



## Former 'drug pusher' fights back

Mass. info advocates want better info about prescriptions

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Massachusetts General Hospital Institute of Health Professions commissioned an expose documentary about prescription drugs.

Director Kathleen Slattery- Moschkau, former pharmaceutical sales rep turned whistleblower, said her new movie, *PeRx: Prescribing Evidence-Based Therapies*, is designed to help prescribers sift through the deluge of drug advertising.

In a stroke of irony, pharmaceutical giant Pfizer is, in part, bankrolling the documentary. Part of the funding comes from Pfizer's 2004 settlement for illegally marketing an epilepsy drug as panacea for psychiatric ailments like bipolar disorder and migraines.

"Right now there's an army of 90 to 100,000 of my former colleagues hitting the streets trying to get doctors to prescribe their drugs," Slattery-Moschkau said. "Our goal with the documentary was to raise ... so we know more about the pills we put in our body."

The program's organizer, Dr. Elissa Ladd of the MGH IHP, said she wants prescribers to

rely on sound science rather than studies financed by drug companies, which report positive research but "rarely report negative findings."

Pfizer did not respond to repeated interview requests.

The documentary is available in four parts at [perxinfo.org](http://perxinfo.org).

## **Medicine**

### **Pharmaceutical marketing**

#### **\$12-15 billion**

Pharmaceutical industry's annual marketing budgets

#### **\$21 million**

Total settlement Pfizer paid in 2004 settlement

#### **\$399,400**

Amount of Pfizer grant to MGH IHP

*(Sources: Journal of American Medical Association, MGH IHP)*

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