



## **Concern About the Changing Payer Climate for New Rare Disease Drugs To Be Discussed at National Organization For Rare Disorders' (NORD) Corporate Council Meeting**

### **Bruckner Group Partner David Balekdjian to Make Presentation to NORD on How Payer Changes Impact Development of New Rare Disease Drugs and Patient Access**

**Wakefield, MA., November 13, 2008.** The payer climate for coverage and access of new rare disease treatments is becoming increasingly challenging. As a result, The National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD) has invited Bruckner Group partner David Balekdjian to make a presentation to NORD's Corporate Council on November 18, 2008, to address these emerging challenges. As one of the country's leading experts in payer drug coverage and access decision-making, and healthcare value issues and strategy, David Balekdjian will discuss how and why the payer environment for new rare disease treatments is changing, how this impacts the rare disease community and drug manufacturers, and what needs to be done.

According to Peter Saltonstall, President of NORD, "It is clear that the rare disease community is seeing changes in payers' coverage and access decisions for new rare disease therapies. It is NORD's belief that this problem is not going to go away, and will likely intensify. One of NORD's responsibilities to our constituents is to create greater awareness, in real time, of challenges facing our rare disease communities, so that proactive action can be taken where possible. To this end, we are inviting David Balekdjian from The Bruckner Group, a good friend of NORD, to share Bruckner's insights into what is happening. This information will help NORD's Corporate Council partners understand the issues better and prepare accordingly, so that patients suffering from rare diseases will be able to maintain access to these essential treatments and still hope for new, improved ones."

David Balekdjian, Partner at The Bruckner Group, indicated that "It is a great honor to be invited to speak to NORD's Corporate Council. The Bruckner Group believes strongly that patients with rare diseases must have liberal access to effective treatments, and that we must encourage development of new, better treatments. These are necessary requirements for a compassionate healthcare system. Yet payers are facing very real and serious healthcare resource limitations, and many believe rare disease drug prices are increasing at an alarming rate. Within the current healthcare environment and these two seemingly disparate realities, Bruckner has developed an approach that enables drug manufacturers to develop innovative new rare disease treatments while also addressing payers' needs. Bruckner's approach has proven very successful for our pharma and biotech company clients, while ensuring coverage and access for patients. We hope that our participation will support NORD's leadership in maintaining a favorable environment for rare disease patients."

**About The Bruckner Group:** The Bruckner Group ([www.brucknergroupp.com](http://www.brucknergroupp.com)), the industry leader in healthcare value strategy, assists pharmaceutical and biotechnology company executives in developing business models, enterprise-wide processes, and individual product strategies that produce new drugs with high healthcare value, meeting the needs of payers, employers, physicians, and patients. In addition to healthcare value strategy, The Bruckner Group assists pharma and biotech executives on a broad range of strategy issues, including payer strategy, product development strategy, strategic marketing, pricing, and corporate development initiatives.