

Doctor

In your assigned role, you are to advocate for raising or lowering the price of one dose of the drug.

You are a Doctor Who Will Prescribe the Drug to Your Patients

Before Spinraza®, there were no drugs approved to treat SMA. Without this new miracle drug, most of your patients with severe SMA died before their second birthday. As a doctor, you would like to see **equity** in access to Spinraza®, where every patient who needs the drug has a fair chance to get it. When you prescribe Spinraza®, you usually have to show the patient's insurance company that the drug is **medically necessary** for that patient. Without insurance coverage, only very wealthy patients would be able to afford the drug. Even with insurance coverage, some of your patients will not be able to afford the drug because insurance may not cover all of the expenses.

Pharmaceutical Company

In your assigned role, you are to advocate for raising or lowering the price of one dose of the drug.

You Represent the Pharmaceutical Company Who Owns the Rights to the Drug, and Will Make, Sell, and Market It.

Your company invested money in the research and development of the drug and paid for the application to the FDA for approval. You own the rights to manufacture and sell the drug, and you will pay for manufacturing and marketing/advertising. Your company is for-profit: you are seeking to make money beyond covering your investment costs. A high price could result in a large profit to the company's owners and investors but also risks low sales if no one is willing or able to pay a high price.

Insurance Company

In your assigned role, you are to advocate for raising or lowering the price of one dose of the drug.

You Represent an Insurance Company Who Will Likely Pay for the Drug.

A lot of people in the US have health insurance that pays for most of their healthcare costs. As an insurance company, you decide whether or not to pay for a drug for individual patients. You make decisions about the **cost-effectiveness** for each prescription and its **medical necessity** for the patient. Your company has limited money to spend on all of your customers' healthcare. So, if you decide to pay for expensive drugs like Spinraza®, you will have less money to cover other drugs that may help more people and be more **cost-effective**. As Dr. Crawford mentions in the Episode, if you decide not to cover Spinraza®, especially for sick babies, your company might be concerned about its reputation.

Patient

In your assigned role, you are to advocate for raising or lowering the price of one dose of the drug.

You Represent a Patient Who Needs the Drug. You May Also Represent a Patient's Family Member, Like the Parent of a Baby with SMA.

Approximately 1 in 15,000 babies are born with SMA. As Dr. Tom Crawford mentioned in the episode, before Spinraza®, it was the most common genetic cause of infant death. Two-thirds of affected babies die from the disease around 12 to 15 months of age, from complications of muscle **degeneration**. The other third may have milder symptoms that start when they are older. Spinraza® stops muscle **degeneration** caused by SMA. For patients with severe disease, this is life-saving. **Pre-symptomatic** infants who are treated with Spinraza® can develop normally. For patients who have already experienced some muscle **degeneration**, Spinraza® can prevent the effects of SMA from progressing. For example, a patient may have already lost the ability to walk, and while Spinraza won't restore their ability to walk, it can help prevent further muscle **degeneration** that would affect their ability to swallow food.