



Rx WIRE

A weekly service from
Pharmaceutical Strategies Group.

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Creating opportunity for our clients with an exclusive focus on pharmacy solutions.

Why The 'Free Market' for Drugs Doesn't Work and What We Can Do About It

Drug Discovery & Development - January 24



The United States faces a major problem with prescription drug prices. Even as the prices of most goods and services have barely budged in recent years, the cost of drugs has surged.

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SUMMARY OF TOP ARTICLES

Drug industry unveils massive new campaign to counter criticism

STAT - January 23

Under withering public criticism, the drug industry is doubling down on its arguments that the debate over drug prices is distorted, rolling out a multimillion-dollar ad campaign to repair its reputation and defend the value its medications provide.

The Republican Health Plan That Doesn't Repeal Obamacare

The Atlantic - January 24

The vast majority of Republicans in Congress haven't budged from their longstanding vow to completely repeal the Affordable Care Act.

How Trump's First Executive Order Could Affect Employer Health Plans

SHRM - January 24

President Donald Trump's Jan. 20 executive order directing federal agencies that oversee the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to waive or delay taxes, penalties and regulatory burdens "to the extent permitted by law" could affect employer plans' coverage mandates and fees, but won't do so immediately.

Lupus Market to Reach \$3.2B by 2025 Due to First-in-Class Drugs

[Drug Discovery & Development - January 23](#)

The lupus market, which covers systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE) and lupus nephritis (LN), is set to almost triple from \$1.2 billion in 2015 to \$3.2 billion by 2025, representing a compound annual growth rate of 10.6%, according to research and consulting firm GlobalData.

Drugmakers Manipulate Orphan Drug Rules To Create Prized Monopolies

[Kaiser Health News - January 17](#)

More than 30 years ago, Congress overwhelmingly passed a landmark health bill aimed at motivating pharmaceutical companies to develop new drugs for people whose rare diseases had been ignored.

EpiPen competitor to launch in February

[Washington Post - January 19](#)

A major competitor to EpiPen, the lifesaving allergy injection that has become the latest flashpoint in the debate over high drug prices, will launch on Feb. 14 at a cash price of \$360 for a two-pack, the company Kaléo announced on Thursday.

Payers block Kaléo's expensive EpiPen challenger

[FiercePharma - January 24](#)

So much for the idea of offering patients an EpiPen alternative at no cost and then pushing the expense elsewhere.

21 Medicare Health Plans Warned To Fix Provider Directory Errors

[Kaiser Health News - January 18](#)

Federal officials this month warned 21 Medicare Advantage insurers with high rates of errors in their online network directories that they could face heavy fines or have to stop enrolling people if the problems are not fixed by Feb. 6.

Heartburn pills tied to serious bacterial infections

[Reuters - January 20](#)

People who take popular heartburn pills known as proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) may be more likely to develop intestinal infections than people who don't take these medications, a Scottish study suggests.

Breakthrough hep C meds carry risk for liver failure, death: report

[FiercePharma - January 25](#)

As financial challenges loom for Gilead, a new report highlighted safety concerns for two of its stalwart hepatitis C meds—Harvoni and Sovaldi—along with other rivals in the class.

Judge Blocks Aetna's \$37 Billion Deal for Humana

[New York Times - January 23](#)

A federal judge ruled on Monday that a \$37 billion merger between the health insurance giants Aetna and Humana should not be allowed to go through on antitrust grounds, siding with the Justice Department, which had been seeking to block the deal.

Pain Expert: 'I Haven't Prescribed an Opioid in a Decade'

[MedPage Today - January 25](#)

Daniel Clauw, MD, is professor of medicine, anesthesia, and psychiatry at the University of Michigan and director of the Chronic Pain and Fatigue Research Center.

5 hurdles facing biosimilar developers

BioPharma Dive - January 23

With four biosimilars approved in the U.S., it's still the early days for the copycat biologics, but interest in the space is growing as companies increasingly see the value that they can add to the market.

FDA NEWS

FDA approves Trulance for Chronic Idiopathic Constipation

FDA - January 19

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration today approved Trulance (plecanatide) for the treatment of Chronic Idiopathic Constipation (CIC) in adult patients.

FDA approves Teva's Vantrela ER

Drug Store News - January 18

The Food and Drug Administration has approved Teva's Vantrela ER (hydrocodone bitartrate, extended-release) tablets, the company announced Wednesday.

FDA approves Allergan's Rhofade cream

Drug Store News - January 19

The Food and Drug Administration has approved Allergan's Rhofade (oxymetazoline hydrochloride) cream, the company announced Thursday.



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