



# PULASKI COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY News

January 2025

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### Pulaski County Medical Society

500 S. University Ave., Suite A14  
 Little Rock, AR 72205  
 Phone: 501.687.0039  
 Email: [derek@pulaskicms.org](mailto:derek@pulaskicms.org)  
 Website: [www.pulaskicms.org](http://www.pulaskicms.org)

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

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

It has been a privilege to serve on the Board of Directors for the Pulaski County Medical Society for the last three years. I now have the honor to serve as your President for 2025.

This opportunity to serve is not taken lightly. The Pulaski County Medical Society (PCMS) is the largest and oldest




*Dr. Ken Singleton*

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**CELEBRATING 150 YEARS**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

150




ARKANSAS MEDICAL SOCIETY

150th Anniversary Kickoff Press Conference  
**JANUARY 16, 2025**

**AMS is holding a press conference on Thursday, January 16, 2025 to kick off our celebration of 150 years of service to physicians in Arkansas.**

**Where: Arkansas State Capitol**

**When: 1:30pm (expected time)**



# Amendments to the HIPAA Privacy Rule: Key Changes for Reproductive Health Care

Justin Joy, JD, CIPP, Attorney, Lewis Thomason, PC

Adapted from the SVMIC Sentinel: Read the full article at [svmic.com/sentinel](https://svmic.com/sentinel)

For the first time in over a decade, substantive changes have been made to the HIPAA Privacy Rule. The HIPAA Privacy Rule To Support Reproductive Health Care Privacy took effect on June 25, 2024. Several of the changes will significantly impact medical practices that provide reproductive health care services or that offer substance use disorder treatment, and a smaller number of changes will affect all HIPAA covered entities.

## CHANGES IMPACTING ALL PROVIDERS

For all practices, the notice of privacy practices (NPP) form will need to be revised to include a statement like the one required on protected health information (PHI) disclosure authorization forms, adequate to put patients on notice of the potential that any PHI disclosed according to the Privacy Rule is subject to redisclosure by the recipient and no longer protected by HIPAA. Additionally, as discussed in more detail below, providers must also modify their NPP to address prohibitions on uses and disclosures of reproductive health care records and when valid attestations are now required.

## CHANGES IMPACTING PROVIDERS CREATING OR MAINTAINING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE RECORDS

The Privacy Rule now includes new provisions regarding reproductive health care records. According to the new rule, reproductive health care is "health care that affects the health of an individual in all matters related to the reproductive system and its functions and processes." Importantly, this definition is not expressly limited to gynecology or

obstetrics, and could encompass various health care settings, such as urology and primary care. Furthermore, for Privacy Rule applicability, the scope of reproductive health care information is effectively expanded further to include activities like expressing interest in, using, performing, furnishing, paying for, disseminating information about, arranging, insuring, administering, authorizing, providing coverage for, approving, counseling about, assisting, or taking any action to engage in reproductive health care. For instance, this could potentially include a patient seeking advice on contraception, a doctor performing a hysterectomy, or a clinic providing information on fertility treatments. This means that any health care provider or organization with records related to these types of activities must be aware of these new obligations. The new rule specifies that a HIPAA covered entity cannot use or disclose protected health information for many specific activities. *See the full SVMIC Sentinel article for a listing.* A new mechanism is introduced with these new rules. For the first time, the HIPAA Privacy Rule requires an attestation for specific uses and disclosures of PHI to individuals or organizations outside of covered entities or business associates. There are many specific requirements for an attestation to be valid, but in summary, an attestation must accompany any request to disclose reproductive health care PHI for health oversight activities, judicial and administrative proceedings such as in response to subpoenas, law enforcement purposes, or to coroners and medical examiners. The attestation must be free of any errors, written in plain language, and include

specific information such as a description of the requested information, the name of the person or organization requested to make the use or disclosure, the name of the person or organization to whom the covered entity is to make the requested use or disclosure, and a clear statement that the request is not being made for a purpose prohibited under the amended Privacy Rule. The attestation must also include a warning about potential criminal penalties for unauthorized disclosure of health information. The attestation must be signed and dated by the person requesting the information, and if signed by a representative, the representative's authority must be provided. For example, unless accompanied by a valid attestation, no PHI potentially related to reproductive health care may be disclosed in response to a medical records subpoena, which are commonly issued in lawsuits involving personal injuries. Conversely, reproductive health care records requested by another provider for treatment purposes are not required to have an attestation. All HIPAA covered entities are impacted to some degree by the recent amendments to the Privacy Rule. The degree of policy and operational modifications required, as well as the deadline for complying with the regulatory changes, depend on the nature of services your medical practice provides to patients, as well as the type of records maintained by your medical practice. SVMIC members with questions about HIPAA, cybersecurity, or access to these resources, call 800-342-2239 or email [ContactSVMIC@svmic.com](mailto:ContactSVMIC@svmic.com).

## President's Message

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county medical society in the state of Arkansas. The PCMS provides an updated online membership directory that serves as a "locator/referral" tool for clinic personnel as well as patients. As a member, you have access to the Pulaski County Medical Exchange, the first emergency medical answering service in Arkansas exclusive to physicians.

Part of our society's mission is to promote professional growth. We are fortunate to be able to partner with UAMS to provide scholarships to incoming freshmen medical students, as well as funding student-led community health projects. This is aided by having a medical student on our board elected by the medical student body. In 2024 the board voted to increase the funding for both the freshman scholarship as well as student projects. Each August, during UAMS orientation week, we have the opportunity to provide lunch for the incoming freshman class and tell them about our organization and the importance of local physician

organizations. All UAMS medical students have complimentary membership in the society if they apply.

We will also continue our tradition of honoring a physician from our community who has demonstrated outstanding contributions to medicine. The 2024 recipient of the annual Presidents Award for Outstanding Contributions to Medicine was Dr. John C. Jones, Sr. Past recipients include Dr. Lawrence Mendelsohn, Dr. Joseph Beck, Dr. Lee Archer, and Dr. William N. Jones to name a few.

The PCMS will keep you informed with news focusing on local health matters, and updates from our members, in our monthly newsletter.

We would also love to see you all at our 2025 annual membership meeting and dinner tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 6, 2025 at the Robinson Center Ballroom.

Let us know how we can serve you, to have an outstanding 2025 as physicians of Pulaski County.

*Ken Singleton, MD*



*Dr. Garrett Lewis*

## CHI St. Vincent Names Dr. Garrett Lewis Market Chief Medical Officer

CHI St. Vincent, a leading regional health network serving Central and Southwest Arkansas, announces that Dr. Garrett Lewis has been named Market Chief Medical Officer. He previously served as Vice President of

Medical Affairs for the Central Arkansas market. In his new role, Lewis will lead the team of medical experts and manage daily hospital operations.

"Dr. Lewis is a great addition to the market leadership team with a proven commitment to compassionate care, and I know he will play an integral part in the

growth and sustainability of our ministry for many years to come," said Market President Chad Aduddell.

Lewis has served as Vice President of Medical Affairs for the Central Arkansas market since July, overseeing the management and operations of CHI St. Vincent's Central Arkansas medical staff. Before that, he was the Medical Director of the CHI St. Vincent Emergency Department, where he has also worked as an emergency physician since 2010.

Lewis is a board-certified emergency physician with more than a decade of experience practicing emergency medicine. He graduated from the University of Arkansas College of Medicine and completed his residency at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

For more information on Dr. Lewis or CHI St. Vincent, visit [chistvincent.com](http://chistvincent.com).

## UAMS Receives \$2.9 Million NIH Grant to Study Virus that Can Trigger Cancers

A discovery at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) that a viral protein helps a cancer-associated herpesvirus evade the immune system has led to a five-year, \$2.9 million research grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Craig Forrest, Ph.D., will use the grant to help reveal functions of the viral protein known as latency-associated nuclear antigen (LANA). The research is focused on LANA's roles during infection by the gamma herpesvirus known as Kaposi sarcoma-associated herpesvirus (KSHV).

Forrest, a professor in the College of Medicine Department of Microbiology and Immunology, hopes the work will someday lead to a vaccine for Kaposi sarcoma and other cancers caused by gamma herpesviruses.

Kaposi sarcoma is a rare cancer that affects the skin, lymph nodes and internal organs, and is caused by KSHV, a member of the gamma herpesvirus family. Gamma herpesviruses, including KSHV and the Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), are known for establishing lifelong infections in their hosts. For most people, the viruses remain latent, only reactivating under certain conditions.

KSHV is of particular concern because it is associated with several types of cancer, especially in people with compromised immune systems, such as those living with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Forrest said he became excited when a Ph.D. student in his lab, Steven Murdock Jr., found that the presence of LANA correlated with an almost nonexistent immune response against the virus.

"First of all, it was great preliminary data to support the rationale for the NIH grant proposal," said Forrest, who has been studying gamma herpesviruses since

2003. "But second of all, I thought, 'That's amazing, and now what can we do to figure out how the virus is preventing immune recognition?'"

At the end of the five-year grant, he hopes to have figured out what the mechanism is that LANA uses for preventing immune detection by the body.

LANA plays a crucial role in maintaining gamma herpesviruses in a latent state, allowing the infection to remain in the body without any symptoms. By understanding how LANA helps KSHV evade immune detection, Forrest hopes to uncover new ways to prevent or treat KSHV-associated cancers.

"We're excited about what we might discover," he said. "It would be amazing to figure out how this virus can persist in the body for so long and what we can do to prevent it from causing cancer."

The research involves creating genetically modified "chimeric" viruses that incorporate KSHV genes to simulate human infection and test potential treatments.

"When we placed the human KSHV LANA gene into our gamma herpesvirus model, it worked just fine for latency but also introduced unique characteristics, such as suppressing viral replication," Forrest said. "This suggests the virus may be using LANA as an immune evasion tactic, preventing the immune system from recognizing and eliminating the infection."

The study will also explore how the immune suppression influences disease development.

"Our new chimeric viruses will help us understand how KSHV genes affect infection and disease in different settings," Forrest said. "Our hypothesis is that the virus's stealthy behavior could give it more opportunity to cause cell transformation and drive tumor development."

## Baptist Health First in Central Arkansas to Utilize Next-Generation da Vinci 5 System

Surgeons at Baptist Health recently became the first in central Arkansas to utilize the da Vinci 5 for robotic surgery.

Intuitive's most advanced surgical system, the da Vinci 5 is designed to transform surgery to enable better outcomes, efficiency, and insights and as a result, help lower the total cost of care. Da Vinci 5 comes from more than a decade of research and development and is built upon the clinical and operational value from more than 14 million procedures that have been performed using various generations of da Vinci technology.

"Baptist Health is thrilled to bring this one-of-a-kind surgical robot as a leader for health care innovation in Arkansas," said Julie Nix, corporate vice president of surgery, women's and children's, and rehabilitation services at Baptist Health. "We implemented our first da Vinci system more than 15 years ago, and since then, we've seen the tremendous benefits of this robot when it comes to fulfilling our mission for our patients."

The da Vinci 5 brings significant technology advances to help improve patient outcomes. It is designed to allow surgeons to feel more and see more. And it addresses often undervalued surgeon ergonomics.

Among the new features are:

- More ergonomic design for surgeon comfort.
- A next-generation display with the highest resolution and most realistic 3D imaging.
- 10,000 times the computing power of the previous model.
- Connectivity with other technology in the operating room that may streamline procedures and save time for surgical teams.

The da Vinci surgical systems are designed to help surgeons perform minimally invasive surgery and offer surgeons high-definition 3D vision, a magnified view, and robotic and computer assistance. They use specialized instrumentation, including a miniaturized surgical camera and wristed instruments (i.e., scissors, scalpels and forceps) that are designed to help with precise dissection and reconstruction deep inside the body.

Baptist Health received the healing ministry's first da Vinci system in July 2006 – the original da Vinci S platform. Since then, the health care organization has upgraded to the Si system, the fourth generation Xi system and now the da Vinci 5 system, which is the most up-to-date technology.



## Healthgrades Awards UAMS Five Stars for Cardiac, Critical Care

The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) has received five-star ratings for its treatment of heart failure and sepsis from Healthgrades, the leading resource used by consumers to find a health care provider.

The 2025 ratings for clinical excellence are based on data collected from about 4,500 hospitals nationwide on all Medicare patients who used hospital in-patient services in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

Paul Mounsey, M.D., professor and chair of the UAMS Division of Cardiology in the Department of Internal Medicine, said he appreciated the recognition — for the second consecutive year — of UAMS' treatment of heart failure.

"As the only academic medical center in Arkansas, we are able to combine the expertise of various disciplines to provide holistic care for our patients," Mounsey said. "As a research institution, we have access to emerging technologies that boost our ability to provide the very best care available. This unique combination of skill and cutting-edge resources offers advantages for our patients that often aren't available anywhere else in the state."

Meanwhile, UAMS' critical care team received a five-star rating for the treatment of sepsis, a life-threatening medical emergency that is caused by the body's extreme immune response to an infection and one that can lead to tissue damage, organ failure or death if not treated quickly.

"Our critical care team provides specialized, 24/7 care for our intensive care patients, using the most up-to-date knowledge and resources available, and we appreciate the well-deserved applause," said Michelle Krause, M.D., senior vice chancellor of UAMS Health and CEO of UAMS Medical Center.

Healthgrades based the ratings solely on patient outcomes, evaluating risk-adjusted mortality and complication rates for over 30 of the most common

conditions and procedures.

"As variation in performance among hospitals continues to grow, it is increasingly important for consumers to seek care at top-rated programs," Healthgrades said in its announcement. "Our 2025 analysis revealed that if all hospitals as a group performed similarly to five-star hospitals during the 2021-2023 study period, on average, 224,958 lives could potentially have been saved and 141,692 complications could potentially have been avoided."

Five-star hospitals are those with statistically better-than-expected performances.

From 2021-23, patients treated for heart failure in five-star hospitals had, on average, a 61.7% lower risk of dying than if they had been treated at a hospital with one star.

During that period, patients treated for sepsis in hospitals with five stars had, on average, a 39% lower risk of dying than if they were treated in hospitals with one star.

"Healthgrades commends UAMS for its clear commitment to delivering consistently superior patient outcomes in critical service areas, including heart failure and sepsis," said Brad Bowman, M.D., chief medical officer and head of data science at Healthgrades. "UAMS' leadership, expertise and unwavering dedication to clinical excellence set a high mark for specialty care in Arkansas and nationwide."

### PCMS Updated Directory Available Online

Click on the link below to access the  
ONLINE updated directory.

[https://www.pulaskicms.org/  
membership/directory/](https://www.pulaskicms.org/membership/directory/)

## Ross and Mary Whipple Pledge \$1.5 Million to UAMS for Cancer Care, Patient Services, Orthopaedics

Ross and Mary Whipple pledged \$1.5 million to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS), supporting rural cancer care, patient services and orthopaedics.

The gifts include \$1 million to establish the Ross and Mary Whipple Family Community Outreach and Engagement Fund for Excellence in the UAMS Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, \$250,000 to The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital at UAMS and \$250,000 to establish the Nancy “Jo” Smith Special Services Fund for Excellence.

“Ross and Mary Whipple have been tremendous leaders for the state of Arkansas, and UAMS is fortunate to be included in their circle of trust and guidance,” said Cam Patterson, M.D., MBA, UAMS chancellor and CEO of UAMS Health. “I was humbled to see that the Whipples made commitments to several areas at UAMS, which we feel is a voice of support for the direction of the institution.”

Ross M. Whipple is president and CEO of Horizon Capital Partners LLC and president of Horizon Timber Services Inc. He also serves as chairman for The Ross Foundation Board of Trustees. An Arkansas native, Whipple was born in Arkadelphia and raised in Malvern. He received a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Henderson State University and a master’s degree in business administration from the Sam M. Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas. He was inducted into the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame, the University of Arkansas’s Business Hall of Fame and the Arkansas Outdoor Hall of Fame.

Mary Whipple is secretary of Horizon Capital Partners LLC and serves on the board of the Ross Foundation. Whipple was born in Hamburg, Arkansas. She holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. Additionally, she serves on the board of the Baptist Health Medical Center – Arkadelphia.

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## Baptist Health Family Clinic-Lakewood Welcomes Dr. Roger Gillum

Roger Gillum, MD, recently joined the team of providers at Baptist Health Family Clinic-Lakewood.

Dr. Gillum received his medical education from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. He later completed residency training in family medicine through the Baptist Health–University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences Medical Education Program.

“I collaborate with my patients to assist them in reaching their health objectives,” he said. “Through personalized guidance, I aim to support them along their wellness journey.”

Dr. Gillum is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine.

Baptist Health Family Clinic-Lakewood connects patients with the quality care they need, for whatever stage of life they’re in.

The clinic, at 2508 Crestwood Road, provides high-quality care to the families of North Little Rock and surrounding communities. It is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.



*Roger Gillum, MD*

## Ross and Mary Whipple Pledge \$1.5 Million to UAMS for Cancer Care, Patient Services, Orthopaedics

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"UAMS is an institution that heals patients, educates students and conducts great research, and we are confident that the people of Arkansas are going to see a great return from our investment," said Ross Whipple.

"We also want our giving to be a catalyst for others to become involved in UAMS — through philanthropy, we want to encourage a sense of community at all levels of giving," added Mary Whipple.

The Ross and Mary Whipple Family Community Outreach and Engagement Fund for Excellence, a nonendowed fund, will benefit the Cancer Institute's Community Outreach and Engagement program for increasing early detection cancer screenings for breast, lung, colon and prostate cancer in our state's rural and underserved communities.

"Our gift to the Cancer Institute is an excellent opportunity to help bring the program statewide, providing cancer treatment access to the more rural areas of the state," said Ross Whipple. "In terms of clinical care, NCI Designation will have tremendous impact on the quality of life for people suffering with cancer."

"I am from a small town in southeast Arkansas, so I understand that some of these areas of the state often get overlooked," added Mary Whipple. "The increased access to care that Arkansas' rural areas could receive because of NCI Designation will have a great impact on these communities, and we are more than happy to extend a hand to see this campaign through."

The Whipples' giving also establishes the Nancy "Jo" Smith Special Services Fund for Excellence, a nonendowed fund, in the UAMS Foundation Fund to support and expand patient services campuswide.

"Whenever we've had to receive treatment at UAMS, Jo Smith has always made sure that we were comfortable and that we had everything that we needed," said Mary Whipple. "We know what Jo means to so many people, so we were happy to set an example and establish the fund to encourage others to contribute. Knowing how many people Jo has touched at UAMS, we are confident that there will be no shortage in giving."

The couple's gift to The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital at UAMS was made in gratitude to C. Lowry Barnes, M.D., chair of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery in the UAMS College of Medicine, and Robert D. Martin, M.D., an orthopaedic foot and ankle surgeon and assistant professor in the department, recognizing their dedication and commitment to expanding innovative orthopaedic health care excellence to Arkansas.

"I was fortunate to be treated by Dr. Barnes and Dr. Martin, and I wanted to show my respect to them in appreciation of the quality of care I received," said Ross Whipple. "We were also impressed by The Orthopaedic and Spine Hospital, which is a truly amazing facility with well-trained staff."

**STAY UPDATED**

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