Global biopharma leaders meet Japanese PM to reinforce action for retaining Japanâ??s leadership in life sciences

June 3, 2026 | News

Biopharmaceutical companies have invested Â¥14 trillion in research and development in Japan

A delegation of over 20 global pharmaceutical leaders from top American, Japanese and European biopharmaceutical companies met with Prime Minister (PM) Sanae Takaichi to reinforce the action needed for Japan to grow its leadership in life sciences.

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 highâ??skilled jobs nationwide. This places innovative pharmaceuticals among Japan's most R&Dâ??intensive and highâ??productivity sectors, supporting advanced manufacturing and highly skilled employment.

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 earlyâ??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.

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.

Biopharmaceutical CEOs Roundtable (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."