

# Patrick Girondi, Esteemed Gene Therapy Pioneer/Indy Music Artist, Examines the Costs of Medicine & the Debate Over Money

*By Patrick Girondi, father of a patient and founder of San Rocco Therapeutics (SRT)*

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, January 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Many in the pharmaceutical industry would publicly state that we should make gene therapy and other medicines more accessible to patients. Often this simply means we need to make them more affordable. What is preventing this noble feat?

A careful review of the history of research and development along with a fair review of corporate profits illustrate that the high drug prices are not justified by the cost of production.

In fact, history and legal court cases plainly show the Leschlys, Sacklers and Shkrelis of the world have used fraud to profit billions by pushing the cost of therapies beyond the reach of ordinary families and health systems.

Yet still, this year, bluebird bio left the European market when their demand of \$1.8 million per dose for their new product Zynteglo was rejected. The true cost to produce Zynteglo is less than \$300,000 per patient. The US authorities approved it at \$2,800,000.

[San Rocco Therapeutics](#) (SRT) brought legal action against bluebird in 2017 and in 2021. New York Supreme Court case 150856/2017, proves that bluebird sabotaged SRT's product. Records of bluebird's PowerPoints show bluebird themselves admitted that SRT's therapy is superior to their own bluebird product. Insider traders, including bluebird's former CEO Nick Leschly, Mitch Finer, Jeffrey T. Walsh, David M. Davidson, Jason F. Cole, Philip D. Gregory, and Third Rock



Pictured above, center, Founder of San Rocco Therapeutics, Patrick Girondi and two sons

Ventures executives sold billions of dollars worth of shares to unknowing investors. Later, the shares plummeted from over \$200 to \$8 per share. Yet no 'official' investigation.

This picture of "apparent corruption" is painted further clearly in a book by SRT's founder [Patrick Girondi](#) titled "[Flight of the Rondone](#) - High School Dropout VS Big Pharma: The Fight to Save My Son's Life."

Many other erudite writings by neutral entities expose the unfairness of corporate profits including Peter Gotzsche's book "Deadly Medicines and Organized Crime: How Big Pharma Has Corrupted Healthcare," Another is a white paper by Professor Eugene McCarthy of James Madison University: "A Call to Prosecute Drug Company Fraud As Organized Crime." With a meticulous comparison of the old mafia with Big Pharma, McCarthy makes the case that the drug lobby is more powerful than the government.

In 1983, Congress passed the Orphan Drug Act to facilitate investment in rare diseases. This act has become abused by executives who have decided to charge high prices which are not proportionate to the cost of production. They still "justify" their actions by claiming that research is expensive. Again, neutral audits, research and evaluations show that only an estimated 20% of a company's expenditures go to R&D.

Audits show that billions of dollars in executive compensation packages are labeled as "research costs."

A recent Financial Times article, "Gene therapies may cure disease but can we afford them?" and a Labiotech article, "To avoid stagnation, the EU must refine its ATMP regulation," highlighted the dilemma of high priced gene therapy.

The debate over accessibility to humane health care continues, and invariably at the center of debate, is the MONEY involved at hand. Period.

Former Chairman of the American Society for Gene Therapy Ethics Committee, Dr. Lucio Luzzatto says, "There's a "wide gap between diagnosis and optimal therapy...between what we know we should be doing and what we are actually doing."

That gap can only be bridged if we place morality over money.

Drug approvals must link drug prices to production costs. While the production cost is \$300,000, demanding the insurer and patient to pay \$2.8 million to be treated, SRT says it is inhumane. SRT is gearing up to return to clinical trials with an eventual price target that is 4 times more affordable - \$700,000 compared to \$2.8 million. SRT's Girondi stated they are working to lower it even more with improvement.

<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2013/09/10/richard-smith-is-the-pharmaceutical-industry-like-the->

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