Top developments and predictions in the Life Sciences & Healthcare sector in Asia-Pacific

Begin ›

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Our reflections and predictions

In this round-up, we look back at the top developments over the last 12 months in the life sciences & healthcare (LSHC) sector, and we look to the future with our top predictions for the coming year for businesses operating in the Asia-Pacific region.

In 2023, China enhanced rules for the management of human genetic resources. It also intensified regulatory oversight in the sales of pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and cosmetics, particularly in the realm of online sales. Meanwhile, the Hong Kong government is actively working on unlocking the city's potential in the Life Sciences & Healthcare (LSHC) sector. Singapore has strengthened its guidance on data protection in the LSHC domain and implemented the third and final phase of the Healthcare Services Act 2020.

In the Year of the Dragon, China will continue its anti-corruption efforts in the LSHC sector and further enhance the foreign investment environment in biopharma and healthcare. It will also advance the distribution of pharmaceuticals and medical devices in the Greater Bay Area. In Hong Kong, legislators will persist in their endeavours to introduce legislation regulating medical devices, and the city will strive to establish itself as Asia's leading clinical innovation hub. Singapore is committed to strengthening regulatory oversight of health information, providing healthcare providers with increased guidance on cyber and data security, and preventing abuse and harassment in healthcare.

Our experts will be closely monitoring these ongoing developments and predictions during the course of the year, and will provide regular updates and analysis through our various free platforms: the eAlert service, Law-Now, LinkedIn at 'CMS Asia Pacific and CMS Life Sciences & Healthcare Sector' and WeChat at 'CMSAsia'.

We hope you find our reflections on 2023 and predictions for the future of interest as you look to the year ahead.

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Top developments of 2023

Mainland China

Implementation Rules of the Human Genetic Resources Management Regulations came into force

The "Implementation Rules of the Human Genetic Resources Management Regulations" officially came into effect on 1 July 2023 in China.

The Implementation Rules were introduced on the basis of current effective Human Genetic Resources Management Regulations and a series of service guidelines and FAQs issued by the Ministry of Science and Technology. These Rules further refine the overall framework and specific requirements for China's human genetic resources management system, and respond to the concerns of stakeholders such as multinational pharmaceutical companies and innovative drug R&D enterprises.

The Implementation Rules provide more detailed compliance requirements for issues such as the following: definitions of human genetic resources information and foreign institutions; the scope of collection and storage licensing providing certain relaxations; approval and record-filing requirements for international collaborative research and international cooperation clinical trials using human genetic resources; prior reporting system for providing or opening up Human Genetic Resource Information; and regulatory authorities and standards of administrative penalties.

New measures implemented for administration of business operations of medicines and medical devices

Since the amended PRC Drug Administration Law took effect on 1 December 2019, supporting regulations have been sequentially promulgated and implemented. To align with the new requirements and changes in the higher-level law, on 29 September 2023 China's State Administration for Market Regulation (**SAMR**) revised and released the Measures for the Supervision and Administration of Drug Operation and Use. These measures took effect on 1 January 2024.

At the regulatory level, the measures further clarify and refine supervisory requirements for drug wholesale enterprises, third-party pharmaceutical logistics companies, and marketing authorisation holders (**MAH**s), among others. The measures also simplify the licensing system, explicitly requiring self-owned warehouses for medicine wholesales enterprises, allowing inter-provincial warehouses and adding new provisions on third-party pharmaceutical logistics, contracted storage, self-distribution and contracted distribution.

In addition, on 4 December 2023, China's National Medical Products Administration (**NMPA**) released a revised version of the Quality Management Regulations for Medical Device Operations to take effect on 1 July 2024. The revised regulation adds a new section on "Establishment and Improvement of Quality Management System", fulfilling the requirements in the Medical Device Supervision and Administration Regulations for enterprises to build quality management systems tailored to their medical device operations and ensuring effective execution. Additionally, provisions that encountered implementation difficulties or ambiguities in practice have been revised, and rules for new business operation models have been supplemented.

China implements new Regulations on the Administration of Special Medical Purpose Formula Foods Registration

The SAMR released an updated version of the Regulations on the Administration of Special Medical Purpose Formula Foods Registration on 28 November 2023, which came into effect on 1 January 2024. The new regulations build upon the 2016 version to further optimise and streamline registration procedures for special medical foods.

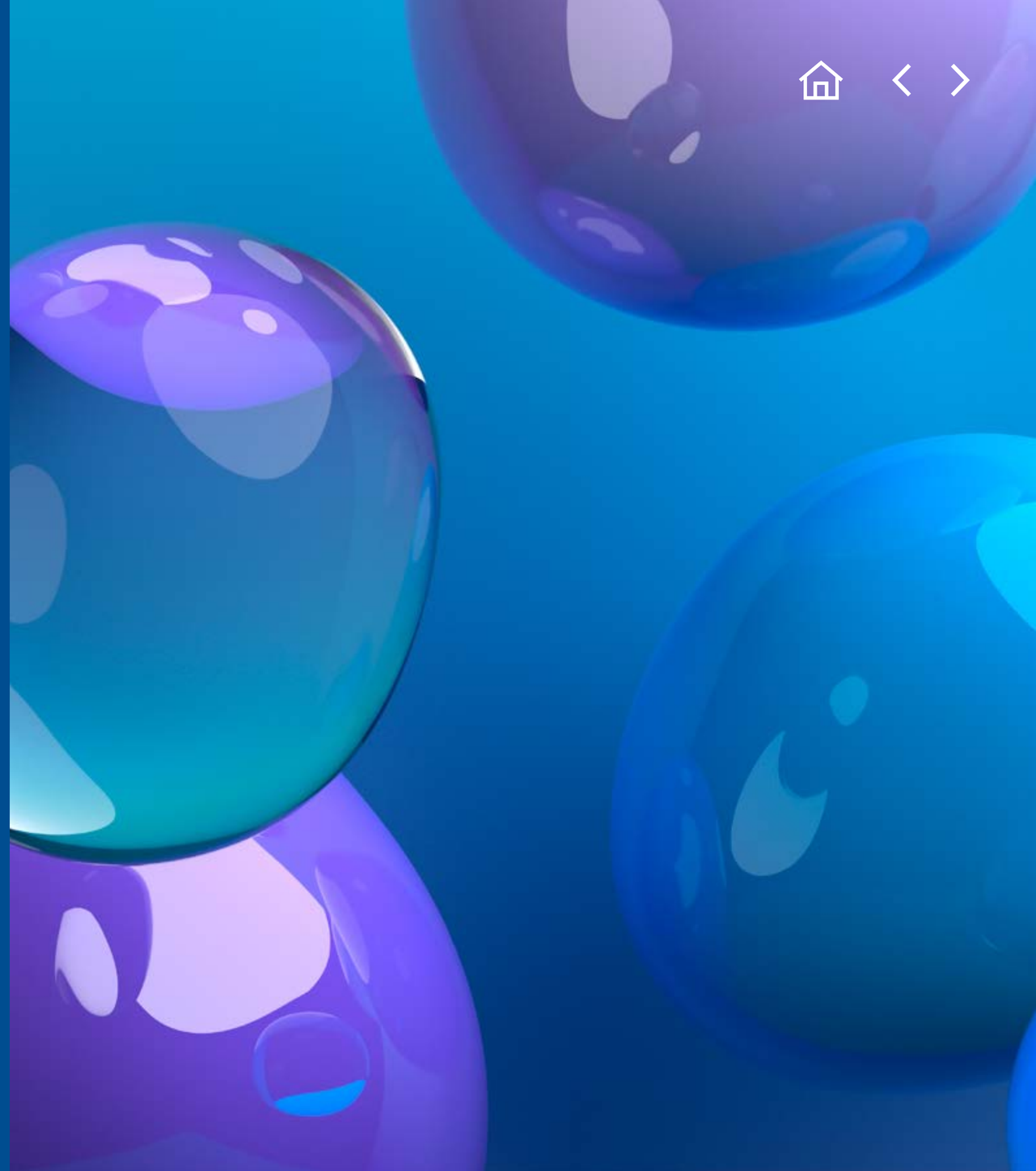
Key enhancements include expediting the on-site verification process, clarifying situations that warrant rejection of registration applications, and shortening the time limit for clinical trial verification to improve efficiency. Expedited approval procedures are instituted for special medical foods for rare diseases and clinical urgencies, which guide and encourage enterprises to develop products to meet pressing clinical needs. Certain registration requirements, however, have been strengthened. Applicant prerequisites, capabilities, legal responsibilities and obligations have been emphasised to reinforce their primary responsibilities. For example, extended verifications can be conducted on ingredient and additive producers and new requirements have been stipulated for renewal registrations. To promote compliance, warning statement locations on labels have been standardised together with explicit marketing prohibitions. Finally, repercussions for regulatory infractions have been amplified.

China issues new measures for regulating online sales of medical devices and cosmetics

On 10 April 2023, the NMPA released a draft for Quality Management Norms for Online Sales of Medical Devices for public comments.

The draft applies to both online medical device sales operators and e-commerce platforms that enable medical device transactions. It provides quality control requirements for internal quality management systems, personnel and training, facilities and equipment, and online sales transaction processes.

The NMPA also issued the Measures for Supervision and Administration of Online Cosmetics Business Operations, which went into effect on 1 September 2023. Key points in these measures include: clearly defining regulatory subjects covering cosmetics e-commerce platforms operators, intra-platform cosmetics operators, and e-commerce operators that operate cosmetic products through self-built websites and other network services; emphasising each platform's responsibility for vetting and overseeing intra-platform cosmetics operators; setting obligations for intra-platform cosmetics operators related to product inspections, information disclosure, recalls, storage and transport; and providing enforcement powers for regulators for inspections, penalties, online sampling tests and monitoring.



Hong Kong

End of emergency use regime for COVID-19 vaccines

Government announces ending emergency use regime for COVID-19 vaccines as planned and cessation arrangement of accepting Indemnity Fund applications by late December (info.gov.hk)

On 18 December 2023 the Government announced that the Prevention and Control of Disease (Use of Vaccines) Regulation (Cap.599K) (the "Vaccines Regulation"), enacted by the Government during the public health emergency caused by the Covid-19 epidemic, would expire at midnight on 23 December 2023. The implied impact of this is the end of the emergency use regime for Covid-19 vaccines. Covid-19 is now officially being managed as a type of upper respiratory tract illness.

The Vaccines Regulation was enacted by the Government on 23 December 2020 to authorise the emergency use of COVID-19 vaccines developed and tested within a short period of time with evidence proving their safety and efficacy. It also enables the on-going monitoring of data surrounding the safety, quality and efficacy of vaccines to facilitate the transition from emergency authorisation under the Vaccines Regulation to more traditional registration under the Pharmacy and Poisons Regulations (Cap.138A) ("PPR"). Given the time that has passed since the peak of the epidemic, there are now vaccines which are registered under the PPR. As a result, COVID-19 vaccines will now be regulated by the PPR. In addition, the Advisory Panel on COVID-19 Vaccines which was set up in accordance with the Vaccines Regulation, will be disbanded in accordance with the expiry of the Regulation.

The Government's Invest Hong Kong ("InvestHK") hosted the Unlock The Life & Health Sciences Potential Through Innovation summit (the "Summit") in October 2023

InvestHK's summit puts Hong Kong's booming life and health sciences industry under spotlight | InvestHK

More than 150 online and offline participants attended the Summit which hosted industry leaders, investors, research and medical professionals, financial specialists and professional service providers who shared their insights and expertise.

InvestHK and Deloitte China released a new joint report entitled "Unlocking Life and Health Sciences Potential – A Complete Guide to Capturing Opportunities from Research to Commercialisation in Hong Kong and Beyond". The report focuses on recent developments and opportunities generated from Hong Kong's life sciences capabilities from research and development to commercialisation.

Key strengths of the Hong Kong life sciences industry include:

- Comprehensive healthcare system enabled with technology, comprehensive insurance services and business collaboration in healthcare innovation;
- Research excellence backed by two high quality medical schools, government research and innovation clusters and strategic partnerships across the GBA;
- Robust Infrastructure, advanced research facilities and medical infrastructure enable establishing and scaling up of business operations;
- Ease of funding access to investors through capital markets, public and private funding sources and government initiatives;
- Competitive business environment with multicultural talent and "trilingual and biliterate" policy and superior legal, tax and financial systems to facilitate business operations across the region; and
- Operates as a gateway to the GBA and as a springboard for accessing new overseas markets.

Singapore

Updates to Advisory Guidelines for the Healthcare Sector

On 20 September 2023, the Personal Data Protection Commission (**PDPC**) updated its Advisory Guidelines for the Healthcare Sector (**Healthcare Guidelines**) to account for amendments to the Personal Data Protection Act 2012 (**PDPA**) and the Personal Data Protection Regulations. The Healthcare Guidelines now provide illustrations and examples on how exceptions apply in relation to obligations under the PDPA within the healthcare sector. These illustrations and examples include: (1) the collection of personal data from patients seeking medical care; (2) the collection of personal data of individuals to respond to an emergency; and (3) the use of personal data for research purposes that does not require consent. These updates to the Healthcare Guidelines will provide greater clarity on how data protection and privacy laws are handled in Singapore's healthcare sector.

Implementation completed on all three phases of the Healthcare Services Act 2020

On 18 December 2023, the third and final phase of the Healthcare Services Act 2020 (HSCA) was implemented. Under the HSCA, healthcare providers are licensed according to the provided healthcare service. Furthermore, the HSCA introduced the concept of "specified services" for each licensable healthcare service. Licensees must receive approval from the Ministry of Health before they can offer "specified services", which usually involve complex or higher risk procedures.

The HCSA was implemented in three phases.

— **Phase 1:** implemented on 3 January 2022 and includes blood bank services, medical transport services, and radiological services.

— **Phase 2:** implemented on 26 June 2023 and includes acute hospital services, ambulatory surgical centre services, outpatient dental services, and outpatient medical services.

— **Phase 3:** implemented on 18 December 2023 and includes nursing home services.

With the HCSA now fully in effect, healthcare providers should take note of any additional applicable obligations and the new requirements for licensing under the new service-based licensing regime.

Cybersecurity Labelling Scheme for Medical Devices Sandbox launched

On 17 October 2023, the Cybersecurity Agency of Singapore (CSA) announced an update concerning its collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the HSA and Synapxe to launch the Cybersecurity Labelling Scheme for Medical Devices (CLSMD) Sandbox. Under the CLSMD, medical devices are rated according to their level of cybersecurity protection with four progressive levels of ratings:

— **Level 1:** Baseline Security Requirements are met (i.e. security baseline requirements).

— **Level 2:** The principles of Security-by-Design are adhered to (i.e. lifecycle requirements).

— **Level 3:** Known common software vulnerabilities are absent (i.e. software binary analysis).

— **Level 4:** Common Cyber-attacks are resisted (i.e. penetration testing).

On 20 October 2023, the CSA launched the sandbox and invited medical device manufacturers to participate in the sandbox and enhance the security of their products. The CSA is expected to work closely with industry partners in executing this sandbox to further develop and enhance the CLSMD framework for medical devices in Singapore.

Guidance on the Procedure for Reporting Adverse Effects, Product Defects and Product Recalls for Cosmetic Products

On 4 December 2023, the Health Sciences Authority of Singapore (**HSA**) released a guidance on the procedure for reporting adverse effects, product defects and product recalls for cosmetic products. The Guidance explains the types of adverse effects that require reporting to the HSA and the relevant timelines. For instance, adverse effects that have caused death or are life threatening must be reported no later than seven days after the supplier first becomes aware of the event or occurrence. The Guidance also explains the types of product defects that must be reported to the HSA, such as products adulterated or contaminated with a prohibited substance, products contaminated with chemicals and products manufactured using the wrong ingredients. The Guidance explains the procedure for product recalls. When a product presents a risk to the intended user and/or public health, the HSA may require the person responsible to remove the product from the market by recalling affected and/or all batches of the product.

Top predictions of 2024

Mainland China

China's continuing fight against pharmaceutical corruption in 2024

Looking forward to 2024, China is poised to continue its crackdown on corruption in the pharmaceutical industry. The groundwork laid in 2023, including the release of the "2023 Key Points of Work for Correcting Unhealthy Tendencies in the Pharmaceutical Purchasing, Sales, and Medical Service Sectors," sets the stage for further transformative actions in the healthcare sector.

In 2024, China is expected to advance its nationwide campaign against pharmaceutical corruption, which was jointly initiated by the National Health Commission (**NHC**) and nine other government agencies in July 2023. This ongoing effort underscores the commitment to rectify various issues across pharmaceutical manufacturers, distributors, sales representatives, and healthcare institutions.

Building upon the Q&A published by the NHC on 15 August 2023, which focused on areas of the rectification campaign, 2024 is expected to see China intensify its efforts to address commercial misconduct in pharmaceutical purchasing and issues related to the use of medical insurance funds.

The campaign represents a significant step towards enhancing ethics and compliance standards throughout China's healthcare ecosystem. As we look ahead to 2024, the continuation of these efforts signifies a dedication to fostering a transparent and accountable healthcare environment for all stakeholders.

Draft amendment issued on Implementing Regulations for the Drug Administration Law

On 9 May 2022, China's NMPA announced a comprehensive draft amendment for the Implementation Regulation of the Drug Administration Law. The Draft Amendment introduced important changes to the regulatory framework and codified regulatory initiatives implemented by the Chinese government after the promulgation of the current Drug Administration Law in 2019. These changes include patent linkage and regulatory data protection. The Draft Amendment also reflects the NMPA's new attempt to address issues of greater public concern, such as penalty guidelines for violations of the Drug Administration Law. Once implemented, the Draft Amendment will significantly impact the operations of pharmaceutical companies. On 11 April 2023, the SAMR deployed key legislative tasks for the year, explicitly stating its intent to actively promote the amendment of the Implementation Regulation of the Drug Administration Law.

Therefore, over the past two years, the industry has been closely monitoring this regulation's progress. Its implementation was greatly anticipated in 2023, but this hope was ultimately not fulfilled. As China looks ahead to 2024, the industry remains deeply invested in the finalisation and implementation of this critical piece of legislation. The forthcoming year holds the promise of clarity and advancement in regulatory frameworks, paving the way for a more transparent and accountable pharmaceutical landscape in China.

Policies to further optimise the foreign investment environment of biopharma and healthcare

Looking forward to 2024, China is setting its sights on building on initiatives put forward in 2023 to optimise the foreign investment environment and attract more foreign capital to key sectors such as biopharma and healthcare.

On 25 July 2023, the Ministry of Commerce issued the "Opinions of the State Council on Further Optimising the Foreign Investment Environment and Strengthening Efforts to Attract Foreign Investment", which proposed major focus areas for foreign investment such as biopharma and healthcare. As part of these efforts, China will accelerate the production and launch of foreign-invested biopharmaceutical projects, encourage foreign-invested enterprises to carry out clinical trials of cell and gene therapies already marketed overseas according to law, and optimise the application procedures for marketed overseas drugs transferred to domestic production.

Additionally, the government will support foreign invested enterprises in the establishment of R&D centres in China, and encourage major scientific research projects. Furthermore, the expansion of the Encouraged Foreign Investment Industry Catalogue, effective from 1 January 2023, includes additional healthcare sectors such as cell therapy R&D and manufacturing, orphan drugs, paediatric specialty drugs, and elder care smart products.

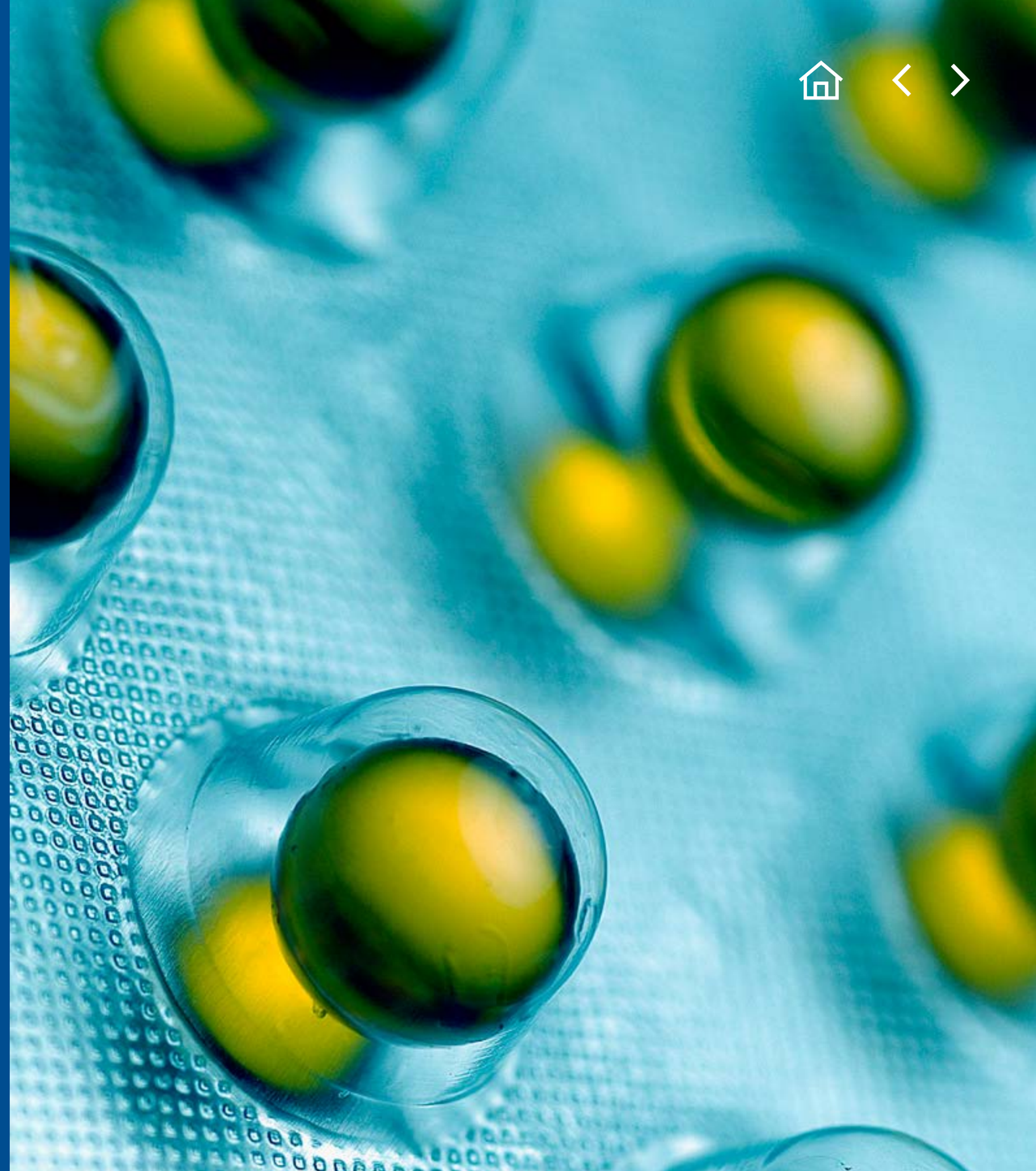
Looking ahead to 2024, the industry is eagerly anticipating whether the aforementioned policy objectives can truly materialise. Specifically, the industry is keen to see if these objectives will be effectively implemented through concrete legislative measures, robust government support policies, and tangible actions.

Progress expected in facilitating drugs and medical devices circulation in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

As of 2023, steady progress has been made in implementing policies to facilitate the circulation of drugs and medical devices in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. China's laws and regulations stipulate that only registered drugs and registered/filed medical devices can enter Mainland China's market. To address urgent domestic clinical needs and facilitate the circulation of drugs and medical devices already available in Hong Kong and Macau, China introduced specific measures for the Greater Bay Area.

These measures allow designated medical institutions to apply for the importation of qualified drugs and medical devices from Hong Kong and Macau for specific medical uses, subject to approval. During the Guangdong Drug Administration meeting on 8 February 2023, authorities stated their commitment to expand the implementation of drugs and medical device circulation policies and enhance approval procedures. Furthermore, on 20 February 2023, the Guangdong Health Commission published the second batch of medical institutions eligible to apply for and use approved drugs and medical devices.

Looking forward to 2024, one can expect the continued development and expansion of facilitative measures for qualified drugs and medical devices within the Greater Bay Area to meet urgent clinical needs, and potentially the roll out of this policy in larger areas.



Hong Kong

Regulation of medical devices

Government's response on medical device regulation (info.gov.hk)

The Health Bureau of the Hong Kong SAR has indicated that it will continue with its efforts to introduce legislation to regulate medical devices in Hong Kong. In the 2023 Policy Address, the Government stated that it will set up a preparatory office in 2024 to study ways to restructure and strengthen the current regulatory landscape applicable to medicine, medical devices and medical technology. The office will make proposals to establish the Hong Kong Centre for Medical Products Regulation ("CMPR"). This will be the first step towards the "primary evaluation" approach in approving applications for registering new pharmaceutical products and ultimately establishing the CMPR as its own statutory body.

The anticipated outcome of this is a more efficient research and development process for new medical products, hopefully allowing said products to reach the market more quickly. In particular, regulation of medical devices will fall within the remit of the CMPR. The government has stated that it will consider the new legislation applicable to medical devices in tandem with establishing the CMPR as a regulatory body.

Rollout of eHealth+ will see increased adoption of eHealth accounts in 2024

New service points for opening eHealth accounts to facilitate access to government health services by citizens (info.gov.hk)

The Government has announced in the 2023 Policy Address that it is gradually extending the requirement that citizens must have eHealth accounts in order to access government health services as part of the eHealth+ programme in 2024. The roll-out is part of the stated aim of centralising digital health records in the public and private system, and to enable members of the public to have better control and management of their health records. As such, the Health Bureau announced on 5 January 2024 that it will provide services to assist members of the public to open eHealth accounts at 18 designated post offices across Hong Kong in order to enable members of the public to continue to access government health services.

Continued Development of Hong Kong into Asia's Leading Clinical Innovation Hub

Our Hong Kong Foundation Launches Policy Research Report "Develop Hong Kong into Asia's Leading Clinical Innovation Hub" | Our Hong Kong Foundation (ourhkfoundation.org.hk)

Speech by Secretary for Health at Our Hong Kong Foundation and Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation Joint BioTech Research Report Launch: "Developing Hong Kong into Asia's Leading Clinical Innovation Hub" (English only) (with photo) (info.gov.hk)

The Our Hong Kong Foundation and Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation Joint BioTech Research Report was launched in November 2023. The report was entitled "Developing Hong Kong into Asia's Leading Clinical Innovation Hub" (the "Report"). The Report aligns with the Government's stated aim to develop Hong Kong into a health and medical innovation hub and proposes that promoting Hong Kong as a viable location for the conduct of clinical trials is a strategic method of bridging the gap between Hong Kong academic excellence and commercialisation of medication.

The report proposes five policies:

- Establishing a Clinical Research Institute (CRI) under the Health Bureau to centralise research efforts between universities, the Hospital Authority (HA) and the private sector;
- Building a talent development strategy to attract clinical trial professionals to Hong Kong;
- Establishing a central primary review authority for new drug registrations;
- Removing duplicative processes associated with establishing clinical trials; and
- Address the infrastructure and skills gaps to foster clinical trial activities through central laboratories and manufacturing plants to make Hong Kong a more attractive destination for clinical trials.

Dr Silas Yang, the Governor of Our Hong Kong Foundation, gave a speech at the launch of the Report during which he described the Government's plan to establish the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute (GBAICTI) in the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone to provide a one-stop clinical trial support platform for research institutions and stakeholders, and to coordinate resources in the public and private healthcare sector.

Continued facilitation of access to Hong Kong registered drugs in the GBA and the Mainland

(legco.gov.hk)

Hong Kong remains committed to developing into a health and medical innovation hub, which is a theme we expect to continue to form in the coming year. Currently, designated healthcare institutions operating in the GBA are allowed to use Hong Kong-registered drugs with urgent clinical use, and medical devices used in Hong Kong public hospitals with urgent clinical use, subject to the approval of Guangdong Province.

The goal for the Hong Kong Government is to establish a regime that registers drugs and medical devices under the "primary evaluation" approach as a long-term objective, and building up the capacity, recognition and status of the new regime step by step to ensure that the eventual approval mechanism of drugs and medical devices of Hong Kong would be widely recognised internationally and by the Mainland.

A new mechanism was put in place in November 2023, meaning pharmaceutical products containing new chemical or biological entities for life threatening or severely debilitating diseases with local clinical data will be allowed to register conditionally with only one certificate of pharmaceutical product (instead of two under the previous arrangement) issued by reference drug regulatory authorities (e.g. the National Medical Products Administration).

These policies, amongst others coming in 2024, are assisting Hong Kong in becoming an international health and medical innovation hub for future years.

Access to Healthcare Services increased within GBA

As mentioned, we have seen the widening of access to Hong Kong and Macau approved drugs and medical devices in the GBA following a measure implemented by mainland authorities. More recently, a new pilot cross border hospital transfer scheme was announced by the Hong Kong Secretary of Health.

At present Hong Kong residents seeking emergency medical services in the SAR while in the mainland must approach the Immigration Department or border checkpoint personnel. Now, following a trial to start by early May, Hong Kong residents will be transferred to the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital, before being sent back across the border via ambulance to the SAR. Patients in Macau can also be transferred to Hong Kong via an ambulance from the Hospital Centre S. Januario.

This is the new pilot cross-border ambulance transfer service designed to move Hong Kong patients from mainland China and Macau hospitals for treatment and it will also be used to ferry non-residents in medical care mercy missions. This part of Beijing's wider plan to link Hong and Macau with nine southern mainland cities to create an economic powerhouse and increase both economic and healthcare synergies, themes which we predict to continue in the coming years.

Singapore

Launch of the Tripartite Framework for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment in Healthcare

On 13 December 2023, the Tripartite Workgroup for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment of Healthcare Workers launched the Tripartite Framework for the Prevention of Abuse and Harassment in Healthcare. This Framework defines abuse and harassment and provides standards for healthcare institutions to protect their workers. The Framework is expected to be fully implemented across public healthcare clusters by June 2024. The Framework broadly aims to achieve the following: (1) protect healthcare workers who face abuse and harassment; (2) prevent situations that lead to abuse and harassment; and (3) promote positive relationships between healthcare workers and patients/caregivers. Under the Framework, healthcare workers can take immediate protective action by addressing the perpetrator or by activating security personnel. Next, public healthcare institutions will be mandated to ensure proper and fair reviews of abuse and harassment incidents involving staff. Physical and wellness support will also be provided for staff who are victims of abuse and harassment.

Cyber & Data Security Guidelines for Healthcare Providers released

On 4 December 2023, the Ministry of Health (MOH) announced the Cyber & Data Security Guidelines for Healthcare Providers, which was developed in consultation with the CSA, the Infocomm Media Development Authority, and the PDPC. The Guidelines provide guidance on the cyber and data security measures that healthcare providers should put in place to ensure proper storage, access, use and sharing of health information to improve the security of healthcare providers.

The Guidelines share practical steps that healthcare providers may follow to bolster Cyber and Data Security. These include:

— Installing software updates on devices and systems promptly;

— Using anti-malware and anti-virus solutions to protect against malicious software;

— Equipping staff with cyber-hygiene practices as the first line of defence; and

— Identifying the type of data an organisation has, where it is stored and how it can be made secure.

Currently, the Guidelines are only intended to promote early awareness and familiarity among healthcare providers. The MOH, however, has said that it intends to prescribe the Guidelines as requirements under the upcoming Health Information Bill.

Ministry of Health holds public consultation on the Health Information Bill

From 11 December 2023 to 11 January 2024, the MOH held a public consultation on the proposed Health Information Bill, which aims to govern the safe collection, access, use and sharing of health information across the healthcare ecosystem in Singapore.

The Health Information Bill seeks to rectify the present situation where an individual's health information has been fragmented and scattered across different healthcare providers, and where patients must undergo repetitive tests and provide medical histories each time they visit different healthcare providers. To address this issue, the Health Information Bill mandates all licensed healthcare providers to contribute data to a centralised health information repository, also known as the National Electronic Health Record. This change is expected to benefit patients and healthcare providers by giving them access to accurate, complete and updated centralised health information whenever care is provided.

Healthcare providers should familiarise themselves with the new requirements under the Health Information Bill, such as using the National Electronic Health Record as a centralised repository.

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