



PULASKI COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY News

February 2022

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When you think professional, ethical, quality healthcare,
think physicians of Pulaski County Medical Society.

UAMS Research Team Finds COVID-19 Has Mutation Limits

A University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) research team has found that while the coronavirus can create dangerous variants like delta and omicron, its ability to mutate has limits that should help drug and vaccine makers trying to thwart it.

Drawing from global databases with millions of sequenced SARS-CoV-2 genomes, the multinational team, led by [David Ussery, Ph.D.](#), has shown that the virus has a limited genetic range for new mutations. The team's observations are [published in FEMS Microbiology Reviews](#).

"The surprising finding is that the virus is pretty stable, and it is not changing that much," said Ussery, professor and director of the Arkansas Center for Genomic Epidemiology & Medicine at UAMS. "It's somewhat restricted. That's good news for designing drugs that can fight it effectively."

The virus' structure makes it slower to mutate and gives it fewer mutation possibilities. Ussery contrasted it with HIV as an example of a virus that is much more adept at evading new drug therapies. A typical viral escape mechanism has to do with regulation of its production of epitopes, which are protein segments of different shapes that antibodies bind to as part of the immune defense.

"Instead of the frightening theoretical possibility of this virus producing millions of different epitopes that need to be therapeutically anticipated during vaccine development, we may now be able to predict a very limited subset of probable epitopes," Ussery said.

The team analyzed coronavirus genomes in GenBank and Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data (GISAID) databases. It used the high performance UAMS-based computer known as GRACE to perform much of the computational work.

The infrastructure to help run this computer is supported in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) in 2020, "Data Analytics That

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Medical Exchange Legal Update

On February 10, 2022, the Pulaski County Medical Exchange (PCME) appeared in federal court, on its Motion for Temporary Restraining Order against Defendants MedCom and Chase Wright based on their conduct in connection with the failed transaction earlier this year. On February 15, 2022, United States District Judge Billy Roy Wilson entered an Order granting PCME’s Motion, concluding that PCME has demonstrated a strong likelihood of success on its claims against Defendants and that, without a temporary restraining order, Defendants could be expected to continue engaging in conduct detrimental not only to Plaintiff’s business interests but to the central



Arkansas medical community. The Order requires that MedCom and Chase Wright immediately return all of PCME’s property and cease all communications and advertisements with PCME customers. A link to the Temporary Restraining Order is below.

<https://pulaskicms.org/media/>

UAMS Research Team Finds COVID-19 Has Mutation Limits

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Are Robust and Trusted (DART).” This was an Arkansas state-wide grant (\$24 million), funded by the [Arkansas NSF EPSCoR program](#).

Ussery, who holds the Helen Adams & Arkansas Research Alliance (ARA) Endowed Chair in Biomedical Informatics, said the analysis was inspired by “[EbolaVirus Comparative Genomics](#),” published in 2015 by an international team that included all four authors of the COVID-19 paper. The Ebola publication earned a FEMS Microbiology Reviews Editor’s Choice Award.

“I think our SARS-CoV-2 findings are breaking some new ground, helping people see the big picture with a systematic look at the virus’ genomics,” Ussery said. “We now have several million genomes and that allows us to tease out the variance within different lineages that are causing major outbreaks like delta and omicron.”

The research team was also able to identify numerous incomplete or erroneous sequences housed in the databases.

<https://www.facebook.com/Pulaski-County-Medical-Society-100260252095789>

Kirkpatrick Family Donates \$1 Million to Create Endowed Cardiovascular Chair in UAMS College of Medicine

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received a \$1 million gift from the Don and Carolyn Kirkpatrick family to create an endowed chair in the UAMS College of Medicine Division of Cardiovascular Medicine.

Don and Carolyn Kirkpatrick enjoyed a close relationship with both physicians and volunteers at UAMS and wanted to express their gratitude with a gift that would help advance the world-class cardiology care available at UAMS. J. Paul Mounsey, M.D., Ph.D., director of the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine in the Department of Internal Medicine, will become the inaugural holder of the Don and Carolyn Kirkpatrick Chair in Cardiovascular Medicine.



range of what is possible to prolong life and relieve symptoms,” said Mounsey. “Our research includes prevention through community intervention for the underserved populations of rural Arkansas and the development of cutting-edge novel treatments for or patients with heart disease. Our efforts will be transformed by this leadership gift from the Kirkpatrick family. I am honored to serve as the inaugural chair holder.”

Heart disease is the leading cause of premature death in the United States, and Arkansas has one of the higher death rates from heart disease, Mounsey said.

“We are grateful to the Kirkpatrick family for their generosity and this highly impactful gift,” said Susan S. Smyth, M.D., Ph.D., executive vice chancellor of UAMS and dean of the College of Medicine. “Dr. Mounsey is providing visionary leadership for the UAMS Health Heart Center and our clinical services, cardiovascular education and training, and cardiology research initiatives. This endowment will provide crucial support for him and his outstanding team in all of these areas.”

“Our mission at the UAMS Health Heart Center is to care for all Arkansans with heart disease, and to provide the full

Carolyn Kirkpatrick and her late husband, Don, have been dedicated supporters and leaders in the UAMS community. Carolyn Kirkpatrick served for more than a decade as a member of the Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging Community Advisory Board. She received the Jo Ellen Ford Distinguished Service Award in 2009. Don Kirkpatrick, former owner of Quality Foods, was a stalwart in the Arkansas business community and a leader in the poultry industry. He died in 2003. The Kirkpatricks were married for 47 years and together have four children: Donna K. Isom, Deborah K. Makris, Gina K. Tappan and Don O. Kirkpatrick Jr. Their legacy of business leadership and philanthropy continues.



Dr. Shree Nallur Joins CHI St. Vincent Primary Care Clinic

CHI St. Vincent announces that Dr. Shree Nallur has joined the team of leading primary care physicians at the CHI St. Vincent Primary Care Clinic in Sherwood. Dr. Nallur is now seeing patients at the clinic, located at 7709 Highway 107.

Dr. Nallur attended medical school at Sri Devaraj Urs Medical College in Karnataka, India, where she also completed her internship. She completed her residency in family medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Dr. Shree Nallur



CARTI Opens Cancer Center in Pine Bluff

Comprehensive cancer services now available at the CARTI Cancer Center in Pine Bluff

CARTI announced February 14th the opening of the CARTI Cancer Center in Pine Bluff, located at 5001 Bobo Road. The center provides medical and radiation oncology, imaging services, including MRI, PET and 3D mammography, and breast surgical consultations to patients of southeast Arkansas. The facility includes an infusion suite with 28 heated recliners, one private infusion suite and an onsite lab. The cancer center will be open Monday - Wednesday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Thursday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This is CARTI's sixth comprehensive cancer center, the second-largest facility in its network of treatment locations. In addition, CARTI has a second location in Pine Bluff, CARTI Urology, which provides general urology services.

"We chose Pine Bluff as the location for our newest cancer center based on patient needs and our desire to bring the most advanced cancer care into the communities where patients live," said Adam Head, president and CEO of the statewide network of cancer care providers. "We are honored to be part of this community and to bring the most advanced technologies and expertise to the residents of southeast Arkansas."

The Pine Bluff medical team consists of experts representing each of CARTI's cancer specialties. Physicians include medical oncologists Ryan E. Hall, M.D., David Kuperman, M.D., and Appalanaidu Sasapu, M.D., FACP, radiation oncologist Brent Cameron, M.D., Ph.D., and breast oncologic surgeon Yara Robertson, M.D., F.A.C.S. Together, these renowned providers will provide patients with a team approach to comprehensive cancer treatment.

OrthoArkansas Opens Urgent Care Clinic in North Little Rock



OrthoArkansas, which specializes in head-to-toe comprehensive orthopedic care, has opened its second Orthopedic Urgent Care Clinic. The clinic is located on Landers Road in North Little Rock, as an expansion of its OrthoArkansas facility.

A staff of orthopedic physicians and specialists is available to diagnose and treat non-life-threatening injuries, sprains or fractures Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Saturdays from 8 a.m. until noon.

The team treats orthopedic trauma of the bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and nerves. If X-rays are required, they are done in the clinic and read promptly. A physician will diagnose their problem and if required, prescribe treatment and any occupational or physical therapy, as well as any required follow-up appointments. A medical equipment shop is on-site if the patient requires slings, crutches, casts, bandages, boots, etc.

OrthoArkansas has an Orthopedic Urgent Care Clinic at its Little Rock location on Fair Park Blvd.

UAMS Kidney, Liver Transplant Programs Again Ranked Among Best in Nation

The Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients has again ranked the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences' (UAMS) kidney and liver transplant programs among the top in the nation.

For the second year in a row, the registry gave the UAMS kidney transplant program five bars – the highest ranking possible – in two categories: the speed of obtaining donor kidneys and patient survivability one year after transplant. Only a handful of transplant centers across the country hold five bars in both categories.

Among national kidney programs with five-tier rankings, the recently released report reveals that UAMS placed fourth when it comes to speed in obtaining transplants

and sixth in the category of patient survivability after one year. UAMS' liver transplant program scored three bars for the speed of obtaining a transplant and four bars for survival of patients one year after the transplant.

Nationwide, there are 256 kidney transplant programs and 147 liver transplant programs. UAMS' kidney transplant program has been operating since 1964, and its liver transplant program began in 2005. They are the only adult kidney and liver transplant programs in Arkansas.

"Once again, having these accomplishments recognized nationally is a great way to start the new year," said UAMS Chancellor Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA. "I commend our kidney and liver transplant teams for their exceptional work."

Baptist Health Appoints John Goodman to Oversee Cancer Services

Baptist Health recently appointed John Goodman, who has more than 17 years of experience in health care leadership, as corporate vice president of oncology, pharmacy and respiratory services.

In this role, Goodman will steer cancer services for all of Baptist Health. He will actively lead the development and execution of a comprehensive system-wide strategic plan for cancer services in partnership with the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Goodman will also lead pharmacy and respiratory services across Baptist Health focusing on operating performance, resource planning and utilization, clinical collaboration and quality outcomes.

Prior to joining Baptist Health, Goodman recently held the position of chief operating officer and chief administrative officer of a local cancer organization.

Before that, he held the position of vice president of the oncology service line for Ascension Saint Thomas in Nashville, Tennessee, where he also served as the vice president of hospital operations at Saint Thomas Midtown and West. Earlier in his career he was the system leader for oncology services at Piedmont Healthcare in Atlanta and served there approximately 12 years.



John Goodman

Goodman earned a Bachelor of Science from East Carolina University in Greenville, North Carolina, and received his Master of Health Administration from Virginia Commonwealth in Richmond, Virginia.



UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute's Radiation Oncology Center Becomes First and Only Center in Arkansas to Earn APEX Accreditation

The [Radiation Oncology Center](#) at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received the highest national accreditation from the American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO).

The center, which is part of the [UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute](#), is the only radiation oncology center in the state to be granted full accreditation by the Society's [ASTRO Accreditation Program for Excellence](#) (APEX®). The accreditation is voluntary and granted by ASTRO for a four-year term ending in November 2025.

Accreditation was awarded after a site visit in November 2021 and a review of the center's modalities, techniques, equipment, information and treatment planning systems for compliance with APEX safety and quality standards. APEX is the society's highest honor, recognizing centers that meet the most rigorous standards for safety and performance.

"APEX accreditation ensures patients that our radiation therapy treatment is safe and provided by a team of highly

trained professionals," said Fen Xia, M.D., Ph.D., radiation oncologist, professor and chair of the UAMS Department of Radiation Oncology in the College of Medicine.

According to the American Cancer Society, radiation is one of the most common treatments for cancer and is needed by half of all patients. The Radiation Oncology Center at UAMS is the only center in the state that treats both adult and pediatric cancer patients.

UAMS provides comprehensive, state-of-the-art radiation therapy including brachytherapy, intensity modulated radiation therapy, surface guided radiation therapy, radiosurgery for brain tumors and stereotactic body radiation therapy for lung, liver, prostate, pancreas, spine and other body sites.

"This accreditation is so well deserved," said Michael Birrer, M.D., Ph.D., UAMS vice chancellor and director of the Cancer Institute. "Having come from cancer centers in other states, this radiation therapy center is state of the art in every way and offers the broadest range of cutting-edge therapies to treat virtually every type of cancer."

Dr. Michael Bogatch Joins Baptist Health Orthopedic Clinic-Little Rock



Dr. Michael Bogatch

Baptist Health Orthopedic Clinic-Little Rock recently welcomed Michael Bogatch, MD, MSc.

"I approach treatment of every patient as if they were my own family member," says Dr. Bogatch. "My goal is to establish good patient rapport and apply myself to the fullest to obtain the best outcomes possible."

Dr. Bogatch received his medical education from the Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans, where he also completed residency training. He is board-certified in orthopedic surgery and fellowship-trained in orthopaedic sports medicine.

In his free time, Dr. Bogatch enjoys golfing, traveling and spending quality time with his family and friends.

For more information about the services Dr. Bogatch provides or to request an appointment, visit baptist-health.com or call Baptist Health HealthLine at 1-888-BAPTIST.

Baptist Health Names Lawrence Montgomery as System's Chief Marketing Officer

Baptist Health has named Lawrence Montgomery as the system's chief marketing officer. He has more than 15 years of experience leading health care advertising and marketing brands.

Montgomery previously served as executive director of national brand advertising for Kaiser Permanente in Oakland, Calif., where he has been since 2010. Prior to that, he served at UC Davis Health System and the State of California, Department of Public Health.

Since 2010, Montgomery was responsible for multiple Kaiser Permanente advertising functions across brand and other lines of business. He managed advertising/marketing departments across Kaiser Permanente including strategic partnerships, paid media, social media and brand advertising as well as multicultural, translation, mental health, sports and wellness marketing.

In his senior level marketing role, Montgomery was the key leader with creative and brand strategy for the "Thrive Campaign", an industry-changing initiative that transformed health care marketing from the perspective of "treating

illness" to people taking control of their own health.

At Baptist Health, Montgomery will be responsible for developing and leading a high performance marketing and communications team focused on optimizing the patient experience, driving service line revenue growth, and supporting the brand and mission of Baptist Health.



Lawrence Montgomery

Montgomery, a California native, received Bachelor of Arts degrees in Psychology and Political Science and Communication from the University of California/Davis in Davis, Calif. He has a Master of Science in Business in Integrated Marketing and Communication from Golden State University in San Francisco, Calif. In addition, he received a Master of Science in Anthropology from Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass.