



FasterCures, Children's Tumor Foundation, and CureSearch Launch New Initiative to Accelerate Promising Drugs for Pediatric Tumors

At FasterCures, we have spent nearly 20 years working toward building a system that is effective, efficient, and driven by a clear vision: patient needs above all else. We believe that transformative and life-saving science should be fully realized and deliver better treatments to the people who need them.

But many promising medicines, despite strong safety data and pharmaceutical characteristics, are deprioritized by pharmaceutical companies for non-technical reasons including strategy, organization, and financial changes. Unlocking these drugs – for intended or new indications – is challenging due to informational, operational, and cultural obstacles within those companies. Meanwhile, patients and families suffer from waiting for new therapies for their conditions.

To address this challenge and opportunity, FasterCures launched the [BRIDGE initiative](#) in 2019, with a mission to enable more dynamic marketplaces for biomedical innovation. Through a series of meetings held during the [2019 Milken Institute Global Conference](#) and [Future of Health Summit](#), we identified a possible path forward: a neutral information and matchmaking forum that can connect discontinued drug assets with partners that have the expertise and capital needed to develop those medicines.

FasterCures today is proud to announce the first project under the BRIDGE initiative with the [Children's Tumor Foundation \(CTF\)](#) and [CureSearch for Children's Cancer](#)—two leading non-profit foundations with missions to accelerate the development of new therapies for treating pediatric cancer and rare disease.

Together, we will take the essential steps to build partnerships to develop discontinued drugs to treat pediatric tumors. FasterCures, CTF, and CureSearch are creating a non-profit initiative that will approach biopharmaceutical companies, identify promising but discontinued drugs, develop an externalization framework, and match validated drugs to new development and investment partners.

"FasterCures is thrilled to launch a new pilot program with the Children's Tumor Foundation and CureSearch to create a path to development for promising drugs for pediatric tumors," said Esther Krofah, Executive Director of FasterCures. "Through this partnership, we will evaluate the potential for a non-profit approach to accessing and revitalizing discontinued drugs."

"When drug programs are discontinued or not pursued for business reasons, there can be missed opportunities for children," said Kay Koehler, President & CEO of CureSearch. "This innovative project will enable us to offer biopharmaceutical companies an alternative, pediatric-focused path forward for those discontinued drugs to benefit the patients and families who are counting on us."

"The Children's Tumor Foundation is proud to partner with FasterCures and CureSearch to further expand the collaborative network of pharmaceutical companies and foundations with the aim of accelerating treatments to patients," said Annette Bakker, President of CTF. "The recent FDA approval of

the first-ever treatment for neurofibromatosis, Koselugo® (selumetinib), shows what is possible through a united effort of all stakeholders, including biopharmaceutical companies, foundations, and patients.”

The organizations will be advised on a voluntary basis by, among others:

- **D. Wade Clapp, M.D.**, Richard L. Schreiner Professor and Chairman, Department of Pediatrics at the Indiana University School of Medicine and Physician-in-Chief for Riley Hospital for Children
- **Elizabeth Fox, M.D.**, Senior Vice President, Clinical Trials Research at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital
- **Kevin Grimes, M.D.**, Co-director of the SPARK Translational Research Program and Professor of Chemical and Systems Biology, Stanford University School of Medicine
- **Chris Lee**, Managing Director, Strategic Growth at Palladium
- **Freda Lewis-Hall, M.D.**, Board Member of FasterCures and former Chief Patient Officer and Chief Medical Officer at Pfizer
- **Baiju Shah**, Senior Advisor to FasterCures and former CEO of BioMotiv
- **Kathy Wanner**, Board Member of CureSearch and a Partner at Fairway Capital Management
- **Brigitte Widemann, M.D.**, Chief of the Pediatric Oncology Branch at the National Cancer Institute.

Momentum is building. To date, the organizations are in dialogues with two major biopharmaceutical companies around specific assets.

Companies interested in learning more about this pilot program should contact Sung Hee Choe at schoe@milkeninstitute.org.