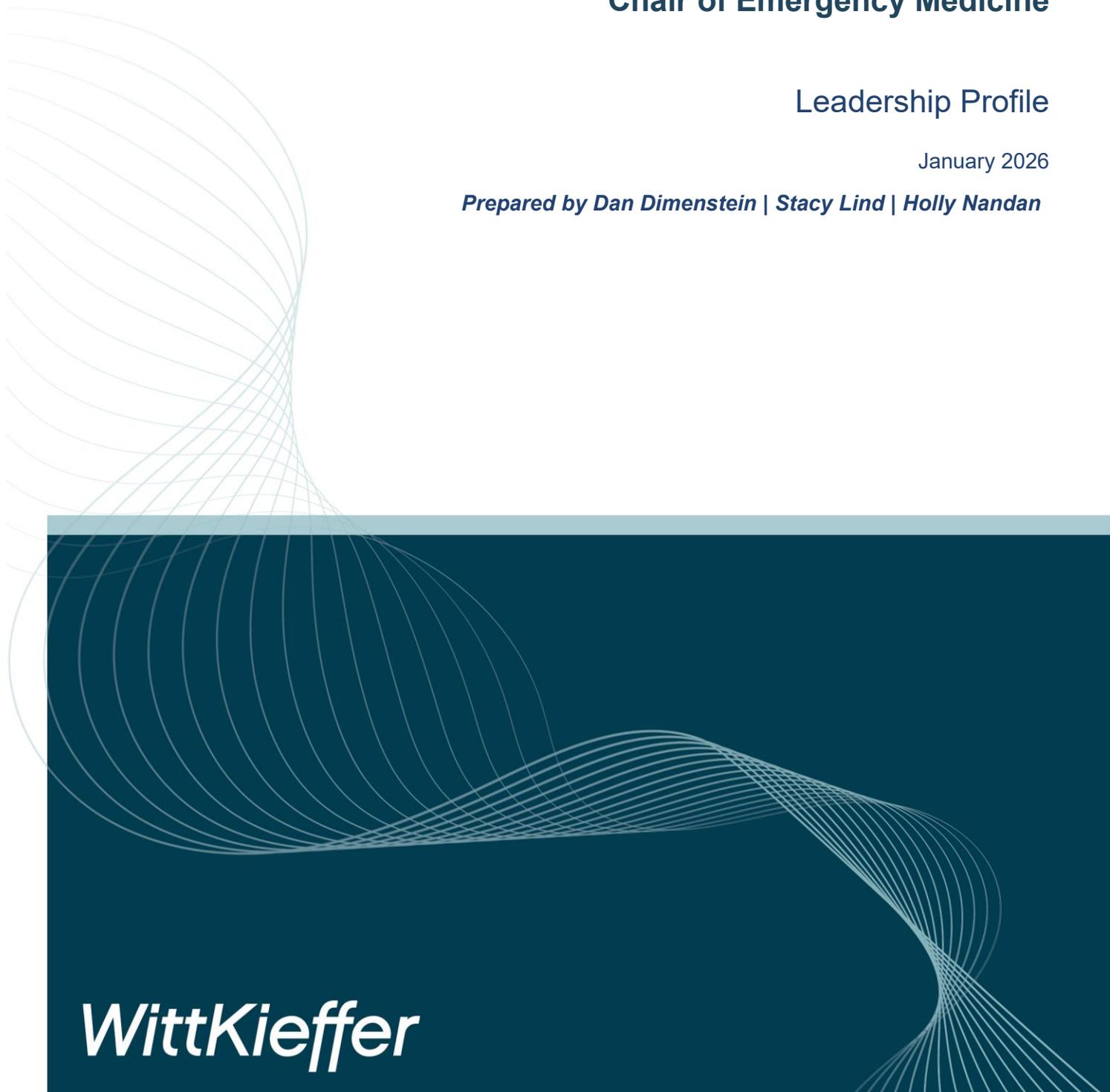


Chair of Emergency Medicine

Leadership Profile

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The Opportunity

Kern Medical, located in California's Central Valley, is seeking an experienced and dynamic leader for the position of Chair of Emergency Medicine. This opening follows the planned retirement of Dr. Rick McPheeters, who has led the department with distinction for the past eight years. His departure marks a significant transition and creates an exceptional opportunity for a collaborative, strategic, and results-oriented physician to shape the future of Emergency Medicine at a respected academic medical center.

The Chair will provide overall strategic and operational leadership for the Department of Emergency Medicine, with responsibility for clinical services, faculty oversight, graduate medical education, quality and safety, and academic advancement. This is a hands-on leadership role for a physician who thrives in a fast-paced environment and is passionate about delivering high-quality, patient-centered emergency care.

The Chair will work closely with faculty, residents, nursing, and hospital leadership to enhance clinical operations, grow the residency program, and expand academic and research initiatives. The Chair will also play a key role in maintaining the Department's strong relationship with the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

Located in Bakersfield, Kern Medical is a full-service, 222-bed acute care teaching hospital owned and operated by the Kern County Hospital Authority. As one of California's designated public safety net hospitals, Kern Medical serves the region's most vulnerable populations and provides services not widely available locally, including a Level II Trauma Center, inpatient behavioral health, and a robust academic training environment. The institution includes 12 outpatient clinics and a medical group of 120 employed providers.

The Chair will oversee all aspects of the Department's clinical and academic missions, including faculty recruitment and development, performance improvement, and alignment with institutional goals. They will ensure the continued excellence of the Emergency Medicine Residency Program, support the development of the Simulation Laboratory, and foster a culture of safety, professionalism, and innovation. The Chair will also maintain a clinical presence, modeling exemplary care and leadership.

Reporting directly to the Chief Medical Officer, the ideal candidate will be a contemporary emergency medicine leader with demonstrated administrative experience, a commitment to education, and a track record of clinical excellence. Candidates must hold an M.D. or D.O., be Board-certified in Emergency Medicine, and qualify for academic appointment at UCLA. This is a unique opportunity to lead a mission-driven department at a pivotal time of growth and transformation.

Organization Overview

For 160 years, Kern Medical has been a cornerstone of healthcare in California's Central Valley. Located in Bakersfield, Kern Medical is a 222-bed acute-care teaching hospital and one of only 21 designated public safety-net hospitals in the state. Owned and operated by the Kern County Hospital Authority, the organization plays a vital role in delivering high-quality, compassionate care to a diverse population of more than 900,000 residents across a large geographic region.

Kern Medical is a Level II Trauma Center and a tertiary referral center, offering a full spectrum of services including emergency care, high-risk obstetrics, behavioral health, and advanced surgical specialties. In FY 2025, the hospital recorded 54,971 emergency room visits, 2,402 trauma activations, 6,356 surgeries, 2,604 births, and more than 250,000 outpatient clinic visits across its 12 ambulatory locations.

As a robust academic institution, Kern Medical trains more than 115 residents annually in ACGME-accredited programs in Emergency Medicine, Internal Medicine, Family Medicine, Psychiatry, and Obstetrics & Gynecology. It also offers fellowships in Addiction Psychiatry, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and Infectious Disease. The hospital maintains a strong academic affiliation with the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, supporting over 125 medical student rotations each year and hosting nearly 1,000 visiting physicians, researchers, and educators.

Following a successful financial and operational turnaround beginning in 2013, Kern Medical has experienced significant growth in clinical services, educational programs, and community impact. Governed by an independent Board of Governors, the organization continues to evolve as a mission-driven, patient-centered institution committed to improving the health and well-being of Kern County.

Valley Fever Institute

The Valley Fever Institute at Kern Medical is a nationally recognized center of excellence dedicated to the diagnosis, treatment, research, and education surrounding *Coccidioidomycosis*, commonly known as Valley Fever. Located in the heart of California's Central Valley—where the fungus *Coccidioides immitis* is endemic—the Institute is uniquely positioned to serve the region most affected by this disease.

Kern Medical's legacy in Valley Fever care began with the pioneering work of Dr. Hans E. Einstein, a global authority on the disease. Building on this foundation, the Valley Fever Institute was formally established in 2015 to centralize and expand Kern Medical's efforts in clinical care, research, and public education. In 2020, the Institute opened a state-of-the-art research and treatment facility, designed to integrate specialty care, diagnostics, support services, and clinical trials under one roof.

The Institute is home to the only dedicated Valley Fever Clinic in the Central Valley, attracting patients from across the U.S. and internationally. Many of the treatments offered are not widely available elsewhere, making the Institute a critical referral center for complex or severe cases.

Research at the Valley Fever Institute is focused on improving diagnostics, understanding disease progression, and developing more effective treatments. The Institute has over 40 years of experience in clinical research and is currently engaged in studies exploring why some individuals develop severe illness while others remain asymptomatic. Its work is supported by state and federal funding, including a \$3 million investment from the State of California to expand its mission.

The Institute also plays a vital role in educating healthcare providers across California to reduce misdiagnosis and delays in care. Through partnerships with academic institutions and public health agencies, the Valley Fever Institute continues to lead efforts in awareness, prevention, and innovation in the fight against this often-overlooked disease.

Department of Emergency Medicine

The Department of Emergency Medicine at Kern Medical is a vital, high-performing academic department that plays a central role in the hospital's mission as a public safety net provider and a Level II Trauma Center. The Department includes a diverse team of faculty physicians, residents, and advanced practice providers who deliver high-acuity care to almost 55,000 emergency patients annually. The department is staffed by a combination of Kern Medical-employed faculty, contracted physicians, and independent medical staff members.

The Emergency Department features:

- 6 trauma and medical resuscitation bays
- 32 beds (16 of which have telemetry monitoring)
- 4 respiratory isolation and gynecologic rooms
- A psychiatric observation room
- 2 spiral, 64-slice CT scanners
- A dedicated radiography suite with 24/7 imaging services

The Department is home to Kern Medical's [Emergency Medicine Residency Program](#), one of the longest-standing programs in California, established in 1976. The four-year ACGME-accredited program trains 28 residents (7 per class) and offers a robust, hands-on curriculum that includes rotations at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and Children's Hospital Los Angeles. The program emphasizes procedural competency, trauma care, and leadership development, preparing graduates to practice in a wide range of clinical settings.

The Department also supports medical student education through clerkships and simulation-based learning and maintains a strong academic affiliation with the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. Faculty members hold academic appointments and are actively involved in teaching, research, and mentorship.

The Department of Emergency Medicine has been led for the past eight years by Dr. Rick McPheeters, a long-standing faculty member and alumnus of Kern Medical's Emergency Medicine Residency Program. Dr. McPheeters also serves as Vice Chair of Emergency Medicine at UCLA and has held numerous leadership roles within the department, including Residency Director and EMS Director. Under his leadership, the department has expanded its academic and clinical footprint, strengthened its residency program, and deepened its affiliation with the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA.

In January 2026, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) officially approved the opening of Kern Medical's newly constructed Pediatric Emergency Department. The new Pediatric Emergency Department provides a child-centered environment designed to deliver specialized, compassionate emergency care. Each treatment room is equipped with cardiac monitoring and medical equipment to meet the needs of newborns, toddlers, school-aged children, and teens.



BY THE NUMBERS



2,500+

Employees



41

Primary Care and
Specialty Clinics
across 12 Locations



250,103

Outpatient
Clinic Visits



2,604

Births



2,402

Trauma
Activations



6,356

Surgeries



10,184

Inpatient
Admissions



54,971

Emergency Visits

Mission

Guided by the needs of our patients and their families, Kern Medical will deliver safe, compassionate, high-quality care and improve the health and well-being of our community.

Vision

Kern Medical will:

- Place the patient at the center of the healthcare experience
- Lead academic and professional excellence in the community
- Advance healthcare delivery through a fully integrated system across the spectrum of care
- Realize the triple aim of providing the best patient experience, highest quality of care, and most appropriate use of healthcare resources
- Hire and develop the best team that is both inspired and committed to healing
- Commit to financial stability through efficient management of resources

Values

Kern Medical is guided by the principles of:

- **Compassionate Healing:** We ensure a culture of caring that nurtures the well-being of the whole person
- **Respect:** We are kind and listen to understand, while embracing the skills and knowledge of others
- **Integrity:** We earn your trust by delivering the best in healthcare
- **Innovation:** We are committed to new ideas, creativity, and academic achievements
- **Collaboration:** We value our partnerships to advance the health of our community
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** We are committed to effectively utilizing and maximizing our resources

For more information, visit www.kernmedical.com.

Position Summary

Reporting Relationships

Reports To: Chief Medical Officer, Kern Medical

Direct Reports: Emergency Medicine Residency Program Director, Emergency Department faculty

Key Relationships:

- Kern Medical Leadership Team
- Department Chairs across Kern Medical
- Emergency Medicine Leadership, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine
- Executive Vice Chair of Emergency Medicine, UCLA Affiliated Hospitals

The Chair of Emergency Medicine at Kern Medical is expected to hold an academic appointment at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine and serve as Vice Chair of UCLA's Department of Emergency Medicine.

Responsibilities

The successful Chair of Emergency Medicine candidate will:

- Provide strategic and operational leadership for the Department of Emergency Medicine, ensuring excellence in clinical care, education, and research.
- Oversee all educational activities and faculty within the Department, including the Emergency Medicine Residency Program, and ensure quality, safety, and exceptional outcomes.
- Collaborate with medical and nursing leadership to identify and address gaps in patient care processes and implement quality and process improvement strategies.
- Uphold the standard of care by supporting the hospital's peer review process and promoting a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.
- Lead departmental planning efforts, including physician and APP recruitment, resource utilization, and service line development aligned with institutional goals.
- Foster professional growth and development of faculty and staff through mentoring, coaching, and continuing education.
- Promote innovation in emergency care delivery, including the evaluation and adoption of novel clinical approaches and technologies.
- Support and encourage scholarly activity, including research, presentations, publications, and pursuit of grant funding.
- Assess and plan for physician workforce needs in response to patient volume trends, service expansion, and faculty transitions.

- Ensure the quality and accreditation of all educational and research programs within the Department, with direct involvement in teaching and mentorship.
- Maintain and strengthen external academic and clinical partnerships, particularly with UCLA and other key stakeholders.
- Recommend and implement departmental policies, governance structures, and best practices in collaboration with other departments.
- Champion patient satisfaction and ensure timely resolution of patient concerns.
- Actively engage in Kern Medical's philanthropic, marketing, and strategic initiatives.
- Serve as an active member of relevant administrative, medical staff, and community leadership committees.

Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives have been identified as priorities for this position:

- Establish a strong, visible leadership presence in the Emergency Department by working clinical shifts, building trust with faculty and staff, and reinforcing a culture of accountability, professionalism, and high performance.
- Build a cohesive and collaborative departmental culture that supports faculty across all academic ranks and backgrounds. Foster mentorship, professional development, and shared ownership of departmental goals.
- Evaluate current clinical operations and implement strategies to improve efficiency, patient flow, and quality of care, particularly in trauma and behavioral health. Advocate for the resources necessary to enhance the delivery of high-quality, efficient emergency care.
- Lead the Department through a period of strategic transformation, including preparation for 340B implementation, compliance with SB43, and the transition to a new electronic health record (EHR) platform. Embrace AI-enabled documentation and other innovations that enhance care delivery, provider efficiency, and patient outcomes.
- Collaborate with the Emergency Medicine Residency Program Director to ensure continued excellence in graduate medical education. Maintain high retention while also recruiting external candidates to bring diverse training experiences and perspectives.
- Strengthen the Department's academic profile by supporting faculty in scholarly activity, research, and publication. Leverage the department's affiliation with UCLA to enhance academic visibility and innovation.
- Assess faculty staffing needs and develop a recruitment and succession plan that addresses natural attrition, supports clinical growth, and ensures coverage for trauma, behavioral health, and pediatric services.
- Champion a culture of continuous improvement in quality, safety, and patient satisfaction. Establish clear performance metrics and ensure accountability at all levels of the Department.
- Support the opening of the new pediatric emergency wing and ensure the Department is prepared to meet the needs of pediatric patients in collaboration with regional partners.
- Serve as a key liaison between the Department and Kern Medical leadership, the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, and community stakeholders.
- Represent the Department on hospital-wide committees and in external partnerships.

Candidate Qualifications

Education/Certification

- Medical degree (M.D. or D.O.) from an accredited institution
- Board certification in Emergency Medicine by the American Board of Emergency Medicine
- Eligible for licensure in the state of California
- Eligible for academic appointment at the UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, with preference for candidates at the associate or full professor level

Knowledge and Work Experience

- Minimum of ten (10) years of clinical practice in Emergency Medicine with progressive leadership responsibilities in an academic or high-volume emergency department
- Demonstrated excellence in emergency care delivery, trauma services, and behavioral health integration
- Experience leading or supporting an ACGME-accredited Emergency Medicine Residency Program
- Proven ability to manage complex clinical operations and lead multidisciplinary teams in a dynamic, resource-constrained environment
- Academic experience teaching residents and medical students, with a track record of supporting scholarly activity and clinical research

Leadership Skills and Competencies

- A visible, hands-on leader with a strong clinical presence and the ability to inspire trust and accountability
- Strategic thinker with the ability to navigate evolving healthcare policy, behavioral health reform, and emergency department innovation
- Entrepreneurial, innovative, and solution-oriented, with a commitment to continuous improvement and operational excellence
- Strong analytical and financial acumen, with the ability to manage resources effectively and advocate for departmental needs
- Fair, objective, and consistent; able to set clear expectations and hold faculty accountable while fostering a collaborative culture
- Politically astute and diplomatically skilled, with the ability to build consensus across departments and with external partners
- High emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills; approachable, optimistic, and committed to team success
- A decisive and organized leader who communicates clearly and effectively across all levels of the organization
- Passionate about education, mentorship, and advancing the academic mission of the department

- Deep commitment to serving vulnerable and underserved populations in a safety net hospital environment
- Willingness to live in Bakersfield and engage meaningfully with the local community

The Community

Bakersfield, California

Bakersfield, the ninth-largest city in California and the 52nd-largest in the U.S., is a vibrant and fast-growing community located in the southern San Joaquin Valley. With a city population of over 400,000 and more than 900,000 in the greater Kern County area, Bakersfield offers a unique blend of metropolitan amenities and small-town charm. Its central location provides easy access to the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Pacific Coast, Los Angeles, and California's Central Valley agricultural heartlands within a two-hour drive.

The region's economy is diverse and resilient, anchored by agriculture, oil, healthcare, aerospace, government, and logistics. Bakersfield is also home to the nation's two largest carrot growers and has become an increasingly attractive destination for distribution centers and high-tech industries. The city continues to draw new residents from across California, particularly from Los Angeles and the Bay Area, due to its lower cost of living, expanding job market, and family-friendly environment.

Bakersfield is rich in culture and history. It is the birthplace of the "Bakersfield Sound," a distinct genre of country music made famous by Buck Owens and Merle Haggard. The city boasts more than 170 miles of bike trails and paths, a thriving arts scene, and a wide range of recreational opportunities—from whitewater rafting on the Kern River to hiking in nearby national forests. The Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra, Bakersfield Community Theater (the oldest continually operating community theater in California), and numerous museums and galleries contribute to a vibrant cultural life.

The city is also known for its Basque cuisine, historic architecture, and growing culinary scene—highlighted by multiple features on the Food Network's "Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives." Bakersfield's Amtrak station ranks among the busiest in California, and the city continues to invest in infrastructure and community development.



Educational opportunities abound, with institutions such as California State University, Bakersfield, and Bakersfield College serving the region. The area offers a wide range of housing options, from historic neighborhoods to new developments, with a median home price significantly lower than most major California cities.

Bakersfield's welcoming spirit, strategic location, and dynamic growth make it an ideal place to live, work, and lead in healthcare.



Procedure for Candidacy

Please direct all nominations and applications to Dan Dimenstein, Holly Nandan, or Stacy Lind via email to slind@wittkieffer.com.

Daniel Dimenstein
Principal

Holly Nandan
Consultant

Stacy Lind
Senior Associate

Compensation Range

The pay range for this position is \$475,000 - \$500,000. The referenced pay range represents Kern Medical's good faith and reasonable estimate of the total compensation for this position. Individual salaries will be determined within the job's salary range and established based on (but not limited to) market data, experience, and expertise of the individual, and with consideration to related position salaries.

Kern Medical values diversity and is committed to equal opportunity for all persons regardless of age, color, disability, ethnicity, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, veteran status, or any other status protected by law.

The material presented in this leadership profile should be relied on for informational purposes only. This material has been copied, compiled, or quoted in part from Kern Medical documents and personal interviews and is believed to be reliable. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information, the original source documents and factual situations govern.

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