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Pfizer Inc. Sets Aside \$491 Million for Rapamune Marketing

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Two years ago, a federal judge approved a move by the US Justice Department to intervene – or join – a widely publicized whistleblower lawsuit that accused Wyeth of illegally marketing the Rapamune kidney transplant drug for unapproved uses and for targeting African-Americans, a high-risk patient group. Now, Pfizer – which bought Wyeth in 2009 – has set aside \$491 million in connection with an agreement-in-principle with the feds (see this).

There have been many off-label allegations, but this particular lawsuit prompted considerable interest because of the sensational accusation that Wyeth targeted African-Americans. Wyeth managers were allegedly aware of limited data for Rapamune use in high-risk patients, but Wyeth deliberately targeted two hospitals with mostly African-American patients – Philadelphia’s Einstein Medical Center and New York’s SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

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