The FDA vs. Cancer Patients  

In the 1970s, the American Society of Clinical Oncology called on the Congress to "get its head out of the sand" about the cancer threat. "Cancers are killing us," they said. And they were right. But there are many, many others who believe the same thing. My daughter, a cancer patient, was seared as seeing. "None of them are going to do anything to help us!"

That is, until the news that "hopefulness" really is the operative word. Former FDA Commissioner David Kessler recently announced that the agency will begin to consider the patient's perspective in its drug approval process. And that is a huge step forward. Because even though many of the best-funded only demon- stration complex, the high price of drugs was the sole focus of attention.

Another recent development that may help the cause is the recent decision of the Food and Drug Administration to consider the patient's perspective in its drug approval process. This is a significant step forward, because it recognizes that patients are the ultimate judges of the efficacy and safety of new treatments. And it is a welcome sign of progress in the ongoing debate over how best to balance the interests of patients and doctors.

But despite these developments, there is still much work to be done. The FDA needs to do more to ensure that the patient's voice is heard in the drug approval process. And it needs to take steps to ensure that new drugs are affordable and accessible to all who need them. Only then will we see the true potential of modern medicine being realized.