

UAMS News Bureau

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**Sickle Cell Symposium Oct. 19 to Focus
on Stem Cell Transplants for Sickle Cell Disease**

LITTLE ROCK — People with sickle cell disease, their families, health care professionals and the public are invited to the 2017 annual Sickle Cell Symposium at 6 p.m. Oct. 19 at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS). The symposium is free for the general public, and \$20 for health care providers who want continuing education credit.

The central topic of the symposium is “Stem Cell Transplant as a Cure for Sickle Cell Disease: Who, When and How?”

Meeting on the 12th floor of the Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, the Sickle Cell Symposium is presented by Future Builders Inc. and Arkansas Black Nurses Association in collaboration with the UAMS Adult Sickle Cell Clinical Program.

Registration is required. To register for the symposium and for more information, go to sicklecell.uams.edu, or email Donna Ezell, R.N., at DJEzell@uams.edu.

Keynote speaker Kathryn Yarkony, Ph.D., A.P.R.N., will give an overview of the bone marrow transplant program at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore where she is the lead transplant coordinator. Then Pooja Motwani, M.D., co-director of the UAMS Adult Sickle Cell Clinical Program, will discuss what the opportunity for bone marrow transplant means for UAMS adult sickle cell patients.

Bone marrow transplants are one of the procedures used to restore stem cells. Recent advances in ‘half-matched’ bone marrow transplantation have allowed for a much broader range of donors, allowing just about any patient to be eligible for the procedure. This means a donor can be found for nearly every patient who needs a bone marrow transplant to be cured. As a national referral center for the procedure, Johns Hopkins annually performs about 300 bone marrow transplants.

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Yarkony has been the lead transplant coordinator at Johns Hopkins since January 2016 and has worked there in various nursing roles since 2007. She earned her doctorate in physiology from Johns Hopkins in 1996. Yarkony is a member of the Oncology Nursing Society and a representative to the National Cancer Institute for Oncology Nursing Research.

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 northwest Arkansas regional campus; a statewide network of regional centers; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, the Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, the Myeloma Institute, the Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, the Psychiatric Research Institute, the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging and the Translational Research Institute. It is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 2,870 students, 799 medical residents and six dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including about 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS and its regional campuses throughout the state, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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