

Drug companies accused of manipulation

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Pharmaceutical companies are compromising medical research in Australia by manipulating clinical trials, The Age newspaper reported Monday.

It quoted cancer specialist Stephen Clarke of Sydney University, who has been involved with clinical trials on humans for 15 years, as saying it was essential for the government to fund trials of great public importance rather than leave critical research solely to drug companies.

Clarke said two drug companies have delayed publication of data that showed their medicine were not as effective as previously believed because "it would not have been favorable to their business plan." He also accused drug companies of controlling, censoring and vetting trial information to present results in the most favorable light for sharemarkets.

"The main aim of drug companies is to sell a drug -- they don't deny that -- and our main aim is to help people," Clarke said. "Those two things don't always go together."

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