

### **The World**

#### **Pfizer Boosts Injectable Drug Offering With Hospira Acquisition**

NEW YORK — Pfizer on Thursday announced that they have entered into a definitive merger agreement to acquire Hospira, a leading provider of injectable drugs and infusion technologies and a global leader in biosimilars, for \$90 a share in cash for a total enterprise value of approximately \$17 billion. The boards of directors of both companies have unanimously approved the merger.

"The proposed acquisition of Hospira demonstrates our commitment to prudently deploy capital to create shareholder value and deliver incremental revenue and EPS growth in the near-term," said Ian Read, chairman and CEO, Pfizer. "In addition, Hospira's business aligns well with our new commercial structure and is an excellent strategic fit for our Global Established Pharmaceutical business, which will benefit from a significantly enhanced product portfolio in growing markets. Coupled with Pfizer's global reach, Hospira is expected to drive greater sustainability for our Global Established Pharmaceutical business over the long term." [Read more](#)

### **The Nation**

#### **Federal Bill for Provider Status Recognition Reintroduced**

The Pharmacy and Medically Underserved Areas Enhancement Act (H.R. 592) was introduced today by Reps. Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and G.K. Butterfield (D-NC), both House Energy & Commerce Committee Members, and Reps. Todd Young (R-IN) and Ron Kind (D-WI), both House Ways & Means Committee Members.

If enacted, the legislation would enable patient access to, and coverage of, Medicare Part B services by pharmacists in medically underserved communities. The legislation would improve patient access to health care through pharmacists and their patient care services. [Read more](#)

#### **FDA Head Margaret Hamburg to Resign In March; Ostroff to Be Acting Chief**

Margaret A. Hamburg, who as commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration for nearly six years oversaw far-reaching new initiatives on food safety and tobacco regulation and a wave of new drug approvals, plans to resign in March.

"The honest truth is that I had never expected to stay this long," Hamburg said in an interview Thursday. "But the place got under my skin. It's an extraordinary agency with amazing people and a unique and essential mission."

Stephen Ostroff, the FDA's chief scientist and a former official at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, will become the agency's acting commissioner. Other top officials recently hired by Hamburg could potentially be nominated to succeed her, including Robert Califf, a well-known cardiologist and Duke University researcher who later this month will begin serving as deputy commissioner for medical products and tobacco. [Read more](#)

## **House Passes New Obamacare Repeal, Directing Creation of Replacement Law**

Pledging anew to replace the federal health law that President Obama signed five years ago, House Republicans passed yet another bill Tuesday to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

The repeal bill, the first of the new Congress, faces an uncertain future in the Senate, where Democrats will almost certainly filibuster it. Obama has indicated he will veto the legislation if it makes it to his desk.

That made Tuesday's vote largely a symbolic exercise designed to satisfy the GOP base and to give newly elected Republicans an opportunity to vote for repeal, a central campaign pledge.

The bill passed, 239 to 186. All but three Republicans who voted backed it; every voting Democrat opposed the bill. [Read more](#)

## **Supreme Court's New Health Law Case Cuts Both Ways**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court is taking another look at President Barack Obama's health care law, and this time it's not just the White House that should be worried.

Republican lawmakers and governors, too, will feel the backlash if the court invalidates insurance subsidies worth billions of dollars to people in more than 30 states.

Obama's law offers subsidized private insurance to people who don't have access to it on the job. Without financial assistance with their premiums, millions of those consumers would drop coverage.

Disruptions in the affected states wouldn't end there. If droves of healthy people bail out of HealthCare.gov, residents buying individual policies outside the government market could be next. Self-pay customers would face a jump in premiums because they're in the same insurance pool as the subsidized ones.

Health insurers spent millions to defeat the law as it was being debated. But the industry told the court last month that the subsidies are a key to making the overhaul work. Withdrawing them would "make the situation worse than it was before" Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. [Read more](#)

## **The Measles Outbreak Is a Big Story. This One's Bigger.**

In the past 10 days, one health care story went viral: the Disneyland-centered measles outbreak. It's an important story. More than 100 Americans are infected; thousands more have been exposed.

But it's probably not the *most* important story in health care this month. The only problem is -- which one is?

## **Busy Time of Year**

Just look at the flurry of news last week.

On Monday, HHS announced a plan to shift 85% of Medicare payments to "quality or value" by the end of 2016. Later that day, the Congressional Budget Office [issued a report](#) concluding that the price tag for the Affordable Care Act's coverage expansion had fallen by one-fifth. [Read more](#)

## **Blue Cross North Carolina's Price Tool Could Shake up Medical Industry**

Leslie Goldfarb of Charlotte had been talking to two surgeons about knee surgery and worrying about her out-of-pocket costs.

When she recently read about a new [online database](#) from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina, she checked the average reimbursement for those surgeons. One of them averaged about \$1,500 less in total costs associated with the arthroscopic surgery she's having. And Blue Cross pays about twice as much if the same doctors do the procedure in a hospital – costs that pass through to her with a high-deductible plan. She used that data to schedule her surgery.

"You don't have to legislate medical costs to come down," Goldfarb said. "All you have to do is make the information available." [Read more](#)

## **National Events & CE**

[IACP Educational Conference \(February 2015\)](#)

[MHA Business Summit \(March 2015\)](#)

[Armada Specialty Pharmacy Summit \(May 2015\)](#)

[Compounders on Capitol Hill \(June 2015\)](#)

[NASP 2015 Annual Meeting & Expo \(September 2015\)](#)

[ASCP 2015 Annual Meeting & Exhibition \(October/November 2015\)](#)

## **National Websites**

[ASCP](#)

[Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#)

[CMS Region IX](#)

[FDA](#)

[FDA Guidance Documents](#)

[IACP](#)

[NASP](#)

[NIOSH List of Antineoplastic and other Hazardous Drugs in Healthcare Settings 2014](#)

[U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#)

## **California**

### **Calif. Lawmakers Plan to Stem Overuse of Psychiatric Drugs**

Several California lawmakers this year plan to introduce legislation to curb the overuse of psychiatric drugs among children in the state's foster care system, *San Jose Mercury News/Inside Bay Area* reports (de Sá, *San Jose Mercury News/Inside Bay Area*, 2/1).

### **Background**

The push for more regulation comes after a *Mercury News investigation* last year found that children in the California foster care system are prescribed psychiatric drugs at a rate that is three times higher than children nationwide.

Specifically, the investigation found that nearly 25% of California children in foster care have been prescribed psychiatric drugs, including:

- Antipsychotics;
- Antidepressants;
- Mood stabilizers; and
- Stimulants. [Read more](#)

## California Lawmakers Proposed 72 ACA-Related Bills In 2014

California was one of five states last year where lawmakers introduced at least 50 bills related to the Affordable Care Act, [according to data](#) from the National Conference of State Legislatures, *Center for Public Integrity* reports (Schulte, *Center for Public Integrity*, 1/21).

### National Findings

Overall, more than 700 ACA-related state bills were filed across the U.S. in 2014.

Of the 75 bills that passed, two-thirds were aimed at advancing the law.

Meanwhile, lawmakers introduced about 200 bills aimed at dismantling the law, 25 of which sought a full repeal of the law. The majority of the bills attacking the ACA did not pass (Ferris, *The Hill*, 1/21). [Read more](#)

### Advocates Raise Concerns Over Storing, Sharing Of DNA Samples

Privacy advocates are raising concerns about DNA samples of about 16 million California residents that were taken at birth to test for health disorders and now are being stored indefinitely in a San Francisco Bay Area warehouse, the *Los Angeles Times* reports.

### Details of DNA Storage

For the last 30 years, nearly every infant born in California has had their blood taken to screen for 80 medical conditions, such as sickle cell anemia and cystic fibrosis.

According to the *Times*, the samples are kept in a biobank indefinitely. California is one of 20 states that maintain control of the samples after they have been screened.

The samples can be sold to genetic researchers. California is one of just four states that charge a fee for the samples. [Read more](#)

### New Rules to Limit Narrow Networks

New regulations requiring California health care insurers to follow stricter guidelines for provider network adequacy, out-of-network notifications and accuracy of provider lists when dealing with the state Department of Insurance went into effect on Monday.

California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones (D), who was re-elected in November, used the occasion of his Jan. 5 inauguration to file for the stronger set of regulations. The state Office of Administrative Law approved the new rules Friday.

Regulation of the state's health care insurance market is bifurcated between the DOI and the Department of Managed Health Care. The new rules apply only to policies regulated by DOI. [Read more](#)

### California Hospital News Roundup for the Week of February 6, 2015

To read the news about several California hospitals click [here](#)

### State Net Capitol Journal

News and Views from around the 50 states.



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## CA Events & CE

### **STERILE COMPOUNDING New Laws and Regulations-Western University-March 2015**

For more information [click here](#)

### **West Coast Pharmacy Exchange April 2015**

For more information [click here](#)

### **SEMINAR 2015 (October) [click here](#)**

### **California State Board of Pharmacy**

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians may earn 6 hours of CE for attending the entire day of a board of pharmacy meeting; and 2 hours of CE for each committee meeting. Please go to [www.pharmacy.ca.gov](http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov) for the meeting schedule.

## California State Department Websites

[CAL MediConnect](#)

[California Department of Health Care Services](#)

[Added Link California Department of Health Care Services 1115 Waiver Stakeholder Letters](#)

[California Department of Insurance](#)

[California Department of Managed Health Care](#)

[California Department of Public Health](#)

[California Department of Workers' Compensation](#)

[California State Board of Pharmacy](#)

## CA Legislation

While the Legislature reconvened the 2014-2015 Legislative session on January 5, 2015 (now referred to in the Daily File as the 2015-2016 session), the majority of bills will not be introduced and in print until late February. Consequently, in March the CCAP Legislative Committee will review the relevant bills and recommend positions to the board of directors.

Meanwhile, there have been Informational Hearings, and one important to CCAP was held on February 4, by the Senate Health Committee. The focus of the hearing was health care's high cost drivers-- **Specialty Drugs** earned high visibility during the hearing. You may click [here](#) to access the PDFs from this meeting.

You may always learn more information by logging onto [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov)