

WCG, Inspire Team Up to Boost Trial Access

By Bill Myers

WCG has partnered with Inspire, a leading online health social network, in an effort to make it easier for patients—especially those with rare and genetic-based diseases—to find clinical trials that may help them.

The move is aimed at linking patients with clinical research opportunities, providing greater access to cutting-edge, potentially life-saving treatments.

“As the focus of clinical research shifts from the treatment of widespread illness to the study of genetic-based disease, patient volunteers are becoming increasingly hard to identify,” said Don Deieso, WCG’s executive chairman and CEO. “The Inspire platform is the largest network of proactive, self-identified disease patients in the world. Through

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Inspire is an online health social network that creates and manages support communities for 1.5 million patients and caregivers.

It’s a potentially powerful reserve army for a battle that needs fresh trial recruits: The NIH estimates that some 25 million

Americans suffer from rare diseases. Most have no cure. In fact, there are treatments for fewer than 5 percent of the nearly 7,000 rare diseases. Yet enrollment can be a real challenge, in part because each rare disease affects a relatively small slice of the general population. Researchers often find the best success when they’re able to tap into word-of-mouth among patient populations.

Inspire is especially useful for patients and caregivers who often struggle to get an accurate diagnosis and/or track down clinicians with specific knowledge of their disease. It also helps biopharmaceutical research sponsors better understand and serve the needs of patients—and directly engage and recruit hard-to-find patients for research. 