

Career Opportunities

Curing Problems In The Medical Research Field

(NAPSA)—According to the Centers for Disease Control, the life expectancy for the average American has increased nearly every year since 1970. This, doctors say, can be attributed mainly to advances in medicine and an increased body of knowledge regarding human health and well being—both of which stem from scientific research.

At the core of these medical advances are clinical trials—studies of these new advances to demonstrate that the exploratory medicines, devices, or procedures are safe and effective for use in patients. The pharmaceutical companies that discover and develop new medicines, for example, design clinical trials for potential new treatments. Physicians at major medical centers around the world conduct and monitor these trials, which yield results that the regulatory agencies review for marketing approval.

The number of physicians and dentists pursuing clinical research has declined so sharply that it has been called a quiet national crisis. At a time when the pace of basic biomedical discovery presages a quickening in discovery of potential new treatments and a rising need for translational research, reversing this clinical research “brain drain” is critical.

In 1997, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) responded to the crisis, creating the Clinical Research Training Program (CRTP). Pfizer Inc, one of the world’s top pharmaceutical companies with the largest R&D force in the pharmaceutical industry, is a key sponsor of this innovative program.

“Our nation must develop more



A research program may help improve the prognosis for America’s medical future.

physicians dedicated to clinical research so that biomedical discovery can be funneled into potential new treatments,” says Joseph Feczko, MD, Senior Vice President for Medical Operations, Pfizer Inc. “The NIH Clinical Research Training Program is structured to provide exceptional training to exceptional students, a combination necessary to develop a strong clinical research workforce for the future.”

Young scientists who participate in CRTP take a year off from medical or dental school to work closely with senior-level clinical and research mentors at the NIH. CRTP Fellows plan and carry out individualized research programs that combine patient protocol and laboratory studies. By the end of the program, they have a first-hand knowledge of how to conduct medical research—a knowledge which, in the long term, can have an important positive impact on American healthcare.

The highly selective NIH CRTP Program is in its fourth year, and has produced over forty future clinical researcher leaders. For more information about this unique program, visit www.nih.gov.