

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Washington Poison Center announces new Medical Director

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SEATTLE, SEPTEMBER 7, 2016 – The Washington Poison Center (WAPC) welcomed its new medical director, Dr. Erica Liebelt, on September 1. A pediatric toxicologist, Dr. Liebelt will also serve as a clinical professor of pediatrics at the University of Washington School of Medicine.

As medical director, Dr. Liebelt will report to the WAPC Board of Directors and provide medical oversight ensuring the poison information specialists at the WAPC continue to provide high-quality poisoning treatment advice and consultations. She will also support clinical education and outreach at the local, state and national level for health care providers, as well as the WAPC toxicology rotation program that trains dozens of emergency medicine physicians, pharmacists, nurses, and EMTs each year.

“The Washington Poison Center has provided poisoning-related medical information in Washington for more than 50 years, and has expanded its role to partner with public health agencies on emergency preparedness, health education, legislation, and secure medicine takeback programs in response to the ever changing healthcare landscape. Dr. Liebelt’s extensive experience will help the WAPC to continue to grow and provide valuable services for our entire state,” said Carrie Ulvestad, WAPC executive director.

Dr. Liebelt comes to Seattle from Birmingham, Alabama where she was professor of pediatrics and emergency medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Medicine, co-medical director of the Regional Poison Control Center/Birmingham, director of medical toxicology services at the Children’s of Alabama Hospital where she was also medical director of medication safety.

Dr. Liebelt has authored more than 35 chapters in leading toxicology textbooks and numerous manuscripts in peer-reviewed journals. She has lectured both nationally and internationally on various topics in medical toxicology, pediatric emergency medicine and medication safety. Her research and clinical interests include the pharmacogenomics of psychotropic medications, quality of care for poisoned patients, antidepressant poisoning, and pediatric environmental toxicology, specifically lead poisoning.

“After a comprehensive two year national search, we are pleased to have Dr. Liebelt lead the team at the WAPC. She is a recognized and respected leader in the poison center community, having served as a president of the American College of Medical Toxicology and in many leadership positions with the American Association of Poison Control Centers,” said Mark R. Martzen, PhD, president of WAPC’s board of directors.

She will assume the position from Dr. Betty Chen and Dr. Matthew Valento who have been serving as co-interim medical directors since July of 2014. Drs. Chen and Valento will continue to work as consulting on-call toxicologists for the WAPC in addition to their roles as physicians in the emergency department at Harborview Medical Center.