

FedEx Highlights Integrated Pharma Logistics Strategy for APAC at LogiPharma

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Speakers Noha Schouder and Ken McMahon outlined how structured network design, shipment visibility, quality governance and sustainability are shaping pharmaceutical supply chains across the region.



FedEx has highlighted the need for more integrated, intelligent and sustainable pharmaceutical logistics networks in Asia Pacific, as biologics, clinical trials and temperature-sensitive therapies continue to scale across the region.

Speaking at LogiPharma APAC 2026, Noha Schouder, Managing Director, Quality Global Life Sciences and Healthcare, FedEx, and Ken McMahon, Managing Director of Customer Solutions & Special Services across APAC, FedEx, discussed how pharma supply chains are evolving amid rising complexity across multi-country logistics networks.

As Asia Pacific becomes a central growth region for the pharmaceutical industry, with the region described during the session as a major driver of global expansion. Growth in clinical trials, biologics and cold chain pharmaceutical products is increasing the need for logistics networks that can maintain temperature control, regulatory compliance and consistent handling across borders.

The discussion focused on several operational priorities: network design, supply chain visibility and control, resilience and transparency, and sustainability. These areas are becoming more important as pharmaceutical products move across longer supply chains, multiple countries, different regulatory frameworks and several handoff points before reaching patients, trial sites or healthcare providers.

McMahon noted the next phase of pharma logistics in APAC is moving towards more structured network design. Rather than treating every shipment as a one-off route, pharmaceutical companies and logistics providers are increasingly building predefined lanes and dedicated corridors that can be validated, repeated and monitored.

This approach is especially important for temperature-controlled products, where the ability to manage the product throughout the full journey determines whether the supply chain can remain reliable. By mapping the handoffs, functions and risk points across an end-to-end route, logistics teams can better understand which lanes are most critical and where customs, regulatory or operational risks may arise.

For APAC, this is particularly relevant because supply chains often span multiple markets and multimodal routes. McMahon noted that customers do not always have the full route mapped out, creating a need for logistics partners to design, coordinate and execute networks that are prepared for disruption.

Resilience, he said, comes from having the right pieces in place before something goes wrong. This includes structured routing, temperature-control capability, backup plans and clearly defined actions that teams can take when a shipment is at risk.

Schouder also added that consistency across multiple countries and partners depends on global quality systems and standardised processes. This is supported by network of FedEx Life Science Centers in Singapore, Japan, Korea, and a global network of CEIV-certified facilities, enabling compliant handling across temperature-sensitive supply chains. She added that company's global systems are designed to ensure that freight is handled consistently, with certified hubs and trained teams supporting pharmaceutical shipments across different markets.

The session also emphasised the shift from shipment visibility as a tracking function to visibility as an operational control tool. McMahon noted that logistics has moved beyond basic location scans. Temperature, GPS, humidity, shock indicators, light sensitivity and barometric data can now be monitored to create a fuller picture of what is happening to a shipment.

FedEx generates large volumes of shipment data across its network, which can be integrated into data systems and analysed using machine learning and artificial intelligence. The value of this data lies not only in showing that something is going wrong, but in helping teams decide what action should be taken to protect the shipment and bring it back on track.

This is especially important in APAC, where shipments may move through multiple countries, facilities and transport modes. Integrated visibility helps logistics teams identify deviations, trigger interventions and support continuity across complex supply chains.

Schouder added that visibility is also critical for quality assurance and compliance. Real-time data can show whether a deviation has occurred, while trend analysis helps teams understand where repeated issues may be emerging. The goal is not only to respond to deviations, but to reduce and prevent them over time, whether they involve temperature excursions, human error, equipment issues or process gaps.

Regulatory compliance was another key theme. Across APAC, pharmaceutical shipments must move through markets with different customs procedures, local requirements and regulatory expectations. Schouder said global baseline standards remain important, but local expertise is needed to understand country-specific customs and regulatory requirements.

This requires a combination of global quality governance and local execution. Employees need to be trained on standards, facilities need to be validated, and audits are required to ensure that processes are consistently followed. Schouder also noted that even when an incident is local, organisations need to look at it globally to understand whether broader process improvements are required.

Sustainability is increasingly being built into network design rather than treated as a separate requirement. McMahon said efficient cold chain logistics often overlaps with sustainable logistics, as the most direct routes, fewer transloads and shorter transit times can reduce both risk and fuel use.

Packaging is also becoming part of the sustainability discussion. Reducing material use, lowering weight and using reusable packaging can support both cost efficiency and environmental goals, while still maintaining the temperature-control performance required for pharmaceutical products.

The speakers concluded that pharma supply chains in APAC need to be designed for consistency, resilience and readiness. As the region continues to support APIs, biologics, vaccines, prescription medicines and clinical trial materials across diverse markets, logistics networks must be structured to deliver reliable outcomes despite complexity.

The central question for pharmaceutical supply chains is no longer whether disruption will happen, but whether the network is ready when it does.