SCIENCE BRIEF

NEW CENTER ESTABLISHED TO CONDUCT CLINICAL TRIALS OF NEW DRUGS

The Ohio State University Board of Trustees agreed November 7 to help establish a new research company that would conduct clinical trials on new drugs for the pharmaceutical industry.

The new organization, the Clinical Trial Management and Coordinating Center, would be an independent, nonprofit corporation which would contract with pharmaceutical firms to conduct clinical trials.

Before any drug can be approved for use with patients, the federal Food and Drug Administration requires manufacturers to test the drug on humans. These tests, known as phase 1, 2 or 3 clinical trials, gauge a new drug’s safety and efficacy and compare it with other drugs now in use for specific diseases.

The new CTMCC would contract with Ohio State for the use of university facilities, researchers and physicians to conduct these trials. It also would contract with physicians at other institutions and in private practice in the United States and throughout the world, as well.

Trustees agreed to loan the CTMCC up to $2.5 million to help establish the new program. The loan would be repaid with interest by the year 2001 and once the loan is paid back, the university would share in the excess funds generated by the center.

The corporation would have nine directors, four of whom would be nominated by the university to represent Ohio State’s interests in this new venture.

University officials said that participation with the CTMCC meshed well with the mission of the university, the Ohio State University Medical Center and the James Cancer Hospital.

"This Medical Center initiative represents a positive step toward enhancing our research agenda and increasing funding for research conducted here," said Manuel Tzagournis, vice president for health sciences