System

The DAISY Foundation was formed in November 1999 by the family of J. Patrick Barnes, who died at 33 of complications of Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura (ITP). The nursing care Patrick received when hospitalized profoundly touched his family. There are now more than 4,650 healthcare facilities and schools of nursing in 29 countries

that are committed to honoring their nurses with the DAISY Award. Learn more about the DAISY Foundation at daisyfoundation.org.

The BEE Award (Being Exceptional Every Day) honors non-licensed staff who provide exceptional care for patients and families. Patient care staff includes patient care technicians, medical assistants and others in direct care roles.



The UAMS Center for Nursing Excellence congratulates the following 2022-2023 DAISY and BEE honorees.

July 2022 Winners



Jaicey Dowd, RN
H4 Trauma/SICU/CVICU



Billy Trent
Patient Services Associate
H8 Neurology/Neurosurgery

September 2022 Winners



Amber Westpheling, RN
H4 Trauma/SICU/CVICU



Jennifer Liszewski
Patient Representative
Cardiology Clinic

November 2022 Winners



Kristi Campbell, RN
Cardiac Cath Lab



Robin Rogers
Patient Services Associate
PRI 6 Adult

August 2022 Winners



Decius Hardin, RN
F9 ENT/Orthopedic Surgical
Specialties



Tomeka Smith
Medical Assistant
ENT Clinic

October 2022 Winners



Emma McCullough, RN
H4 Trauma/SICU/CVICU



Amanda Diehl
Social Worker
Care Management
Admin Office

December 2022 Winners



Jenna Williams, RN
E7 Medical Oncology/
Transplant



Na'imah Abdullah
Patient Representative
Shackelford Ortho Clinic

January 2023 Winners



Yolanda Ryland, RN
Perioperative Care - PACU



Florence Hymes
Patient Service Associate
H8 Neurology/Neurosurgery

March 2023 Winners



Voltaire Orlina, RN
Float Pool



Danna Wolters
Social Worker
Emergency Department

May 2023 Winners



Taylor Irons, RN
F8 - Cardiac
Progressive



Lesa Robinson
Patient Service Associate
H8 Neurology/Neurosurgery

February 2023 Winners



Jason Patterson, RN
H4 Trauma/SICU/CVICU



Avelina Bell-Harris
Diagnostic Medical
Sonographer
Cardiac Non-Invasive Lab

April 2023 Winners



Carol Brizzolara, RN
H4 - Trauma/SICU/CVICU



Mariastrella Boyd
Patient Care Technician
F6 Medical Specialties

June 2023 Winners



Megan Hemphill, RN
E6 Perinatal/Lactation



Reed Nutter
Transporter
Patient and Guest Services

Because a DAISY can't survive without a BEE and a BEE can't survive without a DAISY



Thank a Member of Your Care Team

We proudly offer the DAISY Award to recognize nurses who provide skillful and compassionate care and the BEE Award to honor other care team members for going above and beyond.



Scan QR Code to nominate and share your story about the compassionate and extraordinary care you received by any of our UAMS team members.



To learn more visit
UAMS.health/DaisyBee

Daily, Sartini Honored with DAISY Nurse Leader Awards



Melinda Daily, MSN, RN, AMB-BC, NE, BC, and Rebecca Sartini, DNP, RNC-NIC, were honored with the UAMS DAISY Nurse Leader Award in 2022. This award expresses gratitude for leaders who create an environment where trust, compassion, mutual respect, continued professional development and ethical behavior are modeled and supported.



Melinda Daily

Daily is an assistant director of nursing in the Integrated Medicine Service Line and was nominated by a UAMS co-worker for the award presented in July 2022. Her nominator wrote, "Melinda is quick to cover for a team member needing a vacation and does so with little fanfare or recognition. She 'has your back.' She trusts her team members to make good decisions, and she discusses any differences of opinion, encouraging autonomous evaluations. She has empowered her team to challenge assumptions and the status quo, respecting diversity of thought."

The nominator also wrote, "Melinda quietly motivates others to do their best, offering support and encouragement when she sees the team struggling. Melinda is committed to quality and is always ready to answer or validate a data concern. She is extremely knowledgeable in value-based care and is at the forefront of monitoring these primary care metrics. She can identify practice issues and works with key players to ensure we are making progress on these fronts. Melinda is the primary person who runs the safety huddle, and she always makes time for questions and collaboration within the group."

"I have witnessed her deal with very frustrating situations, and she does so without becoming visibly upset, keeps a calm voice, open body language, and measured words," wrote her nominator. "This helps the service line with professional engagement and retention. Melinda participates in hiring activities and isn't afraid to voice concerns, ensuring applicants are thoroughly vetted. She is appreciated for her quiet, calm presence."

Sartini is an assistant director of nursing in the Women and Infants Service Line for Inpatient and was also nominated by a UAMS co-worker. She was honored in December 2022, and the nomination included these comments:

"I have had the opportunity to work with Becky Sartini for over 10 years, most closely as an RN IV clinical expert, then a clinical specialist, and now as director peer. When Becky came to the NICU, she came in, familiarized herself with the 'UAMS way' and got to work doing what she does best - mentoring nurses into leaders. Utilizing the UAMS clinical ladder as a guide, Becky began to mentor three day-shift senior nurses (>15 years of NICU experience) and encouraged them to go back to school, obtain their BSN and become certified in order to promote them to RN IV manager roles. In the course of a couple of years, Becky built a robust team of eight RN IV managers, four on each shift, and divided up the NICU into teams so that all staff members had an RN IV manager to work with as their primary contact for professional development and evaluation. This proved very effective in managing over 100 full-time RNs. Becky continues to have leadership retreats to develop the

team of RN IV managers and clinical experts to grow the nurses."

Sartini has been part of many initiatives to create a shared vision for staff to achieve better outcomes for patients and employees. After developing the RN IV manager team in the NICU, she and her team embarked on a project known as "NICU Team Model," which was a descriptive model of how RNs could engage in a variety of areas. It includes a wheel-spoke graphic, with each spoke representing a different area for engagement, such as quality, informatics, patient/family activities or policies. During the annual evaluation period, each RN was to designate an area for their engagement during the upcoming year. Becky also shared the UAMS Vision 2029 with her staff and worked to focus these strategic initiatives specifically to WISL so staff could understand how they play a part in the overall mission.

Sartini volunteers to support nurses and represent UAMS in the community. She has been part of the marketing of the UAMS NICU, helping solicit donations and supporting events such as Monster Bash. In addition to the UAMS support team for the Little Rock Marathon and other activities, she has been active in the community to promote premature birth awareness and also pregnancy loss through Love Lives, a UAMS support group for families who have experienced the loss of an infant.

To learn more about the DAISY Nurse Leader Award, please visit nurses.UAMS.edu.

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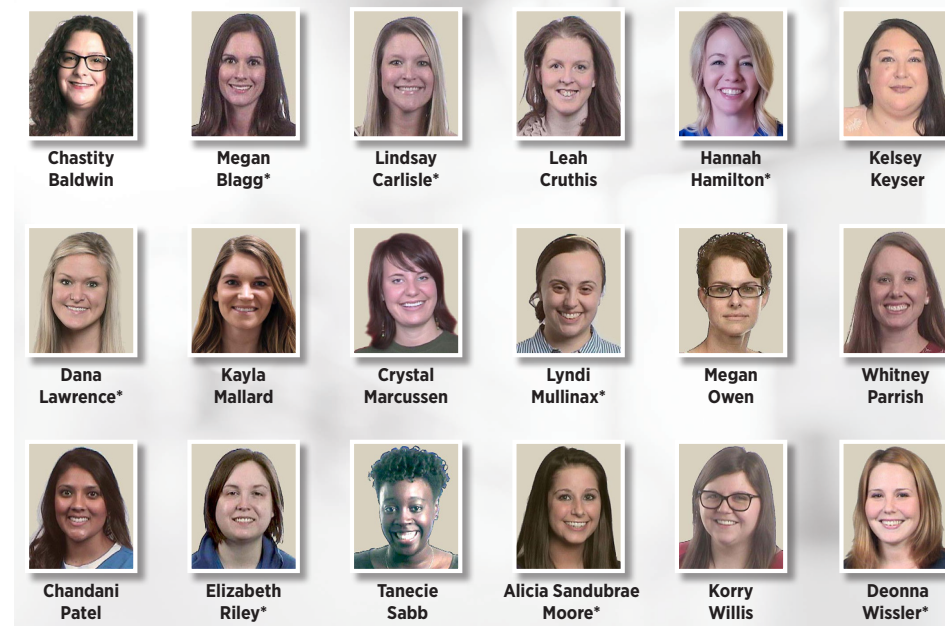
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UAMS Nurses Included in 40 Nurse Leaders Under 40

UAMS is proud to have recognized 70 UAMS Nurses over the past 5 years, Our 2022 nominees and recipients* are pictured below.

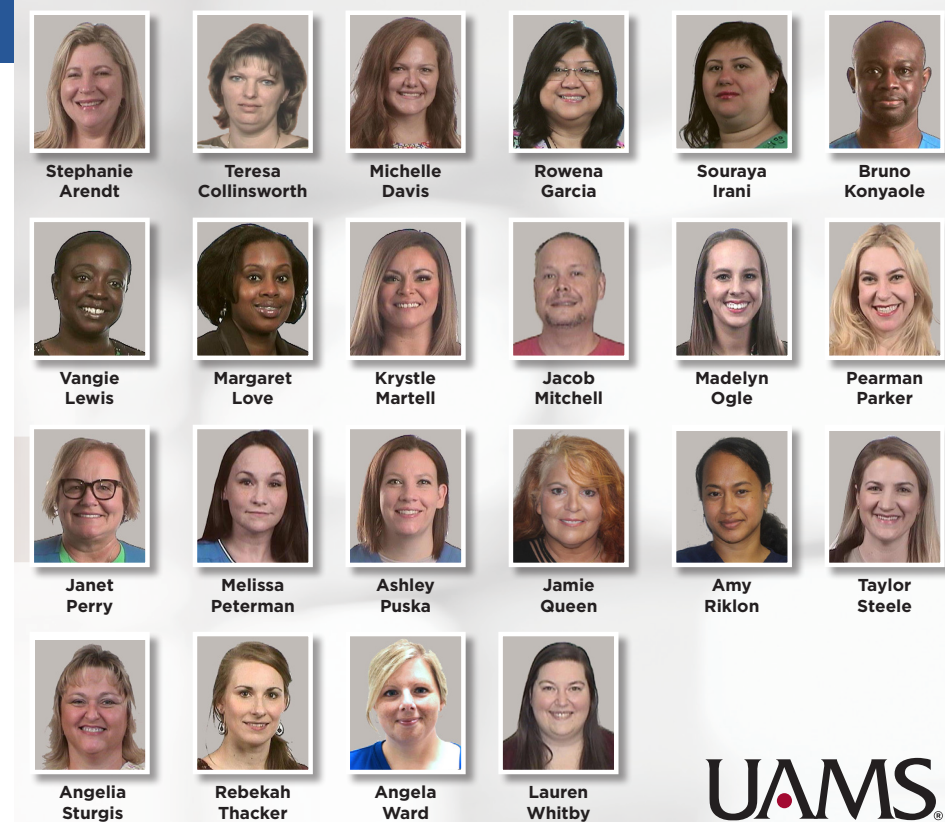
The mission of the Arkansas Center for Nursing, Inc, is to promote a culture of health in Arkansas by advancing nursing education, practice, leadership and workforce development. The purpose of this program is to recognize nurses across Arkansas for their dedication to the nursing profession. Recipients go above and beyond in their commitment to service excellence and leadership and are acknowledged as community outreach servants. Recipients also provide dedicated service with a continued promise to grow in leadership and to advance the nursing profession in Arkansas.



Great 100 Nurses

The Great 100 Nurses Foundation was founded 34 years ago by PK Scheerle, a registered nurse in New Orleans. Since its founding, Great 100 celebrations have honored thousands of nurses across Arkansas, Louisiana, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Texas. These exemplary nurses are selected based on their concern for humanity, contributions to the profession of nursing and mentoring of others. It is a great honor in the life of the nurse to be selected as a Great 100 honoree. The Great 100 Nurses Foundation helps each registered nurse recognize themselves as a nurse hero.

Arkansas joined Great 100 Nurses in 2017. UAMS Medical Center was the Founding Visionary Sponsor for three years and most recently the Florence Nightingale Sponsor. We are proud of the 151 UAMS Nurses named as a Great 100 Nurse in Arkansas through 2022.



Compassionate Nurse/Nurse Educator Award Nominees/Recipients*

On April 1, 2023, Publishing Concepts, Inc. (PCI) presented the 17th Annual Nursing Expo in the Jack Stephens Event Center on the campus of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. In conjunction with this event, PCI also sponsored nominees and recipients of the Compassionate Nurse and Outstanding Nurse Educator awards.

In 2023, the Compassionate Nurse award changed from honoring one nurse to honoring 20 exceptional nurses from across Arkansas. Nominators were asked

to provide information about a nurse who they feel is the most compassionate, caring, and empathetic caregiver, a nurse who has given comfort or care to them, a family member, or friend, or a nurse colleague.

The Outstanding Nurse Educator award is based on nominations to honor the five outstanding nurse educators in the state who serve as instructors or colleagues and have been a driving force in the growth, development, and promotion of the nursing profession. Nominators submit a

short essay expressing why they think the nurse is most deserving of being a Compassionate Nurse or Outstanding Nurse Educator of the Year.

UAMS is proud of the many UAMS nurses who have been nominated and recognized as finalists for both awards dating back to 2007. In 2023, Pam LaBorde was a finalist for the Nurse Educator Award, and Carol Brizzolara, Sonia Ann Criswell, Scott Dawson, Rebecca Smith and Eric Thomas were finalists for the Compassionate Nurse Award.

Compassionate Nurse



Carol Brizzolara*



Kristi Campbell



Sonia Ann Criswell*



Scott Dawson*



Jaicey Dowd



Amy Hale



Decius Hardin



Deborah Johnson



Emma McCullough



Yulonda Mullins



Ashli Nicholas



Stacy Pierce



Vicki Settles



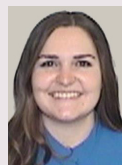
Rebecca Smith*



Eric Thomas*



Sydney Timmerman



Amber Westpheling



Cheyenne White



Jenna Williams



Teresa Wood

*Finalist

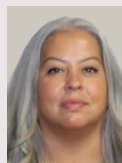
Nurse Educator



Brittany Beasley



Leonie DeClerk



Desiree Jenkins



Pam LaBorde*



Fermin Renteria



Tiffany Spivey



Nicole Ward



UAMS celebrated Hospital Week and Nurses Week from May 6-12, 2023



UAMS celebrated Hospital Week and Nurses Week from May 6-12, 2023, with a variety of activities including welcome to work events, virtual BINGO and a ribbon-cutting and tours of The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital.

Nursing leadership greeted UAMS Nurses and staff on Monday, May 8, at various hospital entrances to express thanks, gratitude and offer a special treat.

Festivities continued with a kick-off event in the Lobby Gallery with music, fellowship, and a tree planting in the future Nurses Garden. To illustrate how UAMS nurses are the nurses of the future, eight nurses were introduced with their accomplishments as Spotlight Wall honorees. Following the presentations and celebration, a group of nurses helped plant the first tree in the future Nurses Garden near the fountain outside the hospital entrance.

The Arkansas Nurses Honor Guard participated in the kick-off event to recognize those who have dedicated their professional lives to nursing. This non-profit organization was established in February 2021 and now has 22 chapters across Arkansas to honor nurses upon their death.



During Wednesday's Professional Nursing Awards, the following awards were presented to these honorees (pictured at left, from left):

- 2023 Advancement of Nursing Practice: Kristen Phonvilai, BSN, RNC-NIC, C-ELBW, CPST, RN IV, F5/H5 - NICU
- 2023 Excellence in Nursing Education: Paige Womack, BSN, RN-BC, H8 - Neurology/Neurosurgery
- 2023 Outstanding Community Service: Delores Chandler, MHA, BSN, RN, CMC, Movement Disorders Clinic
- 2023 Excellence in Advanced Practice: Stephanie Rogers, MSN, APRN, AGACNP, Myeloma Center
- 2023 Betty Casali Transformational Leadership: Devin Terry, MSN, RN, CNS-BC, CPHQ, Director of Clinical Education, Nursing Policy, Patient Education, and Transition to Practice Programs

One of the highlights of the Hospital Week celebration was Thursday morning's Awards of Excellence ceremony where Souraya Irani, RN, of the Myeloma Center was honored with the Helen May Compassionate Care Award (left photo to the right), and Tammy Gillam, RN, was awarded the Mary Helen Forrest Legacy Award in Nursing. (right photo to the right)



The UAMS Medical Center Auxiliary's Team Impact Award was also presented at this ceremony. This year's second runner up was the Comprehensive Stroke Center Team, which is one of only two in Arkansas to receive the Department of Health's Diamond Award for defect-free stroke care and the only one in the state to receive a 5-star rating two years in a row from Healthgrades for CMS patient outcomes.

First runner up was E7 Clinical Services Manager Heather Alverson, E7 Clinical Specialist Amy Hiegel and Christina Ketchum, former clinical specialist for F7. They worked together to address falls and falls with injuries on their units using evidence-based tools for oncology patients. In January and February 2022, the fall rate on their two units was 2.38 per 1,000 patient days. After this team completed their work, this rate declined to 1.83 per 1,000 patient days by the end of 2022.



Winner of this year's Team Impact Award were the 20 members of the Mortality Reduction Improvement Team. This team successfully addressed several gaps and opportunities in three focus areas with a resulting improvement in the mortality index from 1.18 in 2018 to .82 in 2022. This places UAMS in the top quartile performance for all academic medical centers in the United States and closer to the goal of being in the top 10%.

The three main approaches to improve mortality were improving documentation and coding to more accurately capture the acuity of patients and the factors that contribute to the mortality risk models, establishing an inpatient hospice program for patients who are at end-of-life and cannot be transferred back home or to another facility, and improving early identification and early treatment of patients who are developing sepsis to prevent further severity of illness and mortality.

Serving Our Community

Giving back to those we serve is part of the nursing culture at UAMS. Community service is facilitated through many avenues and embraced in each area, clinic or unit, both on and off campus. These three projects are just a few of the extraordinary ways UAMS nurses and staff donated generously to those in need during the past year.

Nursing leadership and hospital administration donated three wagons full of items from the Home for Healing's wish list in December 2022. Donations included cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, snacks and ready-to-eat meals. The Home for Healing is located across Markham from UAMS and offers support to parents for infants in the UAMS NICU, patients undergoing cancer treatment and their caregivers, and caregivers of patients in the UAMS intensive care unit. The home has provided convenient and free lodging in a peaceful and restorative environment for more than 20 years.

The Trauma Progressive Care unit on F4 collected more than \$250 to purchase school supplies for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Arkansas.

Clinic nurses from the Neurosciences Service Line helped educate baseball fans attending the Arkansas Travelers "Strike Out Stroke Night" at Dickey Stephens Park in North Little Rock. Stroke awareness and educational materials were provided, and the team taught attendees about "FAST" (face, arm, smile, time) warning signs of a stroke.



Becky Sartini, Trena Ray and Cynthia Brown deliver donated cleaning supplies and food to the Home for Healing in December 2022.



Nurses, patient care technicians, and patient service associates from F4 poses with some of the school supplies they collected for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Central Arkansas.



UAMS nurses Carolyn Williams, Jamie Langford and Delores Chandler poses with Arkansas Travelers mascots Otey the swamp possum and Ace.

Nursing Research Presented Beyond UAMS

Integration of evidence-based practices (EBP), quality improvement, and nursing research into clinical and operational processes contributes to improved patient care, advancement of nursing practice, and a culture of nursing excellence. Nurses from across UAMS Health engaged in EBP, quality improvement and research to improve outcomes, and several were able to attend conferences to share their work.

Quality Management Coordinators **Holly Taylor, DNP, RN, CNOR, NPD-BC, CNAMB**, and **Michelle Davis, BSN, RN, CNOR**, attended the OR Manager Conference in Denver, Colo., to present Implementation Process Change to Find the Real Patient Safety Indicator Solutions. This presentation was about the usefulness of perioperative nurse inclusion in an interprofessional team with physicians and coding specialists for improvement in Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) PSI 90 measures. PSI is a patient safety and adverse events composite comprised of a number of metrics including pressure ulcer rate and perioperative hemorrhage. Taylor and Davis highlighted how the UAMS Management Guidance Team (MGT) structure drove change at the system level through specific implementation using an EPIC work queue for pre-billing review for documentation opportunities and processes for physician review teams.

Kristen Phonvilai, BSN, RNC-NIC, C-ELBW, CPST, NICU RNIV, from the UAMS Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) presented at the Kappa Rho Research Day at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway. She was concerned about the number of premature infants admitted to the NICU who were hypothermic upon admission. She wanted to determine the incidence of admission hypothermia for infants born at less than 32 weeks gestation and/or less than 1500gm at birth and identify contributing factors occurring during the resuscitation and stabilization, transportation and NICU admission process. With this knowledge, Phonvilai implemented the standardized

use of an underbody warming blanket for the target population in addition to the interventions routinely used in the NICU to reduce the risk of hypothermia upon admission. After this change, the NICU saw a 90% reduction in the percentage of infants who were hypothermic upon admission.

Kenny Worley, BSN, RN, CNOR, traveled to New Orleans to present at the Association of PeriOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Global Surgical Conference & Expo. His first presentation, *Do You Know the Cost?*, addressed strategies and tactics in the purchasing processes and steps to ensure value in purchasing patient care supplies. He also discussed opportunities to ensure best pricing and verification and the vital part clinical nurses play in discussions and decision-making when considering and purchasing products. Worley also presented *Leading Through Unprecedented Times: Burnout and Moral Injury in the post-COVID Era*. This presentation focused on the impact of stress on staff and how to prepare, recognize and provide appropriate resources and responses. The presentation included a role-playing activity with audience members that stimulated great participation and discussion.

Integrated Medicine Service Line Senior Nursing Director **Sandra Meredith-Neve, BScN, RN, CPN**, co-authored a manuscript that was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Clinical and Translational Research* entitled "Rural Research Network to Engage Rural and Minority Community Members in Translational Research." The aim of the report was to describe the development of a rural research network, which provides a platform for rural Arkansans to participate in research opportunities at UAMS. Participation of individuals living in rural locations, underrepresented minorities, and low-income status drives better understanding of health disparities and makes research outcomes more generalizable to a larger portion of the United States.



Shared Decision Model Results in Safer Patient Care

UAMS supports and promotes decision-making by the nurses who ultimately operationalize the outcome of the decision through nursing shared governance. This is the embodiment of the philosophy that nurses have the autonomy and accountability to make decisions about nursing practice and the care delivered to the patients they serve. The design of a shared governance council promotes a multidirectional flow of information between direct care nurses, leadership, inter-professional teams, and the chief nursing officer.

While decision-making is entrusted to those in direct care roles, shared governance draws its strength from the guidance of transformational leaders who support the decision-making process by communicating the parameters and constraints of the situation and moving forward with the decision made by the council. The Ambulatory Nursing Quality, Experience & Safety (NQUEST) Council provides ambulatory nurses the forum to bring up concerns and issues and drive change in the ambulatory areas.

Brenda Willett, BSN, RN, AMB-BC, a clinical nurse in the Paracentesis Clinic, attended the NQUEST meeting as the chair of the Ambulatory NQUEST Council. At this meeting, she heard the inpatient bar code medication administration (BCMA) report and concerns raised by staff members about barriers to success. Willett noted that no ambulatory settings had BCMA other than the Infusion 1 and Infusion 4 clinics in the Cancer Service Line. Knowing that BCMA is recommended by the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) and is an intervention to meet The Joint Commission's National Patient Safety Goal for safe medication usage, Willett brought this topic to the Ambulatory NQUEST Council meeting in March 2022.

When she raised her concern about BCMA not being available in ambulatory clinics despite being safer for patients and patient safety being a strategic priority for UAMS, Associate Chief Nursing Officer for Informatics **Donna Elrod, PhD, RN**, shared that when UAMS went live with Epic, its new electronic medical record (EMR), in 2014 a decision was made to not implement BCMA in the ambulatory setting due to financial concerns. Elrod told the committee she would investigate the feasibility of implementing BCMA in the ambulatory setting with the UAMS EMR Decision Support Committee.

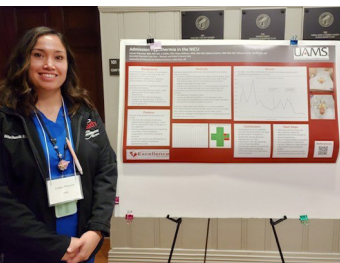
At the May 2022 Ambulatory NQUEST Council meeting, former Nursing Director of Women's Health **Penny Ward, MSn, RN, CPN**, and Director of Nursing Research, Excellence and Magnet **Rebekah Thacker, MNSc, RNC-NIC**, presented the opportunity to begin using Rover, Epic's mobile phone app, along with a cell phone with scanner functionality. Council members agreed this was the best option to move forward with BCMA in ambulatory.

Former Chief Nursing Officer **Trenda Ray, PhD, RN**, a member of the Ambulatory NQUEST Council, worked with senior leadership to secure funding for the project, with individual service lines agreeing to support the purchase of the cell phones needed for the clinics.

Ward updated the Ambulatory NQUEST Council in September 2022, informing them that a pilot to begin using Rover phones, including BCMA scanning, would be implemented in the Paracentesis Clinic, Neurology Clinic and Texarkana Family Medical Clinic.

The BCMA pilot went live in the Neurology clinics on Feb. 16, 2023. Clinical Services Manager for the Neurology and Neurosciences Clinics **Melissa Tillman, MSN, RN**, presented an update to the Ambulatory NQUEST Council in March 2023. She reported opportunities for improvement and positive outcomes of the go-live. Opportunities for improvement included changing physician workflow of ordering medications for proper documentation with scanning, and changing RN workflow to be available for scanning medications prior to administration. Positive outcomes included a more efficient nursing workflow for charting medications at the time of administration, the opportunity to conduct a Time Out for the procedure and the medication administration at the same time. The new workflow did not delay care as some staff members had anticipated.

Willett's identification of a need for change in nursing practice and her empowerment to voice the concern in the Ambulatory NQUEST Council, a nursing shared governance council, brought BCMA scanning to the ambulatory setting. This was a positive change in nursing practice and improved the safety of medication administration to patients.



Kenny Worley and conference attendees at the Association of PeriOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Global Surgical Conference & Expo participate in a role-playing activity during his presentation on the importance of involving nurses in purchasing patient care supplies.

(From left) Quality Management Coordinators Michelle Davis and Holly Taylor speak at the OR Manager Conference in Denver, Colo.

Kristen Phonvilai from the UAMS NICU shares her research on admission hypothermia in babies admitted to the NICU

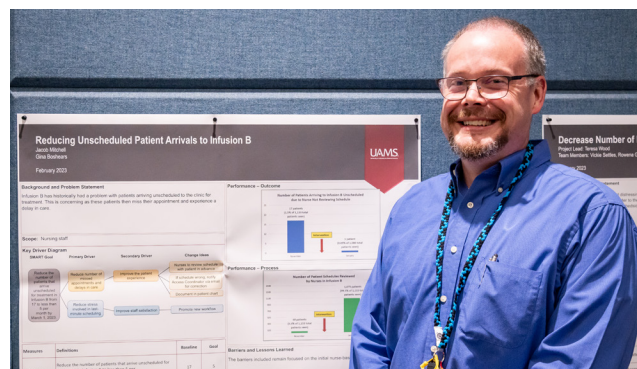
Resource Nurse Program: Leading Quality Improvement

The UAMS Resource Nurse Program began in 2008 to help improve patient outcomes by involving clinical nurses in quality improvement projects. The program started with a focus on infection prevention, skin care, pain, safety, and diabetes for inpatient nurses for six-month terms. Over the past 15 years, the program has grown into a robust course of quality training and initiatives for both inpatient and ambulatory nurses working on quality improvement projects that align with the UAMS Vision 2029 strategic goals. Resource nurses who successfully complete the program requirements receive a financial stipend at the end of the term.

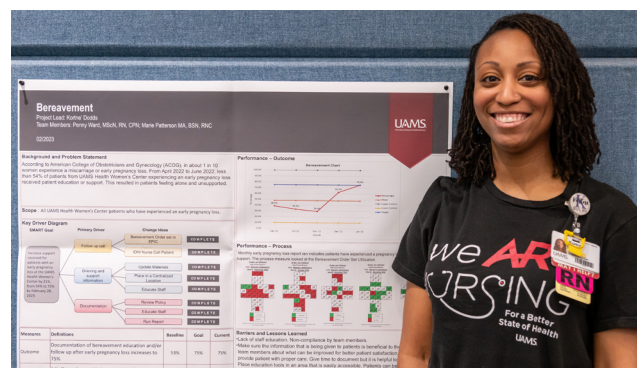
In the spring of 2022, nurses from inpatient and ambulatory areas submitted a letter of interest with peer evaluation and nurse leader support statements to participate in the fiscal year 23 Resource Nurse Program. The term began in July and started with completing Leading Quality Improvement (LQI) training on FOCUS (Find a problem, Organize a team, Clarify the problem, Understand the problem, Select an intervention) PDSA (Plan Do Study Act) processes.

Resource nurses met with quality improvement coaches and nursing leaders monthly to design and execute a quality improvement project using the FOCUS PDSA model.

The resource nurses used improvement huddles to bring attention to the project in their areas, educating staff on the problem, goals, and implementations. They reviewed data, including process and outcome measures, to track their projects. The FY23 Resource Nurse Program wrapped up in March with most of the projects experiencing a great deal of success. Projects included improvement of typical nursing-sensitive quality indicators such as falls, hospital acquired pressure injuries (HAPI) and hospital acquired infections (HAIs). Other projects focused on improving patient experience, like **Jacob Mitchell, BSN, RN**, in Infusion B, who improved clinic workflow and patient scheduling to reduce the number of patients arriving to Infusion B on an unscheduled day.



Resource nurse Jacob Mitchell's project focused on improved clinic workflow and patient scheduling in Infusion B.



Kortne Dodds' project focused on supporting bereaved patients at the Women's Center.

Kortne Dodds, BSN, RN, at the UAMS Health Women's Center, recognized the need to improve support for patients who had experienced early pregnancy loss. Her project focused on improving bereavement support for these patients.

Amber Westpheling, BSN, RN, CCRN, works on H4 and focused on HAPI prevention efforts through quality improvement huddles, bundled skin/wound practices, and preventive wound care consults for high-risk patients. This resulted in a drastic improvement in the HAPI rate on H4, decreasing from 13.17 per 1,000 patient days in June 2022 to 1.56 in January 2023.

Clinical nurse **Jocelyn Aguon, MSN, RN**, implemented the use of a fall risk information board on H9 along with daily morning huddles to discuss high-risk patients with interventions in place. The rate of falls with injury on H9 per 1,000 patient days decreased from 1.44 in August 2021 to zero for three consecutive months beginning in April 2022 after these interventions were put in place.

Clinical nurse **Chloe Uhrnowycz, BSN, RN**, identified an opportunity to address the CLABSI rate on H7 through bedside rounding and assessing central line dressings by Central Line Specialty Nurse **Eric Holmes, BSN**. Uhrnowycz helped educate staff about dressing changes and monitored CLABSI rates. Her participation in the resource nurse program helped decrease the rate of CLABSI per 1,000 central line days on H7 from 5.76 in March 2023 to zero in June and July 2023.

Resource Nurse	Unit/Area	Project
Amy Hale	F9	Reduce Patient Falls
Christina Cooley	PRI 5	Reduce Patient Falls
Melanie Mason	NICU	Reduce CLABSI and HAPI
Amber Westpheling	H4	Reduce CLABSI and HAPI
Jocelyn Aguon	H9	Reduce Falls with Injury
Mary Davidson	F4	Reduce Falls with Injury
Chloe Uhrnowycz	H7	Reduce Falls with Injury and CLABSI
Teresa Wood	Infusion B	Decrease Number of IV Attempts for Infusion B Patients
Jacob Mitchell	Infusion B	Reducing Unscheduled Patient Arrivals to Infusion B
Brenda Willett	Surgical Specialties Service Line	Improving Patient Education to Reduce Readmissions
Kristal Watson	Endoscopy	Endoscopy Procedure Room Turnover Time
Stephanie Moran	Perioperative Services	Missing Neurological Assessment for Preoperative Neuro Surgical Cases
Kortne' Dodds	Women's Health	Bereavement Support for Patients with Early Pregnancy Loss
Angela Ward Chandani Patel Amanda Murry Janet Perry	Family Medicine Clinics	Improving Timely Foot Exams for Diabetic Patients

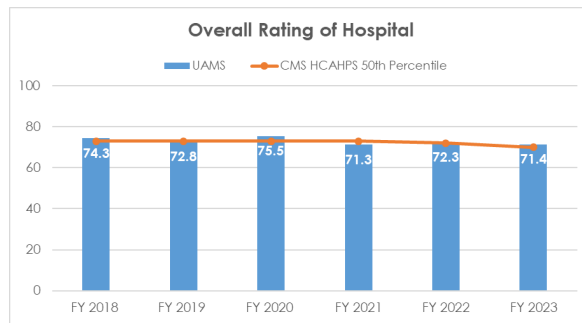
Patient Surveys Reflect Patient Satisfaction

UAMS is committed to providing an exceptional experience for patients and families across the enterprise. The mission of the Patient Experience Office is to collaborate with and support staff, lead data-driven improvement, and engage patients, families and staff in patient- and family-centered care to create an outstanding experience for everyone at UAMS. A key component to providing excellent experiences is the partnership between the office of Patient Experience and UAMS Nursing.

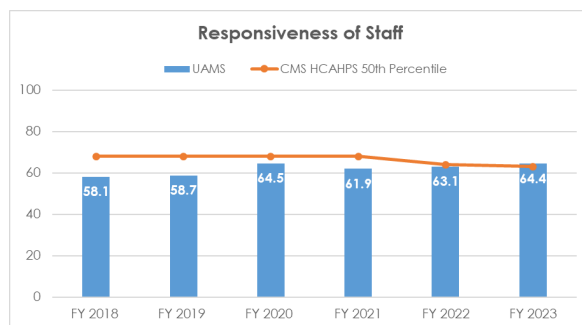
UAMS continues to receive a high volume of “top box” scores and perform at or above the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) 50th percentile on many of the CMS Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) dimensions. UAMS patients continue to give the hospital a high rating overall, and the majority of patients say they would recommend UAMS to their family and friends. The following graphs illustrate how UAMS nurses contribute to a positive patient experience at UAMS.

Inpatient Metrics

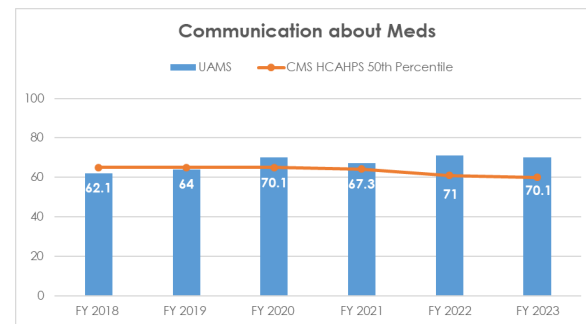
As part of our ongoing efforts to reach the goals set in Vision 2029, UAMS staff focus on facilitating good outcomes for our patients. For the second consecutive year, overall rating of the hospital remained above the HCAHPS benchmark with a 71.4 score. Responsiveness of staff improved slightly as nurses became more committed to anticipatory rounding and turning off call lights in patient rooms. HCAHPS survey responses related to communication about medications, care transitions and communication with nurses all exceeded the CMS 50th percentile benchmark, contributing to improvements in the overall experience for UAMS patients and families.



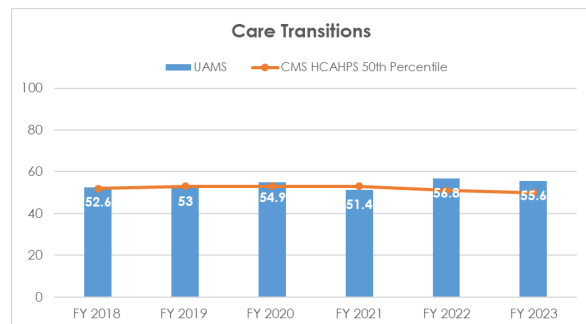
Overall rating of the hospital remained above the CMS median in fiscal year 2023, which ended June 30, 2023.



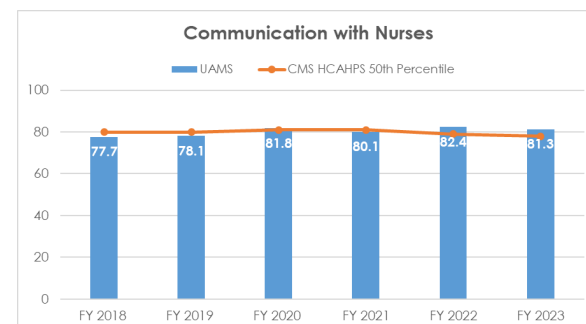
Responsiveness to patient needs improved even as the national benchmark score continued to decrease.



Communication about medication, specifically staff explaining possible side effects of new medications and discussing the purpose of medications, remained above the national median.



UAMS Health scores for Care Transitions, which incorporate staff taking patient preferences into account and patients understanding how to manage their health and the purpose of medications, maintained its position above the national benchmark.

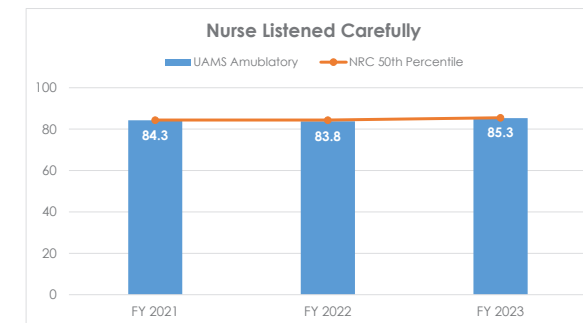


Patient survey scores for Communication with Nurses, which includes nurses listening carefully to patients, explaining in ways that patients can understand, and treating patients with courtesy and respect, exceeded the national average again in fiscal year 2023.

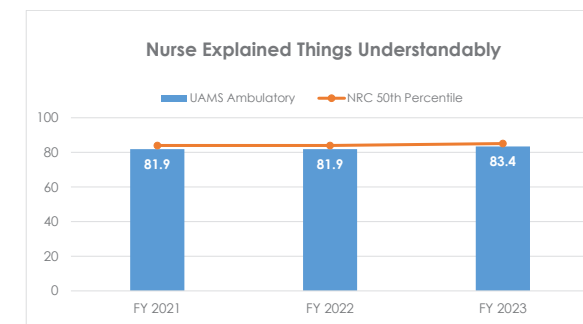
Ambulatory Metrics

UAMS is committed to providing a positive experience in the ambulatory setting in clinics in Central Arkansas and throughout the state. Patients who visit UAMS Health in an outpatient setting are surveyed by NRC Health. The following charts show the responses from UAMS patients compared to our goal of the 50th percentile of all NRC-survey facilities.

Good nurse communication is essential for quality outcomes for patients and good experiences for both patients and staff. There have been clear improvements in nurses listening carefully to patients and explaining things in a way patients can understand. UAMS continues to work toward its goal to exceed the national average in ambulatory settings.



Scores for nurses listening carefully to patients increased in FY23 as nurses continue to improve in communication best practices.



Patient surveys reflected improvement in how UAMS ambulatory nurses explain things to patients in FY23.



The Magnet Journey



Magnet is a designation given by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). It is a distinction of nursing excellence and quality patient care, and it signifies that an organization has taken every effort to promote the empowerment, engagement, and development of nurses, in addition to improving patient outcomes and enhancing the patient experience. UAMS is on a mission to achieve nursing excellence that will result in Magnet designation by 2025.

The UAMS Magnet Journey is well on its way!

Despite the challenges health care has faced in a post-COVID era, UAMS nurses have been resilient and resolved to deliver high-quality, patient- and family-centered care. UAMS experienced continued improvement in quality outcomes and patient experience. As of June 2023, UAMS outperformed benchmarks in the following quality metrics: Inpatient Falls with Injury, HAPI stage 2 and above, CAUTI, Device-Related HAPI, Ambulatory Falls with Injury, Door to Needle, and Procedural Patient Burns. We also had tremendous improvement in our patient experience data, outperforming benchmarks in inpatient and ambulatory areas in Courtesy & Respect, Patient Education, Patient Engagement/Centered Care, Safety and Careful Listening.

The biggest accomplishment realized in the UAMS Magnet journey this past year was the RN Engagement scores on the 2022 Gallup employee engagement survey. We had an overall participation rate of 70% and outperformed benchmarks in Adequacy of Resources & Staffing, Interprofessional Relationships and Leadership Access & Responsiveness.

UAMS nurses should celebrate the successes they have achieved and the dedication and commitment they have made to persevere through challenges. UAMS will submit the final document to the ANCC in February 2024, and we look forward to hosting a site visit with the ANCC in the fall of 2024.

