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Denver Health names Lavonas executive director of Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Safety

DENVER (May 7, 2026) — Denver Health has selected Eric Lavonas, MD, MS, as executive director of Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Safety (RMPDS), recognizing his decades of leadership in medical toxicology, emergency medicine, research and education.

Lavonas has more than 30 years of experience as a clinician, researcher, educator and organizational leader. At Denver Health he has served as interim director of Emergency Medicine, director of Grand County Clinical Operations, associate director of RMPDS, medical toxicology fellowship director and Medical Staff president.

“Dr. Lavonas is a seasoned leader whose clinical expertise, scientific work and deep commitment to education and public service are matched by his integrity and steady judgment,” said Read Pierce, MD, chief medical officer at Denver Health. “He brings credibility, vision and decades of trusted leadership to Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Safety, and he is exceptionally well prepared to guide the program forward at a time when medication safety and poison prevention are more important than ever.”

Lavonas succeeds Richard Dart, MD, PhD, who retired in April 2026 after leading RMPDS for nearly 34 years. During Dart’s tenure, the Denver-based program expanded from a regional poison center into an internationally recognized leader in drug safety. Building on that legacy, Lavonas has authored more than 150 scientific publications focusing on resuscitation science, carbon monoxide poisoning, snake envenomation and medication safety. He serves as senior science editor for the American Heart Association and on the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation Science advisory committee.

Lavonas is a professor of emergency medicine at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and is actively engaged in the education of residents, fellows, pharmacists and students across multiple disciplines. He serves on the Accreditation Council for



Graduate Medical Education Review Committee for Emergency Medicine, is a senior oral examiner for the American Board of Emergency Medicine and is a distinguished fellow of the American College of Medical Toxicology.

His honors include the American College of Medical Toxicology Outstanding Contributions to Medical Toxicology Research Award and the Denver Health Medical Staff Academic Excellence Award.

As executive director, Lavonas will continue to strengthen the mission of RMPDS to advance poison prevention, drug safety, research and education in service of patients and communities across the Rocky Mountain region, the nation and the world.

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About Denver Health

[Denver Health](#) is a comprehensive health and hospital system that provides high-quality care and proudly serves as the city's safety-net hospital. For more than 165 years, Denver Health has been guided by its mission to serve the people of Denver, to educate the next generation of health care professionals and to engage in research and community partnerships to better deliver the services that meet our patients' health care needs while strengthening our community.

About RMPDS

[Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Safety](#) has been serving the public since 1956. Whether it's innovative research in toxicology, progressive solutions in case management, emergency services, or regulatory compliance, Rocky Mountain Poison & Drug Safety is a leader in public health protection.

We work to advance public health and improve access to care by providing knowledge and recommendations through teaching and research – all with the goal of maximizing effectiveness, reducing toxicity, decreasing injury and disease.