Denver Health welcomes new Chief Academic Officer

Denver (Jan. 5, 2026) – Denver Health is proud to announce Yael Schenker, MD, MAS, as the health system's new Chief Academic Officer. In this role, Dr. Schenker oversees research and education, working collaboratively to lead and grow well-supported, multidisciplinary academic programs aligned with Denver Health's mission as a learning health system.

Schenker is an experienced clinician investigator and academic leader. From 2010-2025, she worked at the University of Pittsburgh, where she was a Professor of Medicine, the Director of the Palliative Research Center, and Associate Director for Education and Training at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Hillman Cancer Center. She is a practicing palliative medicine physician and a passionate mentor. Her own research, funded by a variety of federal and foundation sources, focuses broadly on improving delivery of serious illness care. She has led several large-scale trial testing different models of palliative care.

Schenker earned her undergraduate degree in Literature from Harvard and completed medical school, internal medicine residency, and a general internal medicine research fellowship at University of California San Francisco, including time at San Francisco General Hospital.

She values the role that safety net health systems like Denver Health have in serving the community and believes strongly in the importance of research for meeting the health needs of all patients.