

PNC PHARMA & LIFE SCIENCES

Monthly News Brief

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[FTC Sues 3 Largest PBMs and Their GPOs, Alleging They Inflated Insulin Prices](#) *(Darwin Research Group)*

The U.S. FTC filed a lawsuit against the largest pharmacy benefit managers and their group purchasing organizations for alleged anticompetitive practices that “artificially inflated” the price of insulin. The complaint accuses CVS Caremark, Cigna’s Express Scripts and UnitedHealth’s OptumRx, which collectively control an estimated 80% of prescriptions in the U.S., and their GPOs of abusing their economic power by rigging pharmaceutical supply chain competition in their favor, forcing patients to pay more for life-saving medication,” the commission said in a press release

[Roche Launches Test that Detects 12 Respiratory Viruses](#) *(MedTech Dive)*

Roche launches test using the company’s temperature-activated generation of signal technology, called TAGS to simultaneously detect up to 12 respiratory viruses. The company said clinicians can specify which pathogens to check for, choosing, for example, to use the test to determine if an adult patient has influenza or COVID-19 in the winter months when those particular respiratory viruses are prevalent. By simultaneously providing up to 12 test results TAGS eliminates the need to collect another sample or to run the existing sample again

[Masimo CEO, Founder Kiani Resigns](#) *(MedTech Dive)*

Masimo CEO and founder Joe Kiani resigned from the company after losing his board seat last week in a proxy battle, following two-years of contentious debate with Politan over the company’s strategic direction. The company announced in 2Q24 that it planned to divest its consumer audio business which it acquired only 2 years ago

[Novo CEO Pressed by Senate to Cut Prices of Obesity, Diabetes Drugs](#) *(BioPharma Dive)*

Novo Nordisk’s top executive vowed to reopen price negotiations with insurers covering the company’s obesity and diabetes drugs at a congressional hearing in which lawmakers pressed Novo to lower the cost of the fast-selling medicines. Novo CEO said the company would consider new talks with insurers about the list prices of Wegovy and Ozempic if insurers follow through on a pledge to keep the medicines on their formularies. Novo claimed that insurers have previously pulled coverage of its other medicines such as insulins once the company lowers list prices, because it resulted in less revenue for payers afterwards

[Express Scripts Sues FTC Over Report Critical of PBM Business Practices](#) *(BioPharma Dive)*

Express Scripts, sued the FTC over the agency’s report detailing how the drug middlemen could be contributing to high drug prices. Following a two-year investigation, the FTC published a report highlighting how PBMs, which sit between drugmakers and payers in the pharmaceutical supply chain, prioritize access to high-cost drugs in return for larger discounts from drugmakers. According to the agency, PBMs also give their own pharmacies preferential treatment, thereby harming independent operators. According to Express Scripts, the FTC disregarded documents provided by the PBMs showing the companies lower prescription drug costs for payers. The FTC’s report has injured Express Scripts’ business and reputation, and has been cited in multiple lawsuits against Express Scripts, along with investigations from state regulators and Congress

[Exact Sciences Says Data Supports its Colon Cancer Blood Test](#) *(MedTech Dive)*

Exact Sciences released data from a study of its blood-based colorectal cancer screening test that showed sensitivities of 88.3% for colorectal cancer and 31.2% for advanced precancerous lesions. Specificity, a measure of how well a test identifies people who do not have cancer, was 90.1%. Exact, which makes the Cologuard fecal immunochemical test (FIT) test for colorectal cancer, said it is completing additional studies to support a FDA submission for the blood-based test. Exact aims to compete with Guardant Health’s Shield blood test, which gained FDA approval in July as a primary screening option for colorectal cancer in average-risk adults

[As Biosecure Bill Advances, Drugmakers Prepare for Prospect of China Pivot](#) *(BioPharma Dive)*

The U.S. biopharmaceutical industry may be pushed to cut ties with select drug contractors based in China if the Biosecure Act becomes law. It recently passed in the House of Representatives but has not been voted on in the Senate yet. China is a linchpin in pharma’s global supply chain, making up about 13% of active pharmaceutical ingredient manufacturers. The Act would effectively prohibit U.S. companies from doing business with five Chinese firms, including WuXi AppTec, Complete Genomics and MGI Tech. In the House’s version, companies with existing contracts are given eight years to sever ties. This Act would also allow Congress to add more companies to its list as it weighs perceived connections between the Chinese government and the U.S. drug industry

[MedTech Firms have Cut More than 14,000 Jobs in the Past 18 Months](#) *(MedTech Dive)*

Medical device companies have been steadily cutting jobs for the past 18 months, eliminating thousands of positions as firms look to lower costs, close facilities or restructure businesses. The diagnostics industry has taken the largest hit, with more than 5,000 layoffs over the period, as testing demand in the sector has plummeted from its COVID-19 peaks

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