

Progress report:

Pfizer Grant Helps WCG Foundation Identify Obstacles to Expanded Access

WCG Foundation (WCGF) has received a \$5,000 grant from Pfizer to identify obstacles that could discourage physicians from helping desperately ill patients who want to access investigational drugs.

The grant is the latest to support WCGF's Expanded Access Project, which helps those who have exhausted all treatment and clinical trial options and want the chance to try experimental medicines.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) offers an expanded access (compassionate use) program that allows desperately ill patients to request approval to try experimental medicines. Patients must rely on their doctors to secure the necessary approval from the drug sponsor, FDA, and an institutional review board (IRB). For patients and physicians alike, the approval process can be difficult to navigate.

The Pfizer grant will enable WCGF to develop a needs assessment tool to determine how to improve the expanded access process for physicians. The results of the assessment will be used to set policies that could streamline the process and enhance physician participation and compliance.

"Physicians are critical partners in helping patients access experimental medicines," WCGF Executive Director Marjorie A. Speers, Ph.D., said. "By identifying and ultimately addressing physicians' unmet needs, we will make a difference for patients at a time when they are desperate for another chance. We are grateful to Pfizer for helping to make this possible."