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Leader of Big Diabetes Group to Step Down

By Julian Wyllie

JDRF, which raises money to support scientists seeking a cure for Type 1 diabetes, announced today that Derek Rapp plans to step down as the group's leader. JDRF raised nearly \$200 million in private support last year. Rapp, who has been CEO since 2014, will rejoin the group's international Board of Directors after a new leader is hired, a spokeswoman said in an email.

The board plans to recruit a "seasoned nonprofit leader" to help accelerate programs, said Ellen Leake, the board chair, who leads a family timber and land-development business in Mississippi. She added, "We all see the potential to leverage big data, form strategic partnerships, and continue to drive commercial investment during a time of great challenges and opportunities in life sciences and technology."

Recent advancements made by JDRF include research that struck down myths about how and why Type 1 diabetes develops. The organization has also introduced a venture-philanthropy fund to find new, wealthy investors.

JDRF, formerly known as the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, has invested \$2.2 billion in research since its inception in 1970. In recent years, the group saw some gross-revenue declines for signature events but has attempted to innovate with texting campaigns and the use of social media to help Americans understand what it's like to live with the disease.

Leake said Rapp "reinvigorated the organization, advanced our mission, improved field operations, and helped build best-in-class research and advocacy teams worldwide."

A spokeswoman said JDRF hopes to have a new CEO within the first half of 2019 and that Rapp "remains passionate about our mission and fully committed to leading the organization through a seamless transition."