

## **Rethink Research: Rebranding the Clinical Research Enterprise**

**By Norman M. Goldfarb**

Recruiting patients for clinical research studies is getting harder and harder every year, making medical progress harder and harder. Many people have a skeptical or negative attitude toward clinical research. Although the press often reports positive findings from clinical research, negative news stories tend to get the headlines, to say nothing of the portrayals of "villainous" clinical researchers and pharmaceutical companies in movies, television shows, books, etc.

The clinical research enterprise does very little to combat these negative stereotypes and open people's minds to clinical research. The Center for Information & Study on Clinical Research Participation (CISRCP) is dedicated to educating both patients and the public about clinical research participation, but its resources are limited.

If you ask the typical "man on the street" what he thinks of clinical research — if he knows anything about it at all — he is likely to express reservations about being a "guinea pig" in some sketchy corporate experiment.

Back in 1983, the milk industry recognized that it had a problem. Milk consumption was declining as the public consumed more exciting beverages. To fight back, the industry created the "Got Milk?" advertising campaign, a series of ads unified by the "Got Milk?" slogan. The rest is history.

At a conference earlier this year, Joe Kim challenged the clinical research industry to rebrand itself. Just as the milk industry rebranded milk as a hip beverage, can we rebrand clinical research in a way that deeply resonates with the public? Can we change the man on the street's answer to: "Funny you should ask. I've heard good things about clinical research. I really should find a study that's right for me."

### **The Rethink Research Competition**

The first step in rebranding clinical research is to create a "Got Milk?" advertising concept for clinical research. To accomplish this objective, Rethink Research invited patient recruiting firms to contribute their ideas for a campaign concept to achieve the following objectives:

- Generate ideas for promoting participation in clinical research.
- Create materials that study sponsors, etc., can adapt.
- Generate awareness in the industry of the branding issue and create momentum for it.

Four leading patient recruitment firms accepted the challenge:

- ClinEdge
- DAC Patient Recruitment Services
- MMG
- The Patient Recruiting Agency

They have submitted six entries:

- Entry A. Clinical research for your future, and hers.
- Entry B. Going study

- Entry C. Heroes aren't hard to come by.
- Entry D. Missing U
- Entry E. Remedi THIS
- Entry F. Side effects may include

The entries are at [www.magiworld.org/rethink\\_long](http://www.magiworld.org/rethink_long). They are a testament to the passion and creativity that characterizes the clinical research enterprise.

We are also asking clinical research professionals, such as yourself, and the general public to vote for the People's Choice Award. Vote for your favorite concept at: <http://www.magiworld.org/vote>. Voting is open now and closes September 30, 2015.

Please pass the word. Our Twitter hashtag is: #rethinkresearch.

A panel of judges will also assess the entries in various prize categories. The judges include:

- Adam Chasse, President, RxTrials
- Norman M. Goldfarb, Chairman, MAGI
- Diane Gross, National Program Director, Lupus Research Institute, S.L.E. Lupus Foundation
- Joseph Kim, Senior Advisor, Clinical Innovation, Eli Lilly and Company
- Jill McNair, Director of Education, Outreach and Community Support, CISCRP

We will announce the winners at MAGI's Clinical Research Conference in San Diego, October 11-14, 2015. Please join us to congratulate the winners and share practical solutions to patient recruiting and other clinical research challenges.

The Rethink Research competition is just the first step in a long journey to open people's minds to clinical research. Without clinical research, without study participants, there would be no new medicines, no new medical devices, and no new diagnostics. That's not a world we can live in, literally.

### **Author**

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