



PRESS RELEASE

## **Global biopharmaceutical leaders meet Japanese Prime Minister to reinforce action needed to retain Japan's leadership in life-sciences**

**1600 JST/ 0900 CET 28MAY 2026, TOKYO** – A delegation of over 20 global pharmaceutical leaders from top American, Japanese and European biopharmaceutical companies met this week with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi to reinforce the action needed for Japan to grow its leadership in life sciences.

### **Pharmaceutical industry amongst highest R&D intensive sectors in Japan**

Over the past decade, biopharmaceutical companies have invested ¥14 trillion in research and development in Japan, have developed more than 1,200 new medicines, and directly support over 140,000 high-skilled jobs nationwide<sup>1</sup>. This places innovative pharmaceuticals among Japan's most R&D-intensive and high-productivity sectors, supporting advanced manufacturing and highly skilled employment.

### **Japan experiencing a structurally declining share of global pharmaceutical R&D investment**

However, longstanding policy changes alongside growing global competition, are contributing to Japan being one of the major pharmaceutical markets experiencing a structurally declining share of global biopharmaceutical R&D and investment, with early-stage pipelines and clinical trial activity increasingly shifting elsewhere. Most Favoured Nation (MFN) policies risk compounding this, placing Japan at a growing competitive disadvantage.

Global pharmaceutical leaders also shared evidence demonstrating the urgency of reform to safeguard patient access in Japan. Between 2014 and 2023, 245 new medicines launched in the United States or Europe became unavailable in Japan<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> PhRMA, Turning Japan's Innovation Crisis into a National Growth Engine, 17 April 2026, [https://www.phrma-jp.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026-04-17-PhRMA-JBEC-Press-Conference-Slides-ENG\\_FINAL\\_rev1.pdf](https://www.phrma-jp.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026-04-17-PhRMA-JBEC-Press-Conference-Slides-ENG_FINAL_rev1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> PhRMA analysis of IQVIA MIDAS®, Global Data, NAVLIN and country regulatory authority data, November 2024, [https://www.phrma-jp.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026-04-17-PhRMA-JBEC-Press-Conference-Slides-ENG\\_FINAL\\_rev1.pdf](https://www.phrma-jp.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2026/04/2026-04-17-PhRMA-JBEC-Press-Conference-Slides-ENG_FINAL_rev1.pdf)



**IFPMA**



### **Increased expenditure for innovative medicines is needed to reverse these trends**

Changes to how innovative medicines are valued – including repeated revisions to drug pricing rules – have also contributed to a widening gap between the medicines available to Japanese patients, and those available to patients in other countries.

Global pharmaceutical leaders highlighted that increasing government expenditure for innovative medicines, is core to addressing this gap.

### **Commitment to ongoing partnership**

The meeting reaffirmed the importance of partnership between government and the pharmaceutical industry to advance shared objectives – supporting better health outcomes, stronger healthcare systems, economic growth and national security.

#### **BCR Chair Dr. Thomas Schinecker, Chief Executive Officer Roche Group, said:**

*“The life sciences industry is a vital sector for Japan. Meeting with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi and government leaders this week was an important opportunity to discuss the actions needed for Japan to retain its leadership in life sciences.”*

*“Investment into innovative medicines and vaccines is not only essential for health outcomes, but it is also a strategic investment underpinning Japan's economic growth, national security and resilience. We must work together to address the current decline in Japan's share of global biopharmaceutical R&D and ensure that Japanese patients do not face a widening gap in access to life-saving treatments.”*

#### **BCR Vice Chair, Hiroyuki Okuzawa, Chief Executive Officer Daiichi Sankyo, said:**

*“Japan remains one of the traditional homes of pharmaceutical innovation, and will continue to be central to the future strength of Japan. Continued innovation will be critical in successfully tackling demographic change, emerging health challenges and evolving global risks. Today's constructive dialogue can help ensure Japan remains an attractive environment for research, development and access to new medicines.”*

#### **BCR Secretary, Dr. David Reddy, IFPMA Director-General, said:**

*“Medicines and vaccines play a central role in delivering better health outcomes, supporting stronger healthcare systems and driving sustainable economic growth. Today's discussion reaffirmed that partnership between government and industry is essential if Japan is to continue attracting investment and advancing innovation. IFPMA is committed to working closely with Japan to ensure policies support patient access, innovation and health security for the long term.”*



**IFPMA**



**JPMA Director-General, Kenshi Kinoshita, said:**

*“As a member of the G7, we believe it is essential to advance agile policy measures that position pharmaceutical innovation as a strategic asset. JPMA will actively contribute to discussions aimed at strengthening the international competitiveness of Japan’s drug discovery ecosystem and enhancing national security.”*

**About the Biopharmaceutical CEO Roundtable ([BCR](#))**

The BCR is a global policy forum where the CEOs of [International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations \(IFPMA\)](#) member companies discuss global health policies impacting biomedical innovation. Where possible, the BCR organizes meetings with government officials and policymakers.

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**About JPMA**

[The Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association \(JPMA\)](#) is a voluntary organization comprising 68 research and development-based pharmaceutical companies (as of May 1, 2026). Since its foundation in 1968, with the mission of realizing patient-oriented healthcare, JPMA has contributed to the development of global healthcare through the research and development of innovative pharmaceutical products.

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