

UAMS News Bureau

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Boozman at UAMS to Support Radiologist Assistants

LITTLE ROCK — U.S. Sen. John Boozman said Friday at the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) that legislation he is sponsoring in Congress would increase patient access to care by allowing radiologist assistants to be reimbursed for certain procedures that have traditionally been performed by radiologists.

The Medicare Access to Radiology Care Act (MARCA) would recognize radiologist assistants, including certified radiology practitioner assistants, as non-physician providers of health care services and allow reimbursement for their services. Currently, Medicare only pays for such services if they are performed under the personal supervision of a radiologist.

“We simply have to figure out how we can extend professionals as far as they can go,” Boozman said. “You have to be able to practice to the fullest extent of your ability and the licensure of your state, because we are rapidly losing providers for all kinds of different reasons, and then again, we’re rapidly increasing patients.”

The legislation would allow radiologist assistants to work more independently and efficiently and allow radiologists to focus on reviewing and interpreting complex medical images and attending to urgent cases.

UAMS Chancellor Dan Rahn, M.D., said the change would enable radiology staff to function at the top of their licensure.

“That’s one of our principles for health system redesign and team-based care – is that each person’s time and effort is matched with the level of training required to do what they do ... and we should have a framework that financially recognizes the benefit to patients and to the system as a whole,” Rahn said.

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The UAMS College of Health Professions has one of only six radiologist assistant programs in the United States. Since 2005, the college's Radiologic Imaging Sciences/Radiologist Assistant program has graduated 41 radiologist assistants, who have advanced training to perform procedures traditionally performed by radiologists.

"Thank you, Sen. Boozman, for your leadership in sponsoring MARCA," said Douglas Murphy, Ph.D., dean of the UAMS College of Health Professions.

Also thanking Boozman were James McDonald, M.D., interim chair of the Department of Radiology in the UAMS College of Medicine; and Cindy Saylor, M.Ed., director of the UAMS Radiologist Assistant Program.

UAMS is the state's only comprehensive academic health center, 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 3,021 students, 789 medical residents and five dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 10,000 employees, including about 1,000 physicians and other professionals who provide care to patients at UAMS, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the VA Medical Center and UAMS regional centers throughout the state. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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