

Blurred line between hemophilia patients, drug sellers raises ethical questions

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

LaQuenta Caldwell-Moody considered it improper when a pharmacy sales representative tried to take her teenage son, when he was still a minor, to dinner without her.

The salesman was the father of someone with [hemophilia](#), the same disease her son has. But this invitation seemed mercenary, taking advantage of their friendship and shared illness to try to woo the business of her son, Austin Caldwell, whose drug treatments cost more than \$1 million a year.

Drugs for [hemophilia](#) are so expensive and therefore so lucrative for the pharmaceutical industry that they have created an unusual conflict of interest, blurring the lines between being a patient and drug seller. More and more, manufacturers of hemophilia drugs and the specialty pharmacies that dispense the medicines are hiring patients and their relatives to gain an inside track and access in selling their products.

The companies, and some patients, say the practice can improve service, because no one understands the special needs of hemophiliacs more than someone with the disease.

But some patient advocates say that having people with dual, and sometimes dueling roles, can result in patients being misled by someone they think of as their friend but who puts profits over their health. The owners of a specialty pharmacy in Alabama were [convicted](#) of inflating bills to [Medicaid](#) by paying huge commissions to some members of the hemophilia community to recruit patients.

Read full, original post: [Hemophilia Patient or Drug Seller? Dual Role Creates Ethical Quandary](#)