

# Issue Tracker



Together,  
there's  
something  
science  
can do.

**Issue Tracker 2024/006**  
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[Second malaria vaccine launched in Ivory Coast:](#) A second vaccine against Malaria was launched in the Ivory Coast. The vaccines, which have been approved by the World Health Organization (WHO), were developed by the University of Oxford and the Serum Institute of India. The Ivory Coast will vaccinate 250,000 children with 656,600 doses of the vaccine developed by Oxford and Serum. This second vaccine is a milestone in the fight against Malaria; however, demand for the vaccines remains higher than supply.

[U.S. Senate Unanimously Passes Bill to Reduce Big Pharma Patent Thickets, Increase Competition:](#) The bill would limit the number of patents that pharmaceutical companies can assert in patent infringement litigation. This addresses patent thickets, a tactic where patents are layered on top of a product to extend market protection and deter generic and biosimilars from being introduced by other companies. The bill has the potential to lower the cost of prescription drugs in the U.S. but must first pass the House.

[Pharmaceutical companies are forging an increased number of partnerships with artificial intelligence vendors for drug discovery services:](#) Since 2015, almost 100 partnerships between pharmaceutical companies and AI vendors for drug discovery and repurposing were identified in data from the GlobalData Pharmaceutical Intelligence Centre. AI has the potential to accelerate research and development timelines, which could render drug development less costly. Although industry typically relies on AI vendors, companies are beginning to develop their own in-house capabilities in AI. AI drug discovery remains, however, in an early stage of development.

[Apollo Therapeutics and Oxford University enter into drug discovery and development collaboration:](#) The collaboration will focus on translating discoveries from biomedical researchers at Oxford. During the collaboration, novel validated therapeutic targets from Oxford's researchers will be assessed by Apollo. The collaboration will also provide patients with more access to clinical trials. This is Apollo's sixth collaboration with universities and research centres.

[EU regulator rejects Alzheimer's drug lecanemab](#): A license for the Alzheimer's treatment lecanemab, which slows cognitive decline, has been rejected by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). Per the EMA, the benefits of the treatment do not counterbalance the risk of serious side effects such as swelling and bleeding in the brain. Trial results for lecanemab were considered historic by researchers since no previous treatments showed that the disease's underlying mechanism could be slowed.

[Drugmaker Sinergium to share bird flu vaccine data globally](#): Sinergium is currently in the early stages of developing mRNA vaccines against the H5N1 virus and will share its data with a network of manufacturers in low- and middle-income countries. This network of manufacturers was set up by the World Health Organization during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic to assist countries in gaining access to medical tools. The sharing of data by Sinergium could enable manufacturers in poorer countries to begin production quickly if a pandemic occurs, thus diminishing the reliance of poorer countries on handouts.

[Obesity drug shows biological effect on Alzheimer's patients in small trial](#): Novo Nordisk's earlier-generation GLP-1 drug liraglutide, used to treat obesity, was shown to slow the loss of brain volume of patients with mild Alzheimer's disease in a small clinical trial of 204 patients. The trial was not sponsored by Novo Nordisk. Despite the results, scientists urge caution since the trial did not measure cognitive benefits.