



## A Proposed Roadmap to Achieve Health Equity

(Source: A Press Release by GlaxoSmithKline)

ViiV Healthcare announced the release of “Achieving Health Equity: A Roadmap to Eliminating Disparities”, a new report conducted by Economist Impact, a division of The Economist Group, that explores the opportunities that could be created by eliminating health disparities in the UK and US over the next 20 years, while charting a bold course for unified action.

The report, sponsored by ViiV Healthcare, the global specialist HIV company majority owned by GlaxoSmithKline plc (GSK), with Pfizer Inc. and Shionogi Limited as shareholders break from previous efforts by laying out a roadmap that identifies the role of individual groups in achieving health equity and describes the concrete actions they can take to address health disparities (defined as avoidable and unfair differences in the health of people or particular groups that negatively impact their quality of life and life expectancy.)

Research has shown that clear disparities exist in relation to HIV/STIs, mental health, and COVID-19, and are often connected by broader overlapping social factors. The report, which focuses on these three disease areas, explores the opportunities that eliminating health disparities over the next two decades could create and what actions are needed to achieve it in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Insights in the report were gathered from desk research and a literature review, followed by in-depth interviews with a range of academics, HIV experts, and other key stakeholders. Key findings in the report provide the motivation and the pathway for action on health disparities, including:

1. *Disparities in care are avoidable, unfair, and cost us all.* Disparities create unfair economic and social circumstances for individuals, communities, and societies alike. They create fragility and add instability to health and social systems.

2. *Addressing health disparities must be an urgent moral, social, and economic priority that is reliant on a shared vision.* Without action, any meaningful progress on societal health and economic goals is at risk and will remain vulnerable to global health threats like COVID-19. A shared, forward-looking vision that shows us what achieving health equity looks like is critical to success.

3. *Stakeholders and systems can either perpetuate or combat disparities.* Inaction can be as powerful as action. This research lays out a clear route for various stakeholders to contribute to the pursuit of health equity, and systems for accountability and measuring progress.

4. *Systems are slow to promote equity because they are often incentivized not to.* Incentives for health and social care are often

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## In Brief...

♦ **AmerisourceBergen** announced Q4 revenue of US\$58.9 billion, up 19.6% year-over-year, and revenue for year 2021 of US\$214 billion, a 12.7% year-over-year increase. “AmerisourceBergen delivered strong growth in our 2021 fiscal year and took key steps to further enhance our strategic positioning. The investments we have made in our business and team members support AmerisourceBergen’s ability to help advance healthcare through our differentiated capabilities for manufacturers globally and solutions for healthcare providers locally,” said *Steven H. Collis*, Chairman, President & CEO of AmerisourceBergen.

♦ **McKesson Corporation** announced its Q2 financial results, with revenues of US\$66.6 billion, an increase of 9%. Adjusted earnings per share of US\$6.15 increased 28%. “Our enterprise strategy is enabling us to successfully navigate a dynamic environment. McKesson delivered strong second-quarter results, including double-digit Adjusted Operating Profit growth across all segments,” said *Brian Tyler*, chief executive officer. “We remain committed to investing in our growth strategies of biopharma services and oncology ecosystems, while simultaneously increasing shareholder returns.” Separately, McKesson will sell its U.K. business units to Aurelius, a pan-European asset management group with offices across Europe. The transaction is expected to close in FY2022.

♦ **Johnson & Johnson (J&J)** has announced plans to spin off its consumer health unit from its pharmaceutical and medical device business, creating two independent publicly

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## Alliance Healthcare Joins IFPW

IFPW is pleased to announce that Alliance Healthcare has joined IFPW as its newest wholesale member. Alliance Healthcare is a leading European wholesaler of healthcare products with operations in several countries. The company offers a broad range of healthcare solutions through every stage of the value chain, from clinical trials during product development and launch to patient support, marketing and healthcare supply chain.

Alliance Healthcare began in 1938 as Unichem and over the past 80 years has grown into one of the largest pharmaceutical wholesalers and distributors in Europe. IFPW warmly welcomes Alliance Healthcare and looks forward to the Alliance teams’ insights and perspectives as an IFPW member.

## Healthcare Equity (cont.)...

set up to perpetuate disparities in the US and UK. A greater focus on performance and targets centered on equity, stakeholders and systems would be more likely to both reduce disparities, achieve efficiency, and positive health outcomes.

ViiV Healthcare supports Economist Impact's recommended roadmap/next steps to achieve health equity by 2040, as prioritized by a series of actions, including:

1. *Restructuring the health system to prioritize prevention for both physical and mental health.* Healthcare systems are often rewarded for sticking to the status quo - a focus on treating the sick, rather than preventing illness, which contributes to worse outcomes.

2. *Reimagining investment beyond the upfront cost.* Health systems end up spending more in dealing with the consequences of disparities than eliminating them in the first place. Investments in health systems and individual communities should be examined over longer periods of time while developing better measurements of success.

3. *Making practical changes that improve collaboration.* Individuals can make a difference, but their impact alone is limited without the ability to share information with others. Practical changes that improve collaboration, like improved data sharing practices, more efficient referral processes, and better communication between initiatives and health providers could help prioritize and realign goals around improving equity.

4. *Improving our knowledge of how to best reach certain populations.* Many health systems continue to use largely unchanged, outdated methods to engage stakeholders or rely on community partners to pick up the slack. Incorporating new best practices from outside the health sector in planning and organizational structure could expand the current knowledge of how to best reach key populations.

*The full detailed findings of "Achieving Health Equity: A Roadmap to Eliminating Disparities", as well as additional resources related to the report can be found at [viihealthcare.com](https://viihealthcare.com) (<https://viihealthcare.com/en-gb/achieving-health-equity>).*

## New Initiative Aims to Attack Problem of Substandard Generic Drug Distribution

*(Source: A Press Release by Reuters)*

ARTiFACTS, creator of the world's first blockchain-based platform for scientific and academic research, announced a partnership with the Distributed Pharmaceutical Analysis Lab (DPAL) at the University of Notre Dame to develop a prototype solution for tracking pharmaceutical chain-of-custody information in real-time using distributed ledger technology. Working with ARTiFACTS, DPAL will record all physical handling and research metadata starting from the point-of-purchase of prescription drugs and sustained throughout the testing, analysis and reporting requirements.

Up to 2 billion people worldwide lack access to authenticated medicines. The World Health Organization has estimated 1 in 10 medical products in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) are substandard or falsified, with some experts estimating monetary losses of between US\$70 billion and US\$200 billion. More troubling is the human cost. More than 200,000 lives are lost per year in Africa to fake antimalarial drugs alone. The new partnership between ARTiFACTS and DPAL will reduce the

damage to public health from substandard drugs by accelerating and expanding the process whereby they are identified.

Current efforts to reduce fraud in much of the global pharmaceutical supply chain are heavily reliant on time-consuming manual effort and lack transparency, with no robust chain-of-custody. ARTiFACTS is developing a prototype aligned with the DPAL use case that will provide an immutable and trusted transcript of all critical "Who-What-Where" information about each compound. Underlying data will be housed permanently in an immutable, blockchain-based ledger of record for use by researchers, public health and regulatory authorities, and organizations in the manufacturing and distribution supply chain using Web 3.0 technologies.

## In Brief (cont.)...

traded companies. Subject to approvals and meeting specific conditions, the separation is anticipated to conclude in 18 to 24 months. Following the separation, the new J&J will continue to be a healthcare company with a sharpened focus on key areas with unmet medical needs and leverage innovation and technology in the biopharmaceutical and medical device sectors to expand the standard of care.

- ◆ **Profarma** announced their financial results for Q3 FY 2021, with gross revenue increasing by 23.3% to R\$1.9 billion (\$345.5 million) and net profit of R\$24.6 million (US\$54.5 million), 13.2% lower year-over-year. Profarma's distribution unit net income reached R\$22.9 million (US\$4.16 million).

- ◆ Kids ages 5-11 in the United States are now eligible for vaccination against COVID-19. The FDA authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA vaccine, **Comirnaty**. This is the only COVID jab with an FDA nod for those younger than 18. The shot could be made available for kids soon. The Pfizer dosage for children is one-third the size of that for those 12 years and older. The second of the two-shot series is to be administered three weeks after the first.

- ◆ **Pfizer** joined the migraine market in a deal with **Biohaven Pharmaceutical Holding Company** for ex-US commercial rights to its *Nurtec ODT (Rimegepant)* as well as a follow-on oral calcitonin gene-related peptide inhibitor for US\$500 million up front. With significant earnout potential, the agreement strengthens Biohaven financially, removes its financial risk for commercializing *Nurtec* overseas and gives it a commercial partner with broad access and experience outside the U.S.

- ◆ The United Kingdom is the first country in the world to grant marketing authorization to **Merck & Co.'s molnupiravir**, the first oral therapy for COVID-19, to be sold as  *Lagevrio*. The decision was announced on November 4th and the U.K.'s **Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency** announced that the antiviral was safe and effective at reducing the risk of hospitalization and death in people with mild to moderate COVID-19 who are at increased risk of developing severe disease. Merck has also granted a royalty-free license for its COVID-19 pill to a United Nations-backed nonprofit in a deal that would allow the drug to be manufactured and sold cheaply in the poorest nations, where vaccines for the coronavirus are in devastatingly short supply.

*(Sources: Business Wire, Company Press Releases, Drug Store News, FiercePharma, and World Pharma News)*