

Atticus Pharma Awarded \$2 Million NIH Phase II SBIR Grant to Advance Topical ED Treatment

Funding supports development of a Z-pod®-based sildenafil formulation designed to improve localized delivery while reducing systemic exposure.

SAN DIEGO, CA - August, 25, 2026 — Atticus Pharma Inc., a therapeutics company developing novel medicines using its topical, sustained-release drug delivery platform has received a Notice of Award for a \$2 million Phase II Small Business Innovation Research grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, part of the NIH.

The grant will support optimization of a Z-pod-based topical PDE5i formulation for treatment of erectile dysfunction (ED), building on successful work completed under a Phase I SBIR that showed Atticus's novel product candidate demonstrated significant efficacy in a model of ED secondary to aging.

The Phase II funding allows Atticus not only to continue optimizing the formulation, but to advance the novel drug candidate in diabetes-related ED and to assess its application in recovery post radical prostatectomy. Both the prior Phase I work and this prospective Phase II work will be conducted in collaboration with Kelvin Davies, Ph.D. from the Department of Urology, Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

Phosphodiesterase type 5 (PDE5) inhibitors, such as sildenafil, are administered orally, exposing the patient systemically, which can result in myriad side effects such as headache, facial flushing, and vision and hearing loss. Atticus's topical approach delivers the drug locally, reducing systemic exposure and potentially decreasing associated side effects, while maintaining therapeutic benefit.

"This award gives us the opportunity to advance an important new application of our delivery technology while building on the encouraging work completed during Phase I," said Leigh Hsu, Ph.D., CEO and co-founder of Atticus Pharma. "We see significant potential in localized drug delivery for this program and, importantly, in other therapeutic areas where improving how and where a drug is delivered can meaningfully improve the treatment experience."

For the innovation communities in Greenville, where Atticus is headquartered, and San Diego the award represents another example of federal research funding helping a local biotechnology company advance technology toward commercialization while preserving equity for future growth.

About Atticus Pharma

Atticus Pharma was established in 2024 to advance the pharmaceutical applications of the Z-pod technology. Atticus is advancing two other product candidates: ATC-001 for cutaneous

lupus, which is currently in IND-enabling studies and is slated to enter clinical trials in 2027; and ATC-002 for androgenic alopecia, which recently completed a human clinical study in 98 women and showed significant new hair growth with no significant treatment-related adverse events. Atticus continues to expand its platform technology capabilities through partnerships with companies that are active in skin and immunodermatological diseases.

Connect is sharing this announcement as part of its ongoing work to amplify the founders, companies and innovations advancing the region's innovation ecosystem.

Learn more about Atticus Pharma at www.atticuspharma.com.