PNC PHARMA & LIFE SCIENCES

Monthly News Brief

August 2025

The Robotic Surgery Market Battle is Heating up *(MedTech Dive)*

Across the MedTech industry, the race is on among dozens of companies looking to secure a place in the high-growth business of surgical robotics. Developers that have been working for years to bring their efforts to market are now ready to launch platforms in the U.S. — or are close to it. Between hiring efforts and FDA authorization progress, the robotics landscape is changing daily

FDA's New Accelerated Pathway may open Pharma up to Risks, as well as Benefits *(BioPharma Dive)*

The FDA is pushing for faster drug reviews using a new accelerated approval pathway, where the agency will consider drug affordability as one of the priorities of its new voucher-based program. The agency doesn't typically include pricing & affordability questions in the drug review process, and the emergence of this process leaves new questions for pharma companies pursuing a voucher for faster review. FDA commissioner Makary wants to bring the timeline for drug reviews that are part of the voucher program to one or two months, down from as long as a year. Because the accelerated process doesn't require companies to prove clinical benefit before a drug's approval, there is a greater risk of testing ultimately showing no benefit

The bar has risen': China's biotech gains push US companies to adapt *(BioPharma Dive)*

Recently, large pharmaceutical companies are licensing experimental drugs from China, and venture companies are launching new U.S. startups around compounds sourced from China's laboratories. This shift from U.S.-based companies has been sudden, with licensing deals ramping rapidly over the past two years. And it is occurring even as the shadow of U.S.-China competition within biotech grows longer. Executives and investors in the industry expect such deals will accelerate and, in the process, force U.S. biotechs to work harder to stand out

Pharma Prepared to work with Trump on Direct-to-Consumer Drug sales: Pfizer CEO *(BioPharma Dive)*

Large pharmaceutical companies are taking seriously President Donald Trump's demand that drugmakers make more of their medicines available direct to consumers ("DTC") in the U.S. at lower cost. Pfizer and partner Bristol Myers Squibb recently announced plans to offer their widely-used blood thinner Eliquis at a discounted cash price through an online service, and obesity drugmakers Eli Lilly and Novo Nordisk have also recently opened up more ways for cash-paying patients to access their weight loss medicines directly. Expanding DTC options was one of four demands Trump made of the pharmaceutical industry last week in letters issued to 17 drugmakers, including Pfizer

AbbVie to Build API Plant in Illinois as it Steps up US Production *(BioPharma Dive)*

AbbVie plans to spend $195 million to build a new facility to produce active pharmaceutical ingredients ("APIs") in Illinois. Construction will begin in the fall, and the site should be fully operational in 2027. The facility will help the company produce both current and future medicines in neuroscience, immunology and oncology. The new investment is part of a larger commitment of more than $10 billion in capital investments in the U.S. over the next decade

Novo's Wegovy Becomes First GLP-1 Drug Approved for MASH *(BioPharma Dive)*

The FDA has cleared a new use for Novo Nordisk's Wegovy, granting accelerated approval of the popular weight loss drug in a common liver condition known as metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis, or MASH. Wegovy is the first GLP-1 agonist cleared for MASH, which Novo estimates affects around 22 million people in the U.S. The only other therapy specifically approved for MASH, Madrigal Pharmaceuticals' Rezdiffra, has gotten off to a stronger-than-expected sales start

4 MedTech Topics to Watch for the Rest of 2025 *(MedTech Dive)*

Halfway into the year, medical device companies are receiving more clarity about what the rest of 2025 will hold. An expected uptick in M&A, expanded Medicare coverage for new devices & procedures, renewal of medical device user fees MDUFA which help fund the FDA, and approval & launch of additional soft tissue surgical robotics are all expected to drive growth in the MedTech industry in the second half of 2025, and provide a strong foundation for 2026

Big Pharma's New Chapter: M&A, Metabolism & the Outsourcing Room *(Contract Pharma)*

2024 was a pivotal year that rebalanced the pharmaceutical landscape. Major companies emerged from the pandemic era with clearer strategic focus—some leaner, some bolder—and an unwavering commitment to scientific innovation. Nearly every top 20 company increased R&D investment in 2024, even as some cut operating costs elsewhere. The collective message was that future growth hinges on innovation. R&D as a percent of sales hit record levels at several firms