



La Esquina Legal

I am considering earning money by participating in a drug-safety trial. What should I know?

The promise of quick and easy money has been known to draw people to biomedical trials. However, you should be very careful before committing to any drug-safety studies. Many drug-study subjects are well paid, but the conditions of the trials may not be worth it.

While attempts are made to regulate clinical trials, they are not necessarily properly monitored. The FDA requires researchers to have their studies approved by institutional review boards, or I.R.B.s. These review boards are supposed to monitor the treatment of human testing subjects. Originally, these review boards were based in academic institutions and university hospitals. However, for-profit I.R.B.s began to offer rapid approvals of trial proposals in exchange for a fee. These for-profit review boards compete with one another for business. So, in many cases, the original goal of ethical review has been replaced by the goal of money-making. Thus, this business competition may cause the approval of some essentially unsafe studies, creating risks for potential subjects.

In addition, the prospect of money-making has caused some physicians to move away from the prospect of academic, scientific, or humanitarian merit. Fraudulent researchers target human subjects who may have few options in terms of generating income, particularly the unemployed. In addition, in the case that something does go wrong, most of the researchers or sponsors responsible will not pay for the injured party's medical attention. Although the FDA regulations try to prevent this deceit, there are limitations to how thoroughly the FDA can monitor every drug study.

So, before you commit to participating in drug studies, make sure that you are given detailed information concerning what you have to expect from the trial. What are you signing yourself up for? What are the standards of care? The conditions of the facility? How invasive are the trials? Are you healthy enough to withstand the trials? What are possible side effects? Finding accurate and honest answers to these questions will allow you to make an informed decision.

This column is made possible by the support of **Barton, Barton and Plotkin**. Please send us your legal questions to fmiranda@hispanicfederation.org.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AT THE HISPANIC FEDERATION

The Hispanic Federation seeks a **Program Coordinator** to work on its NYS public health insurance enrollment programs. The Program Coordinator will report to the Director of Health Programs and support other Federation health projects and initiatives.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Enrolling eligible individuals in NYS public health insurance Programs
- Conducting quality assurance on all NYS health insurance applications and renewals submitted by subcontracting agencies
- Performing data entry of applications into HRA's, SDOH and Hispanic Federation's tracking systems
- Preparing all revised and completed applications according to protocol and submit them to HRA or the health plans on assigned days
- Assisting individuals in person or by phone with health-related questions

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bilingual (English/Spanish)
- BA degree required
- Excellent computer skills and knowledge of computer systems

TO APPLY:

Applicants should send resume and cover letter to Liliana Melgar at Imelgar@hispanicfederation.org or 55 Exchange Place, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10005 or fax to (212) 233-8996.

Targeted Impact Fund Grants

United Way of New York City

UWNYC's Impact Fund offers grants -- on a competitive basis -- to nonprofits whose efforts align with the goals of the United Way's five **Community Action Areas**: homelessness prevention, access to health care, education, building economic independence, and strengthening NYC nonprofits.

Grants are made in two categories:

- **Community Impact Grants:** Grants greater than \$20,000 are available to support human service projects.
- **Small Impact Grants:** Grants under \$20,000 support organizations and fund programs that align with and support the overall goals of initiatives in our five Action Areas.

If you want more information about UWNYC's Community Action Areas and Impact Grant program, please visit www.unitedwaynyc.org and click on the "Support to Nonprofits" tab below the name, call Kathryn O'Neal-Dunham at (212) 251-2488 or email konealdunham@uwnyc.org.