



Pharmaceuticals

Research Team

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Pharmaceuticals

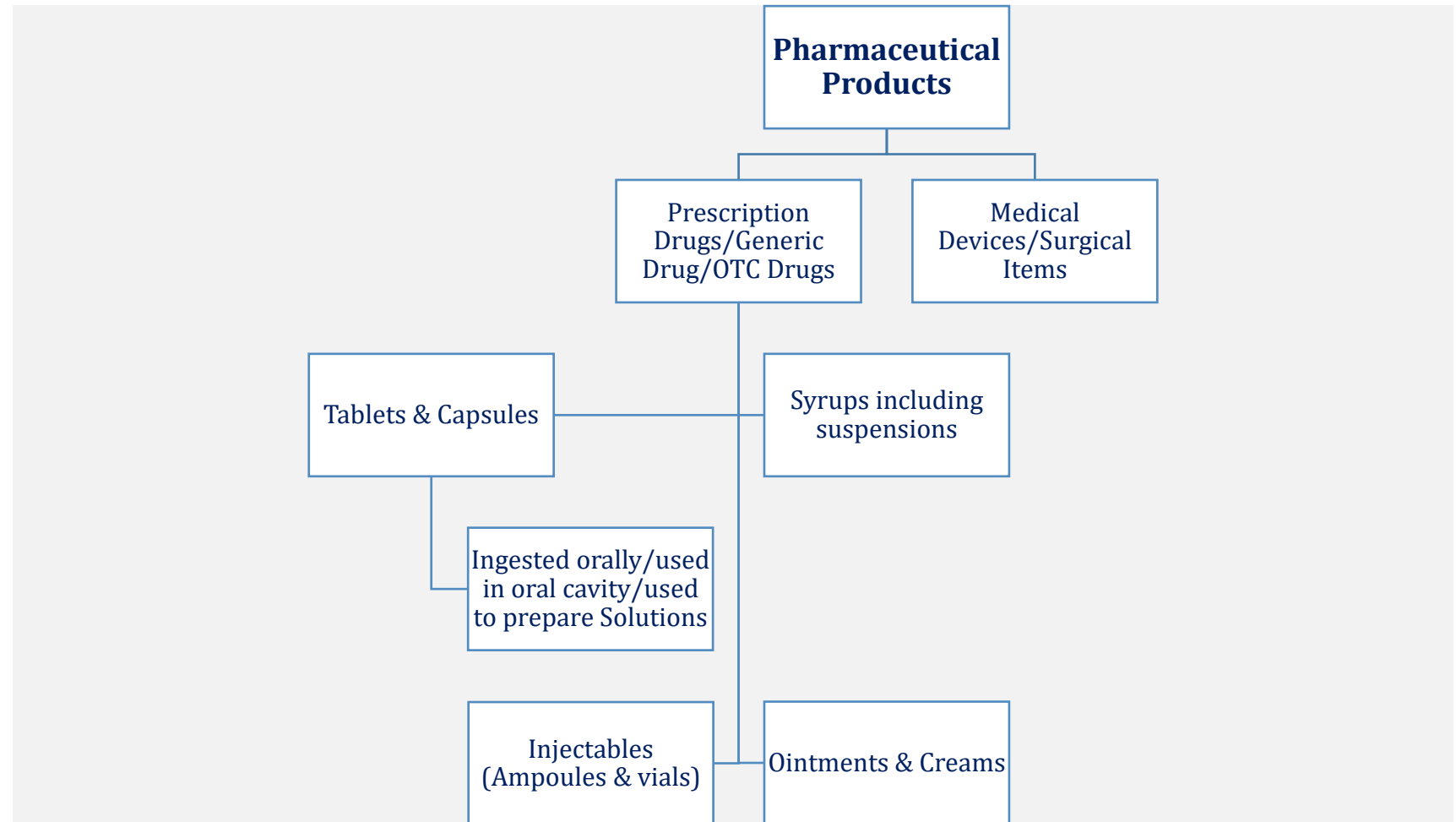
Contents	Page.
Global	
Introduction	1
Manufacturing Process	2
Global Overview	3
Top 10 Companies	4
Company-wise R&D Expenditure	5
Local	
Introduction	6
Industry Overview	7
Player-wise	8
Regulatory Framework	9
Supply Raw Material	10
Supply Production	11
Supply Foreign Direct Investment	12
Demand Price Dynamics	13

Contents	Page.
Demand Consumption	14
Demand Exports	15
Business Risk Margins	16
Financial Risk Leverage & Working Capital	17
Financial Risk Borrowings	18
Duty Structure	19
Porters 5 Forces Model	20
SWOT Analysis	21
Outlook	22
Rating Curve	23
Bibliography	24

Pharmaceuticals

Introduction

- The pharmaceutical sector plays a vital role in advancing global health by developing, producing, and distributing medicines for a wide range of medical conditions.
- It comprises a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including multinational corporations and innovative biotech startups, all contributing to medical progress in their respective capacities.
- By investing in research and development, the sector drives breakthroughs that lead to more effective treatments, improved healthcare delivery, and better patient outcomes.
- The sector's contributions are instrumental in combating diseases, enhancing life expectancy, and raising the overall quality of life around the world.



Pharmaceuticals

Manufacturing Process



Synthesis of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API): Producing the API, the drug's active component, through chemical synthesis, fermentation, or biotechnological methods.



Formulation: Combining the API with excipients (inactive ingredients) to create the final drug product.



Granulation, Encapsulation & Coating: For tablets or capsules processing powders into granules. Applying a coating to tablets for various purposes, such as controlled release or taste masking.



Preparation of Syrup Base: The syrup base is prepared by dissolving or dispersing the APIs and other excipients in purified water or a suitable solvent under controlled conditions.



Compounding & Filtration: For the formulation of injectables the ingredients are compounded under sterile conditions and filtered to remove any particle or microbial contaminants.



Preparation of ointments base & Cooling: For preparation of ointments, its base is prepared mixing APIs and Excipients & the mixture is cooled and homogenized for desired texture.

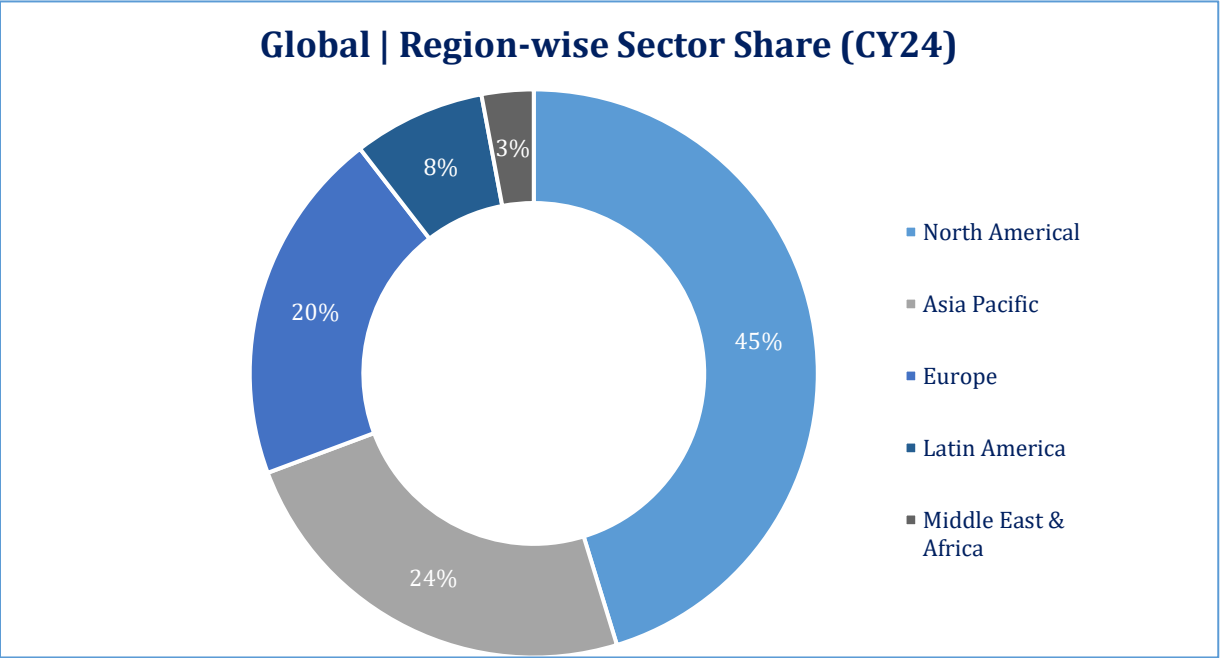
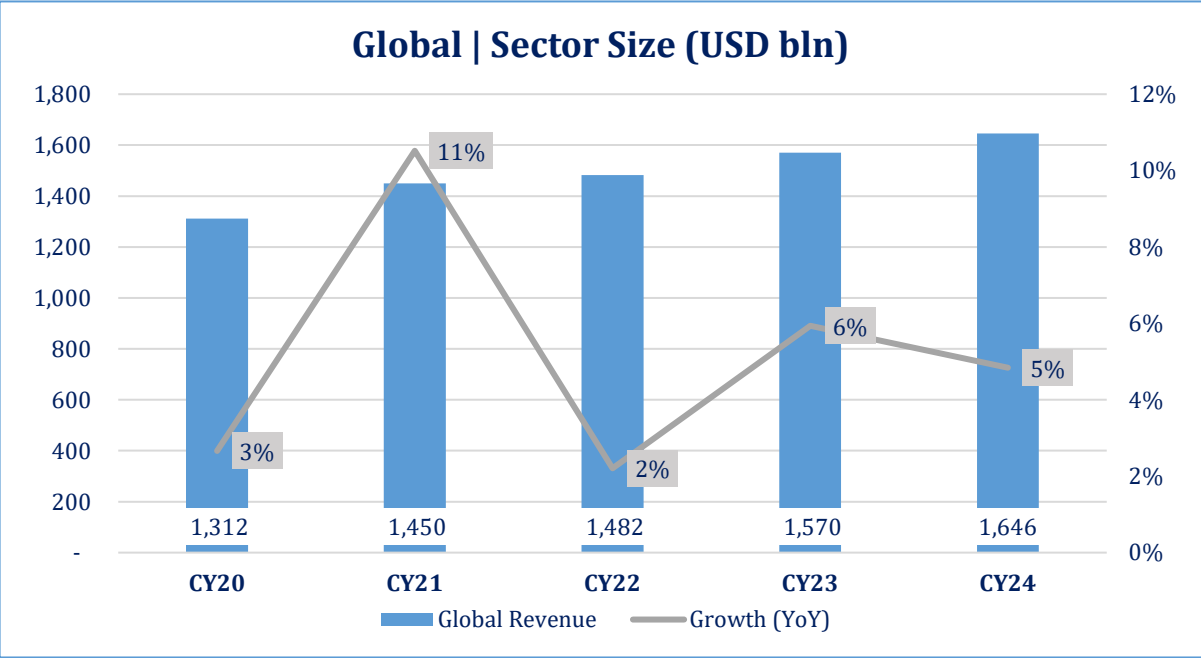


Capping & Sealing/Packaging: Packaging is done and properly labeled for usage. Ingredients and side effects are listed. The final product is then shipped for retail.

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Global | Overview

- During CY24, global revenue of the pharmaceutical sector was recorded at USD~1,646.0bln (CY23: USD~1,570bln), an increase of ~5.0% YoY, while exhibiting CAGR of ~5.0% during CY20-24.
- The CY24 growth was led by a growing and ageing population, prevalence of chronic diseases, and advances in biotechnology, genomics, and other areas of research, leading to the development of innovative therapies and targeted drugs for various diseases.
- Biologics and Biosimilars were recorded to be the fastest-growing segments. In CY24, conventional drugs (Small Molecules) contributed ~57.5% (USD~947.0bln) to the pharmaceutical revenue.



Note: Region-wise market shares are revenue-based.

Pharmaceuticals

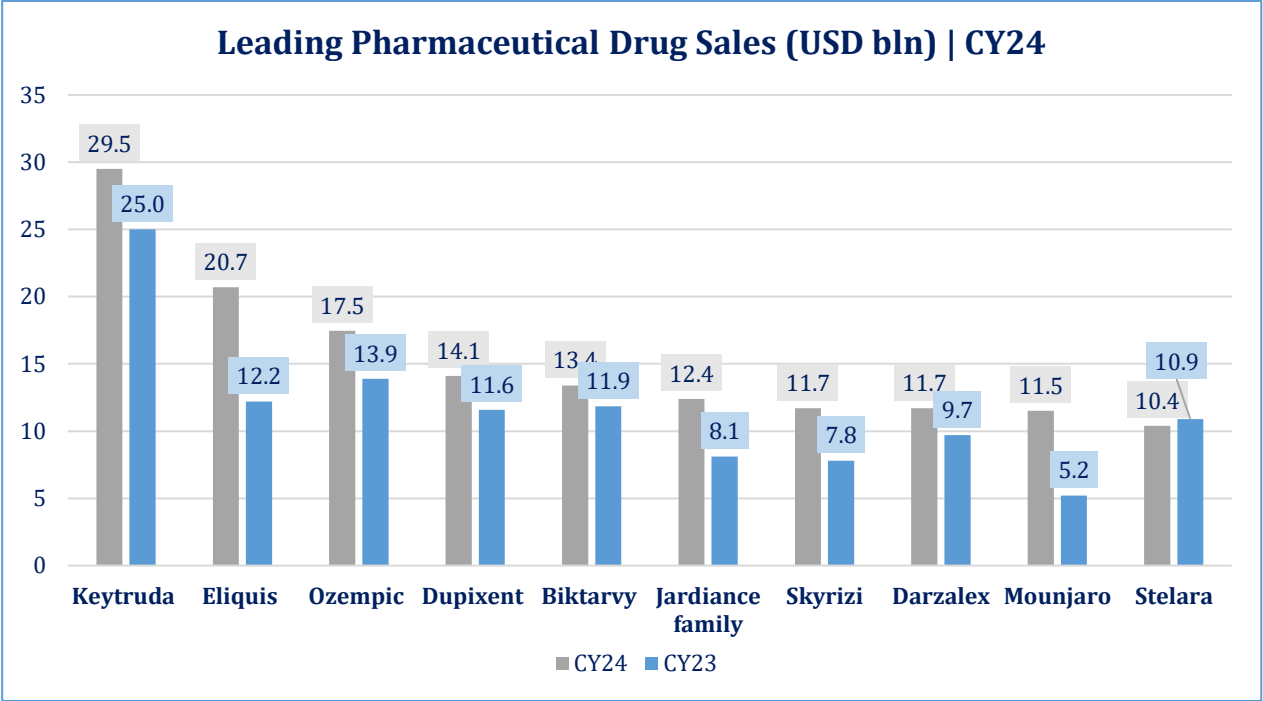
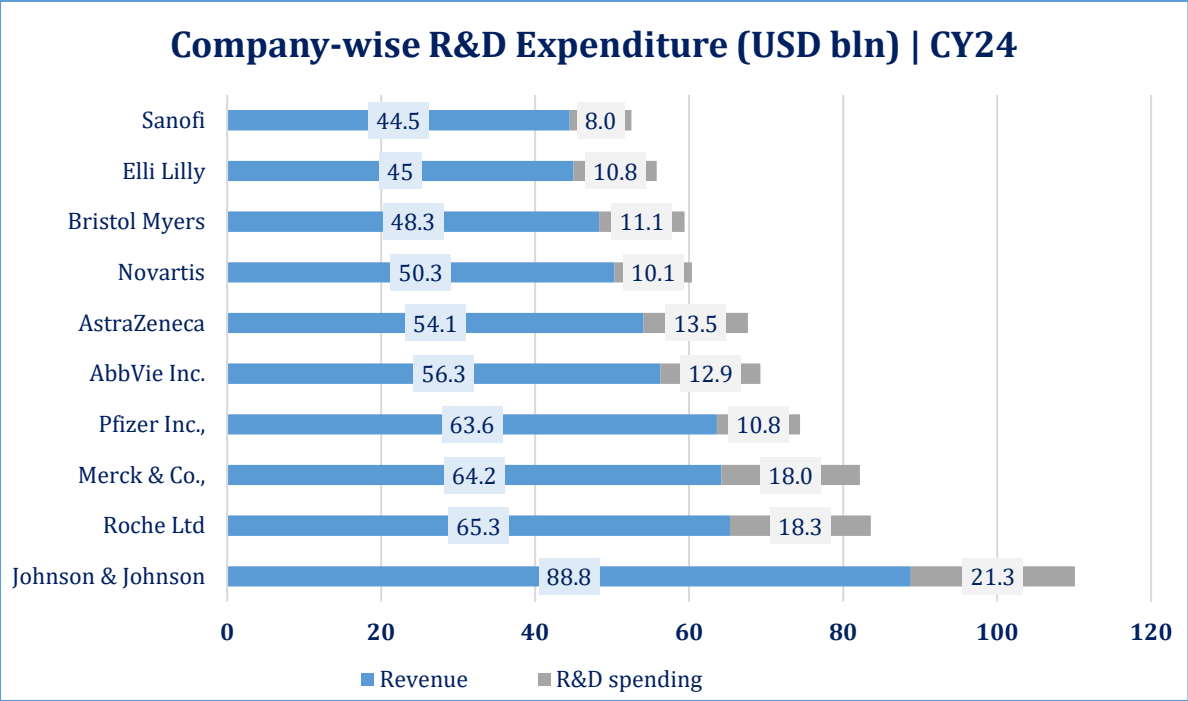
Global | Top 10 Companies

- The global pharmaceutical sector is concentrated among established players, with the top 10 largest pharmaceutical firms (by revenue) representing ~35.3% of global revenue for CY24.
- Johnson & Johnson leads the pharmaceutical sales, recording ~4.2% YoY increase in CY24 while Roche, Merck, Pfizer, and AbbVie maintained their top positions from the last year.
- Pfizer and Roche saw a notable return to growth after experiencing significant sales declines in CY23 by ~41.0% and ~7.0%, primarily due to reduced demand for COVID-19-related products. The past year marked a recalibration, as both companies began to realign with their pre-pandemic growth paths.
- AstraZeneca had one of the strongest performances among major pharmaceutical companies in CY24, with annual revenue reaching USD~54.1bln, an ~18.0% YoY increase. This growth was driven by key products such as Farxiga, Beyfortus (developed with Sanofi), Calquence, and Enhertu (in partnership with Daiichi Sankyo).

Revenue in USD bln			
Ranking	Company Name/ Region	CY23	CY24
1	Johnson & Johnson, USA	85.2	88.8
2	F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd, Switzerland	65.3	65.3
3	Merck & Co., USA	60.1	64.2
4	Pfizer Inc., USA	58.5	63.6
5	AbbVie Inc., USA	54.3	56.3
6	AstraZeneca, UK	45.8	54.1
7	Novartis, Switzerland	45.4	50.3
8	Bristol Myers Squibb, USA	45.0	48.3
9	Elli Lilly, USA	34.1	45.0
10	Sanofi, France	40.1	44.5

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Global | Research & Development

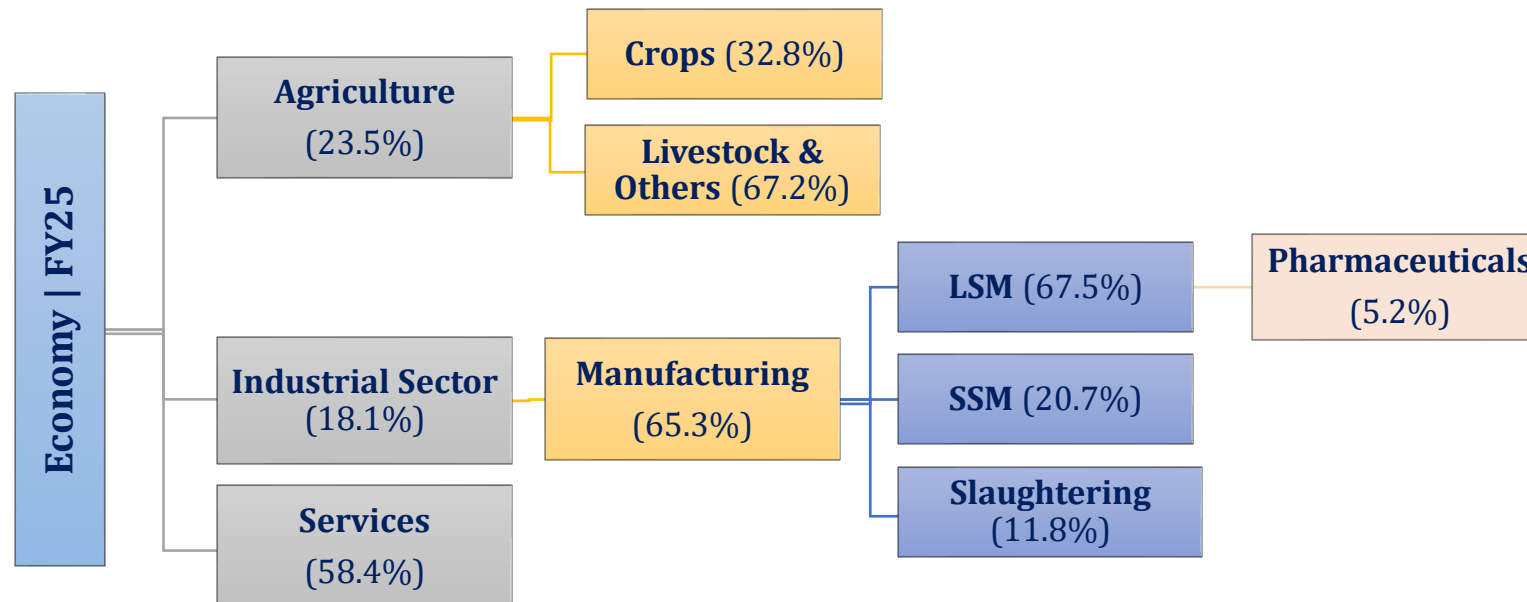


- In CY24, Merck & Co. earned USD~64.2bln (CY23: USD~60.1bln) in revenue, while its R&D expenditure was recorded at USD~18.0bln (CY23: USD~30.5bln). This investment accounted for ~28.0% of the company's total revenue in CY24 (SPLY: ~50.8%). By matching Merck’s ~27.0% investment in R&D, Roche reinforces its standing as one of the leading R&D spenders in the pharmaceutical industry.
- In CY24, Merck’s Keytruda (for cancer treatment) led with USD~29.5bln in sales, up ~17.9%. AbbVie’s Skyrizi surged ~50.9% to USD~11.7bln, offsetting Humira’s ~37.6% decline amid biosimilar pressure. Dupixent, from Sanofi and Regeneron, also showcased strong immunology growth with a ~22.1% rise.

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Local | Introduction

- In FY25, Pakistan's GDP (nominal) stood at PKR~114.7trn, increasing, in real terms, by ~2.7% YoY (FY24: ~2.5% YoY). The industrial sector held ~18.1% share in the GDP in FY25, while the service sector made up ~58.4%.
- Large-scale Manufacturing (LSM) in Pakistan is essential for economic growth, considering its linkages with other sectors, as it represented ~67.5% value in manufacturing activities and ~8.0% of the country's GDP in FY25. The LSM, however, contracted by ~1.5% YoY in FY25 (FY24: ~0.9%).
- The pharmaceutical sector is classified under the LSM segment of the economy. In FY25, its weight in the Quantum Index of Manufacturing (QIM) was recorded at ~5.2%. Moreover, the sector in LSM experienced a growth of ~2.3% in 9MFY25 compared to ~23.1% in 9MFY24.



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Local | Overview

- The pharmaceutical sector recorded a revenue of PKR~963.0bln during FY24 with a YoY growth of ~23.8% (FY23: PKR~778.0bln). ~662 companies are operating in the local pharmaceutical sector, including ~25 multinational companies in FY24.
- The sector is highly dependent on imports to meet the demand of basic raw materials – APIs (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients) and Excipients/Chemicals. The majority of APIs used in the industry are imported from countries such as China, India, and Korea.
- As of May’25, ~23 pharmaceutical manufacturers hold licenses to produce APIs. These companies cater to ~15.0% of API production, with the remaining ~85.0% being imported. Usually, pharmaceutical MNCs procure APIs and finished products from their parent or group companies. Local companies, on the other hand, rely on cost-effective sources to purchase these.
- For instance, Amoxicillin is being provided to GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) for Augmentin and Amoxil. Paracetamol is being provided to multinationals like GSK and local manufacturers like Getz Pharma for Panadol.

Particulars	FY23	FY24	11MFY25
Gross Revenue * (PKR bln)	778	963	-
Contribution to GDP	1.0%		
Registered Manufacturers with DRAP	~651	~653	~662
Structure	Oligopolistic		
Imports (PKR bln)	256	246	304
Exports (PKR bln)	81	96	119
Regulator	Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP)		
Association	Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA)		

* Revenue is based on CY data

Pharmaceuticals

Local | Sector Players

- The sector is dominated by local/national companies, which account for more than ~67.0% of the total market share in terms of their revenue.
- The top 10 companies operating in the local market comprised ~48.2% of market share in the pharmaceutical sector, whereas the rest of the sector players made up ~51.8% during FY24.
- In FY25, Lucky Core Industries Limited acquired Pfizer Pakistan Limited's manufacturing facility in Karachi, as another international player exits the Pakistani market. Lucky Group's acquisition signals a strategic move into the pharmaceutical sector and highlights the growing influence of local enterprises in Pakistan.
- Searle Company Limited (SEARL) has become Pakistan’s first pharmaceutical company to register its manufacturing facility in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) market. This registration opens avenues for Pakistani pharmaceutical exports and signifies a breakthrough for the industry. SEARL anticipates increased business opportunities and expansion throughout the region as a result of this milestone.

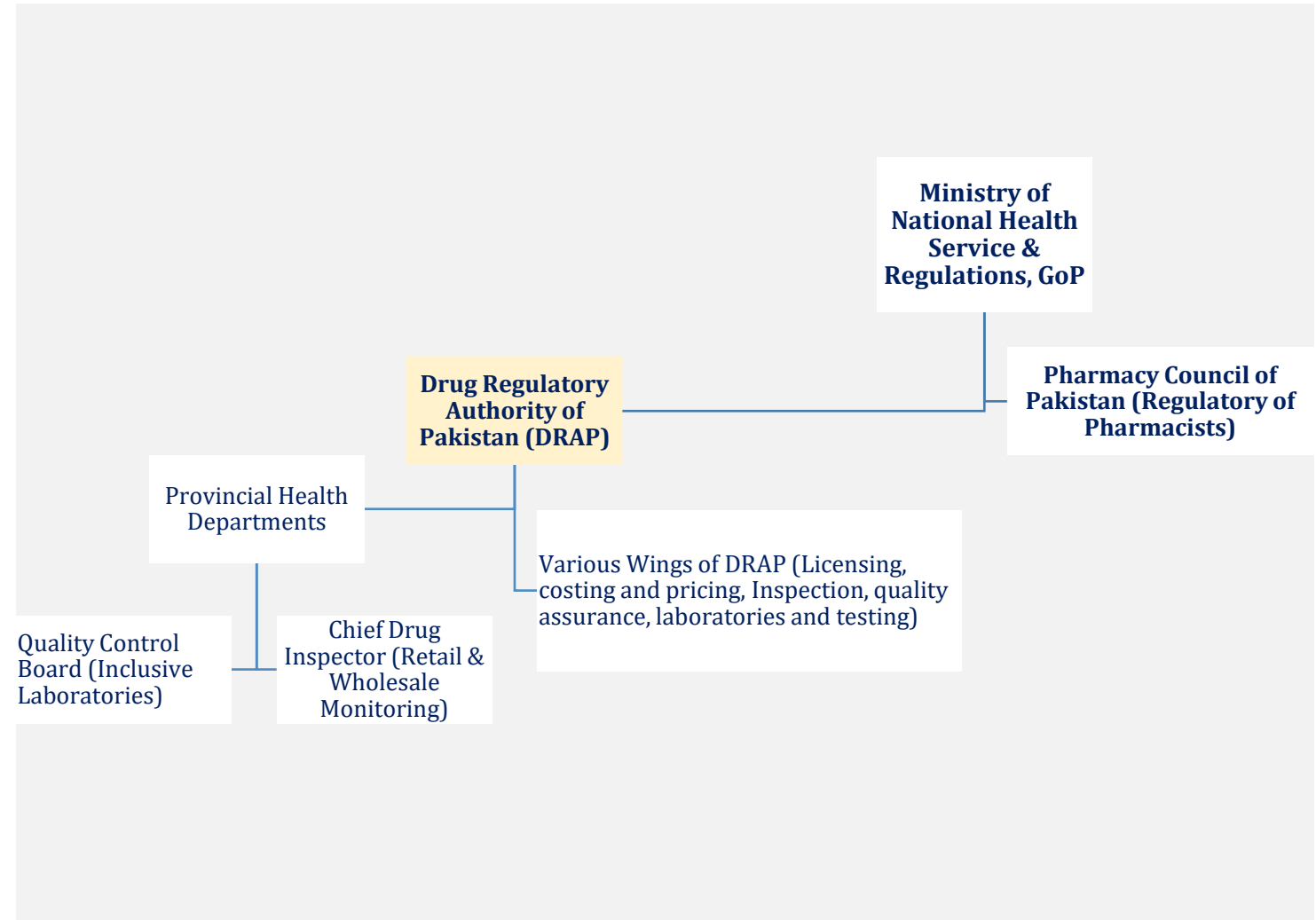
Sr.	Company Name	National/ MNC
1	Getz Pharma	National
2	Sami Pharmaceuticals	National
3	GlaxoSmithKline Pakistan	MNC
4	Abbott Laboratories Pakistan Ltd.	MNC
5	The Searle Company	National
6	Martin Dow Ltd.	National
7	Hilton	National
8	OBS	National
9	High-Q International	National
10	Haleon Pakistan Ltd.	MNC

***Note:** The top 10 Companies based on their revenue in the pharmaceutical sector*

Pharmaceuticals

Regulatory Framework

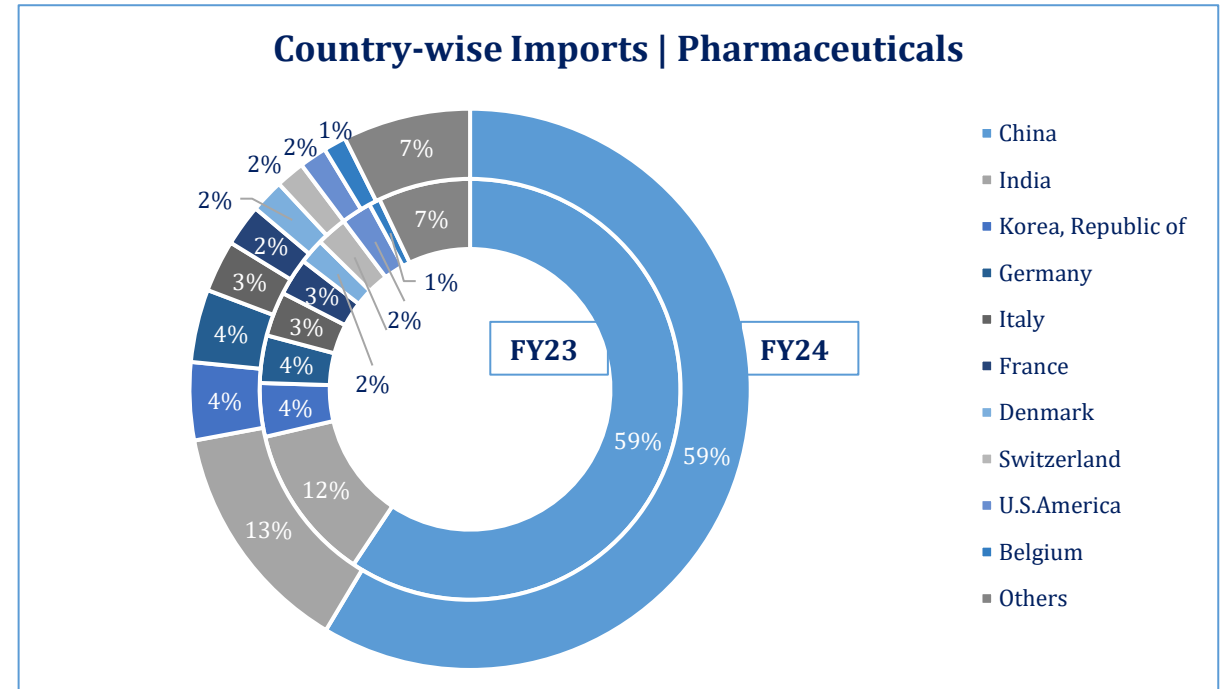
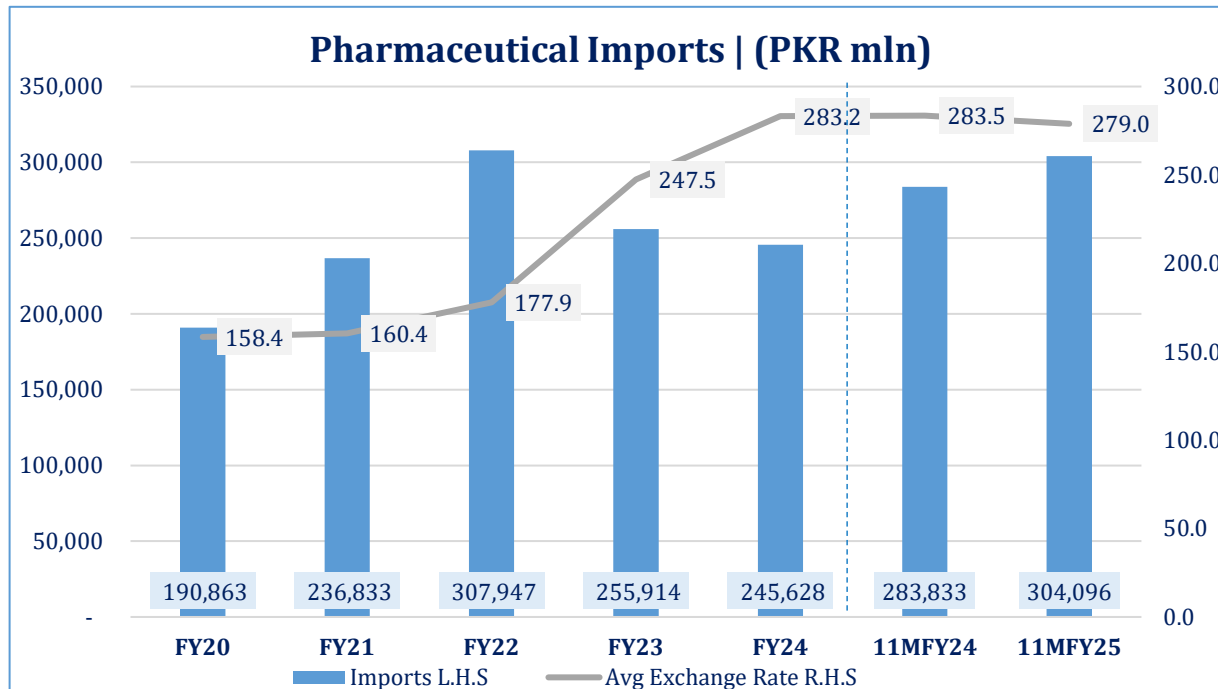
- Pakistan's pharmaceutical sector is regulated by the Ministry of National Health Services Regulations & Coordination (NHSR&C) and the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), formed in 2012 under the DRAP Act.
- DRAP, an autonomous body under the Federal Government, comprises eight technical and five support divisions. Its quality assurance department oversees five field offices, staffed by federal drug inspectors and assistant drug controllers, with an appellate board for oversight.
- The DRAP Act, 2012, and the Drugs Act 1976 set out legal requirements for the manufacture, import, export, storage, distribution, and sale of therapeutic goods in the country. DRAP ensures that every drug, medical device or cosmetic, alternative medicine, and health product must have a standard of quality and is safe and effective for use. DRAP ensures that therapeutic goods, approved and available in the market, meet prescribed standards of quality, safety, and efficacy.



Pharmaceuticals

Supply | Raw Material

- During FY24, pharmaceutical imports stood at PKR~245.6bln, marking a ~4.0% decline from PKR~255.9bln in FY23. However, in the 11MFY25, imports surged to PKR~304.1bln, reflecting a ~7.1% increase compared to the same period last year. Pakistan is diverting its sourcing for pharmaceutical raw materials in response to escalating tensions with India and relying more on China and Korea.
- In FY24, country-wise data shows that China was the largest exporter of pharmaceutical products to Pakistan constituting more than half of the Pakistan's total imports ~58.6% in FY24, followed by India with a share of ~13.5%, Korea (~4.5%), Germany (~4.2%) and Italy (~3.6%).



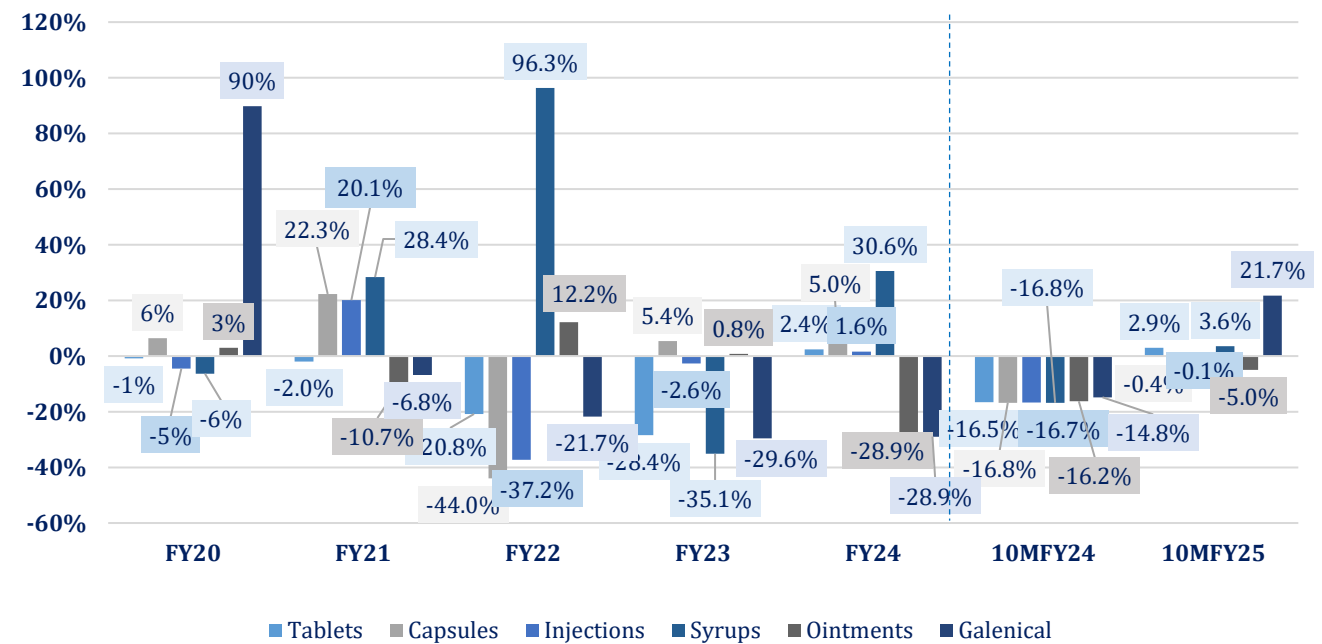
Note: Imports data pertains to HS Codes 2933, 3004, 2916, 2939, 2932, 2941, 2935, 2934, 3003, 2929, 2821, 2942

Pharmaceuticals

Supply | Production

- Production of pharmaceutical products such as tablets, capsules and injections rose marginally from ~18.9bln units in FY23 to ~19.9bln units in FY24, accounting for ~5.3% YoY increase. During 10MFY25, production of these products recorded an increase of ~6.3% YoY and clocked in at ~16.8bln (SPLY: ~15.8bln). Surging pharmaceutical exports and a relatively stable PKR mean higher revenue for companies, leading to increased profit margins.
- Syrups production rose by ~30.6% in FY24 compared to a previous year’s decrease of ~35.1%. In 10MFY25, the production rose by ~21.7%. This growth is attributable to the growth in flu and throat infection treatments, mainly due to the increase in smog-related issues in densely populated regions of Pakistan.

Pharmaceutical Production | Growth Trend

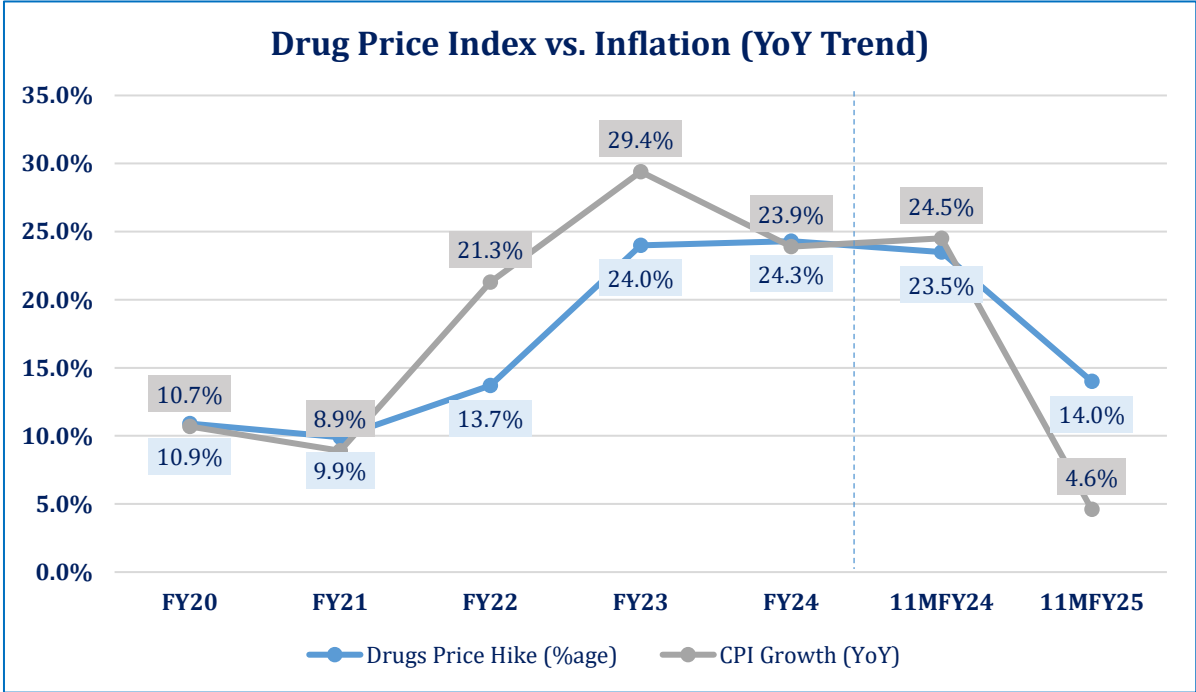
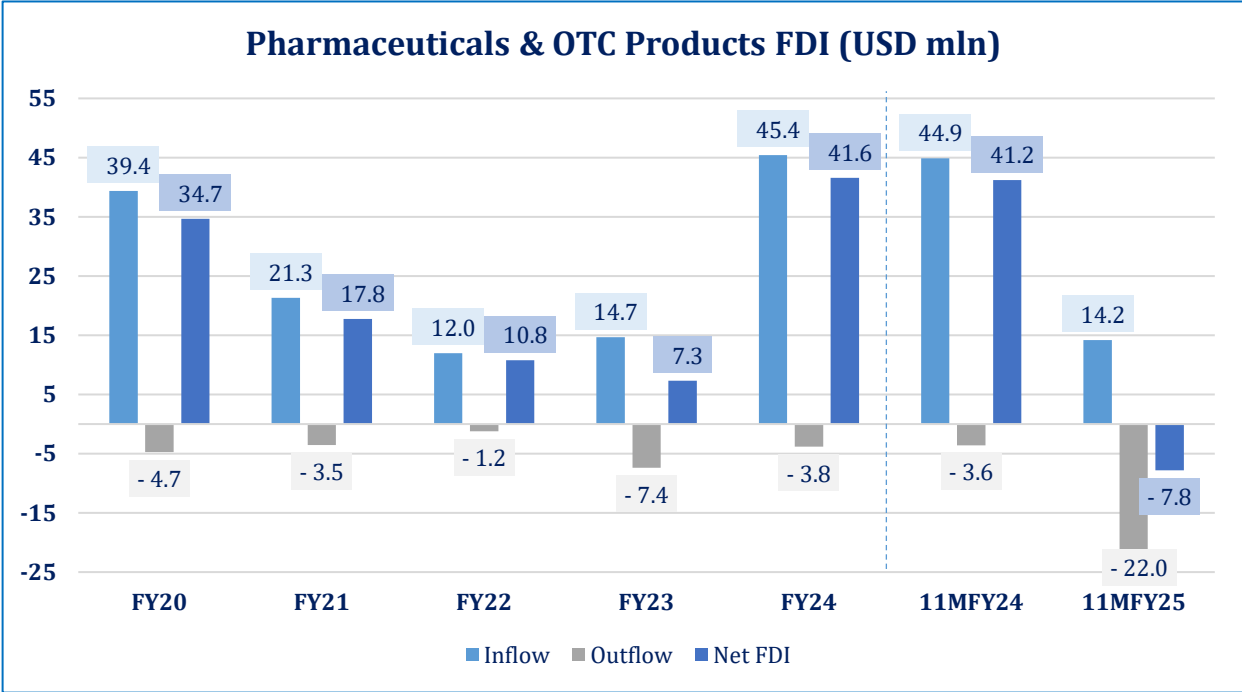


Category	Unit	FY23	FY24	10MFY24	10MFY25
Tablets	bln No.	15	16	13	14
Capsules	bln No.	3	3	2	2
Injections	mln No.	937	952	793	792
Syrups	000 Ltr.	153,288	200,159	166,490	172,455
Ointments	000 Kg	3,381	2,404	2,014	1,914
Galenical	000 Ltr.	38	27	23	28

Pharmaceuticals

Supply | Foreign Direct Investment

- FDI inflows towards the sector increased to USD~45.4mln in FY24, (FY23: USD~14.7mln), depicting a ~210.0% YoY increase. Meanwhile, FDI outflows fell by ~49.0% and clocked in at USD~3.8mln in FY24 (FY23: USD~7.4mln). Resultantly, the net FDI towards the sector stood at USD~41.6mln.
- In FY24, inflation on averaged was recorded at ~23.9% while exchange rate depreciated ~14.3%, raising sector’s cost. This all led to a drug price hike of ~24.3% in FY24. In 11MFY25, despite easing inflation and an improved exchange rate, drug prices rose by ~14.0% compared to the same period last year, primarily due to the deregulation of non-essential medicines by the government.



Pharmaceuticals

Demand | Price Dynamics

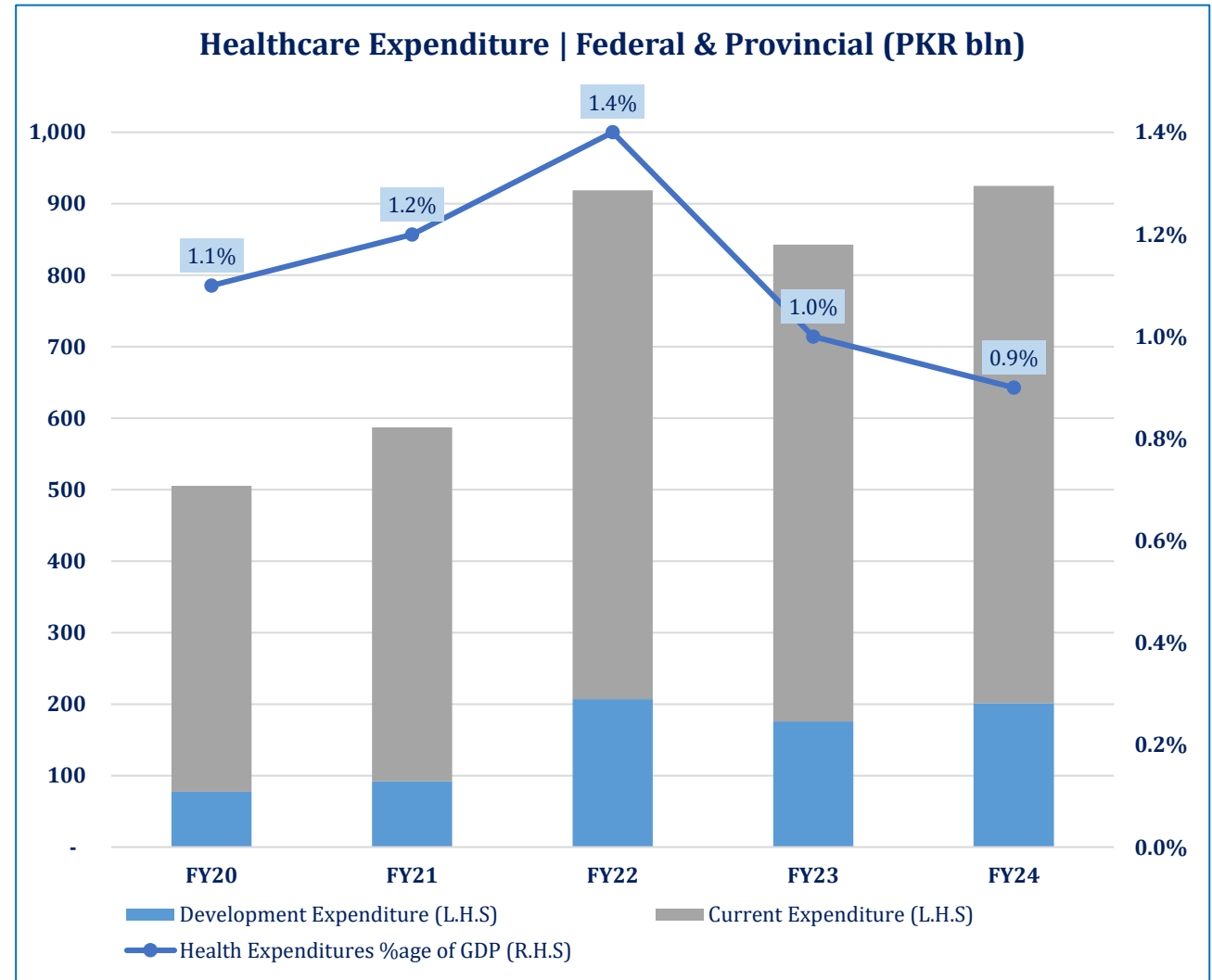
- Local prices of pharmaceutical products are regulated by DRAP and cannot be changed unilaterally by the sector players. Any price determination of new products and an increase for existing products requires approval from DRAP. Moreover, prices are adjusted with respect to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- As a positive development for manufacturers, after the amendments in the Drug Pricing Policy 2018, DRAP is mandated to respond to companies’ requests for price revision within 30 days of submission. Otherwise, the price increase as submitted by the companies is made effective.
- Under the proposals recommended by the Federal Cabinet, the Ministry of National Health in Feb’24 approved the proposals regarding deregulation of the prices of medicines which were not included in the National list of essential medicines.
- Under these proposals, prices of medicines other than essential medicines in the national list will be exempted from the Drugs Act, 1976, and necessary amendments will be made in the Drug Pricing Policy 2018.

Pricing and Costing Under Drug Pricing Policy 2018	
Basis of Pricing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drugs for human use shall be divided in two categories in terms of pricing in the country: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Drugs and biological on National Essential Medicines List (ii) All other drugs.
Annual Adjustments in MRPs of Drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Essential Drugs: MRP Increase by 70% of CPI (Cap of 7%) Non-Essential Drugs: MRP Increase by 100% of CPI (Cap of 10%)
Low-Priced Drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-priced drugs are such that their MRPs are lower than the threshold prescribed by DRAP. MRPs of such drugs are to be increased equivalent to CPI every year, subject to conditions.
New Drugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First Generic: MRP of drugs to be set at 30% less than the cost of the Originator brand, subject to conditions. In other cases, MRP fixed at prevailing highest MRP of Generic brand in the market
Hardship Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locally Manufactured Drugs: $MRP = Cost \times Factor$ Imported Drugs: Trade Price= Landed Cost + mark up 45% (40% markup for anti-cancer, biological etc.) Partially Imported Drugs: Trade Price = Landed Cost + packaging cost + markup

Pharmaceuticals

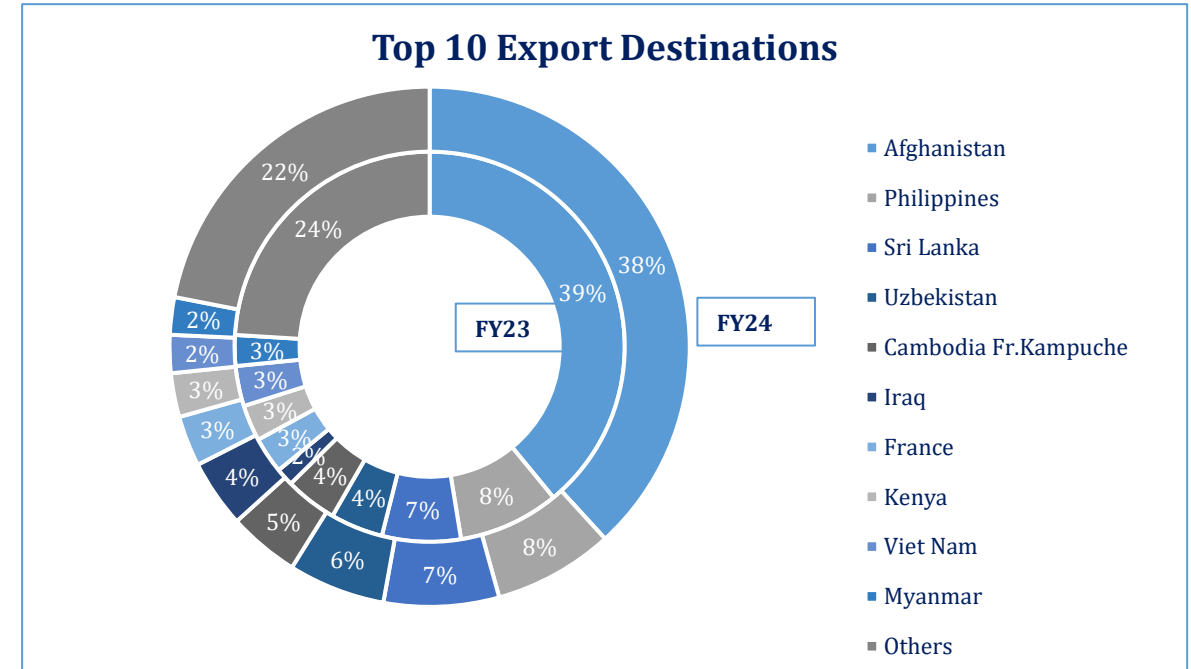
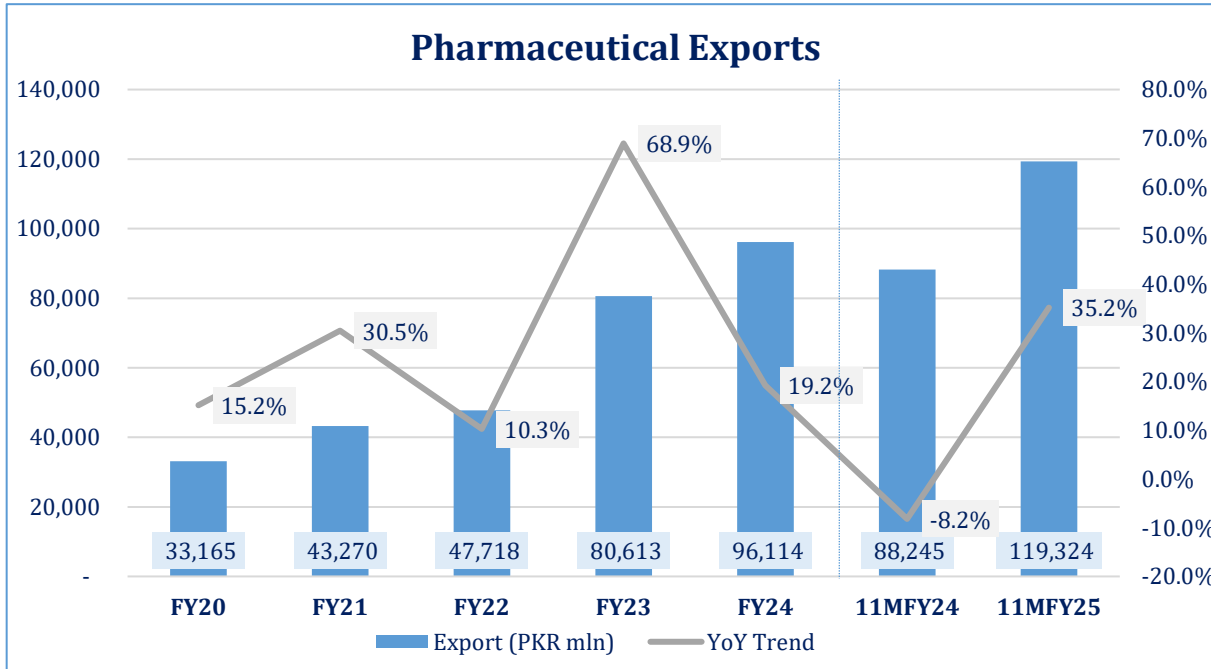
Demand | Consumption

- Pakistan's population was recorded at ~241.5mln according to the latest population census. The annual population growth rate of the country is ~2.0% YoY, much higher than the average global growth rate of ~1.0%.
- The decline in mortality rate from ~84.3/1,000 births in CY00 to ~58.5/1,000 births in CY20, along with the current life expectancy of ~67.8 years in CY23, has resulted in more people reaching older age, hence increasing the demand for a robust healthcare system.
- Total healthcare expenditure was recorded at PKR~925.0bln in FY24 (FY23: PKR~843.0bln). Moreover, total expenditures recorded a YoY decline of ~14.2% during FY24. The total health expenditure in FY24 comprised development and current expenditures.



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Demand | Exports

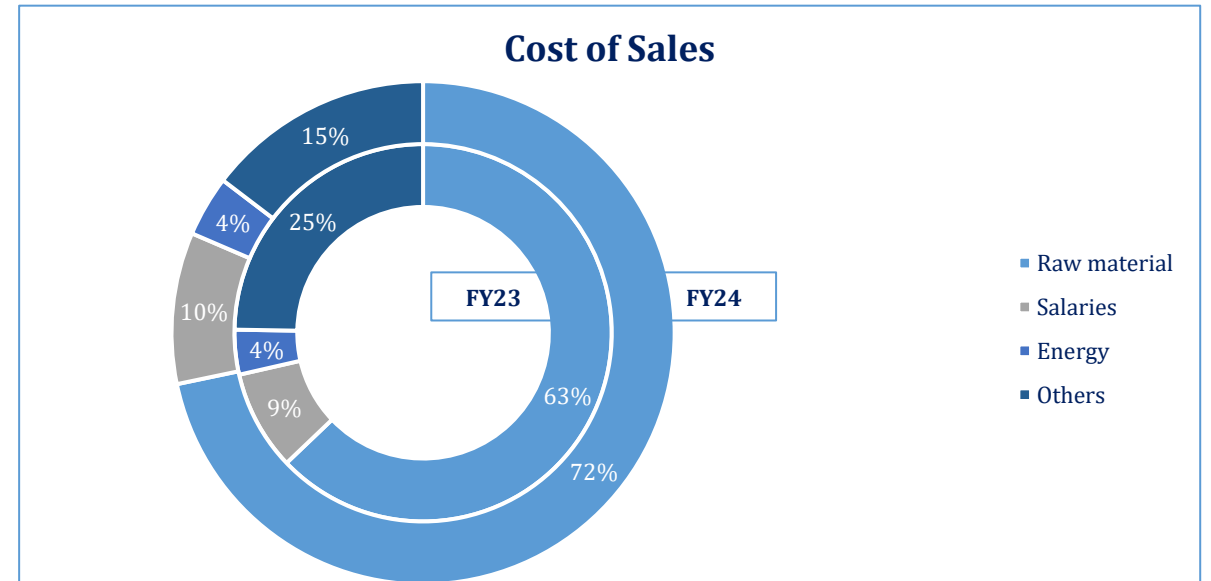
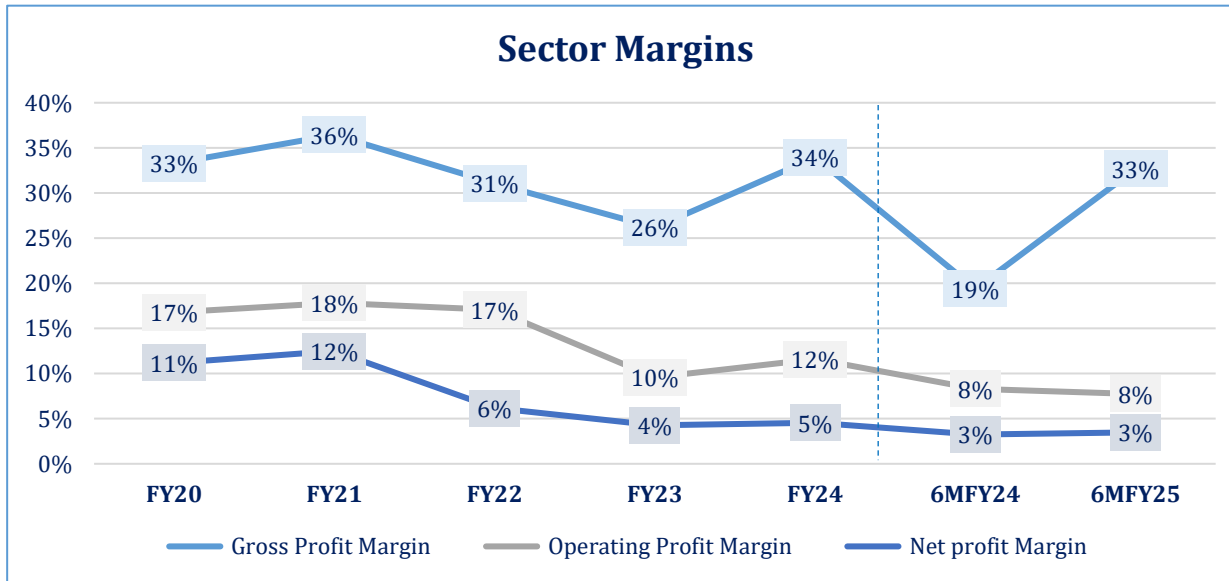


- In FY24 total pharmaceutical exports were recorded at PKR~96.1bln (FY23: PKR~80.6bln) an increase of ~19.3% YoY. In 11MFY25, total exports rose to PKR~119.3bln, up by ~35.2% compared to the same period last year. The increase in exports during 11MFY25 is attributed to the government's decision to deregulate non-essential medicines, which spurred investment, fostered innovation, and enabled competitive pricing, collectively enhancing the sector's export performance.
- In FY24, Afghanistan was the top importer of Pakistani pharmaceutical goods and constituted ~38.0% of the total exports. Other importers of Pakistani pharmaceutical goods include the Philippines (~8.0%), Sri Lanka (~7.0%), Uzbekistan (~6.0%), Cambodia (~5.0%), Iraq (~4.0%), while the rest constituted a (~32.0%) share in exports.

Pharmaceuticals

Business Risk | Margins

- During FY24, the sector's net revenue increased by ~14.0% YoY (FY23: ~20.0%), given improved pricing and the introduction of new products in the sales mix. In 6MFY25, the pharmaceutical sector revenue grew by ~19.0% and clocked in at PKR~161.9bln (SPLY: PKR~135.7bln).
- The cost of sales remained high due to the sector's heavy dependence on imported Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), and therefore raw material constitutes ~72.0% of the total cost of sales, while the rest comprises ~28.0% in FY24. In 6MFY25, COGS were ~7.0% compared to the same period last year.
- On average, gross profits of the sector improved and clocked in at ~34.0% YoY (FY23: ~26.0%). Similarly, for 6MFY25, average gross profit remained healthy at ~33.0% (6MFY24: ~19.0%). The sales growth trend in FY24 has shown a rising trend, on the back of PKR devaluation at PKR~283.2 (FY23:PKR~247.7), inflationary pressure on product prices as inflation rose to ~23.9% on average in FY24.
- Operating and net margins of the sector marginally improved in FY24, clocking in at ~12.0% and ~5.0% respectively (FY23: ~10.0% ; ~4.0%, respectively) and at ~8.0% and ~3.0% for 6MFY25. With the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) regulating drug prices, profit margins are sensitive to exchange rate fluctuation and changes in the cost of raw material.

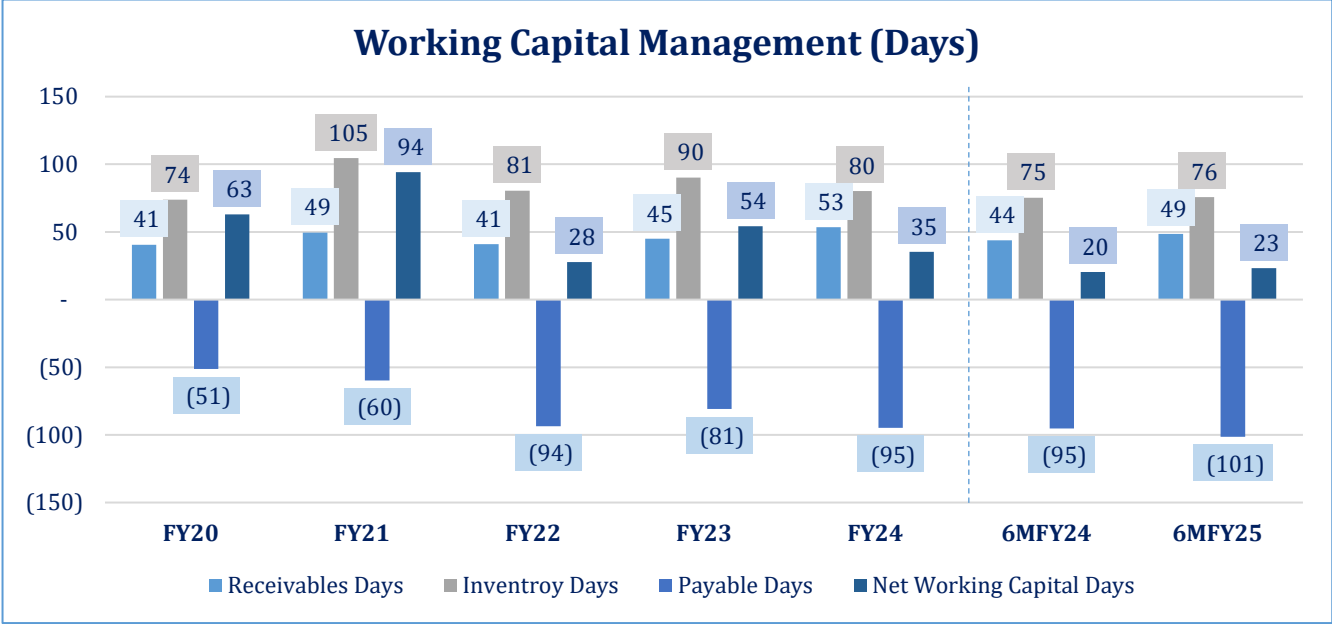
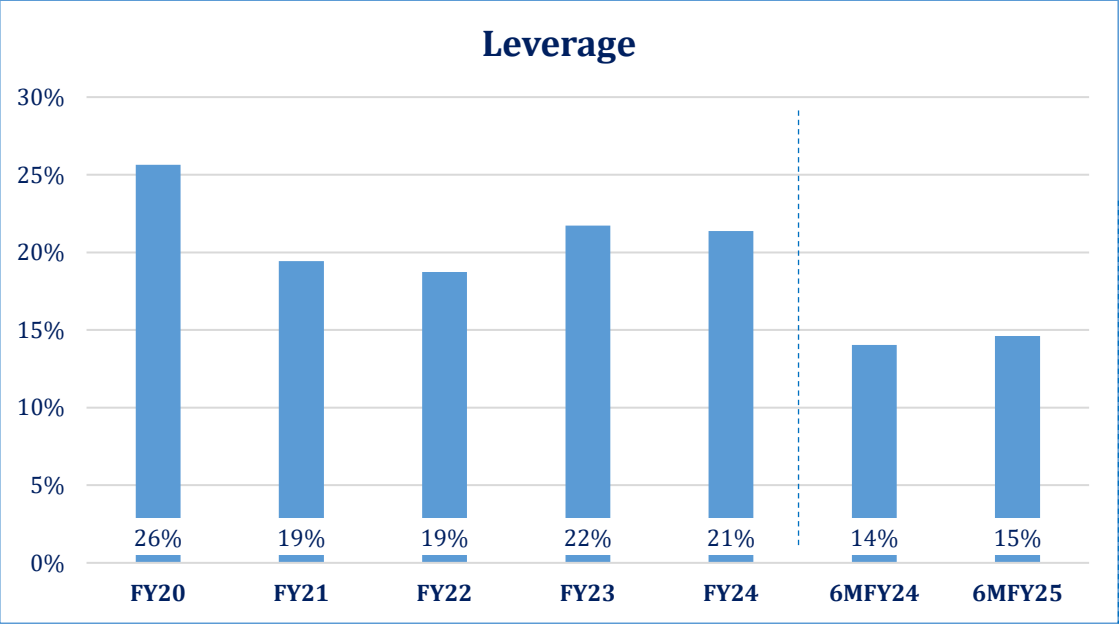


Note: Calculations based on PACRA-rated and selected PSX-listed companies; prorations and adjustments made where needed.

Pharmaceuticals

Financial Risk | Leverage & Working Capital

- In FY24, the sector’s leverage remained low at ~21.0% despite higher finance costs owing to higher interest rates. Improved profitability and cash generation enhanced the sector’s debt servicing capacity. In 6MFY25, sector leverage was recorded at ~15.0% indicating a sufficient cushion for borrowing. The policy rate, which stood at ~20.5% in FY24, eased to ~13.0% during 6MFY25.
- Working capital of the sector has remained historically high. Breakdown of the data for FY24 shows that receivable days of the sector increased from an average of ~45 days to ~53 days, while payable days also rose from ~81 days in FY23 to ~95 days in FY24. Inventory days improved marginally from an average of ~90 days in FY23 to ~80 days in FY24.
- In 6MFY25, net working capital clocked in at ~46 days compared to ~41 days in the same period last year, owing to a marginal increase in payable days of the sector.

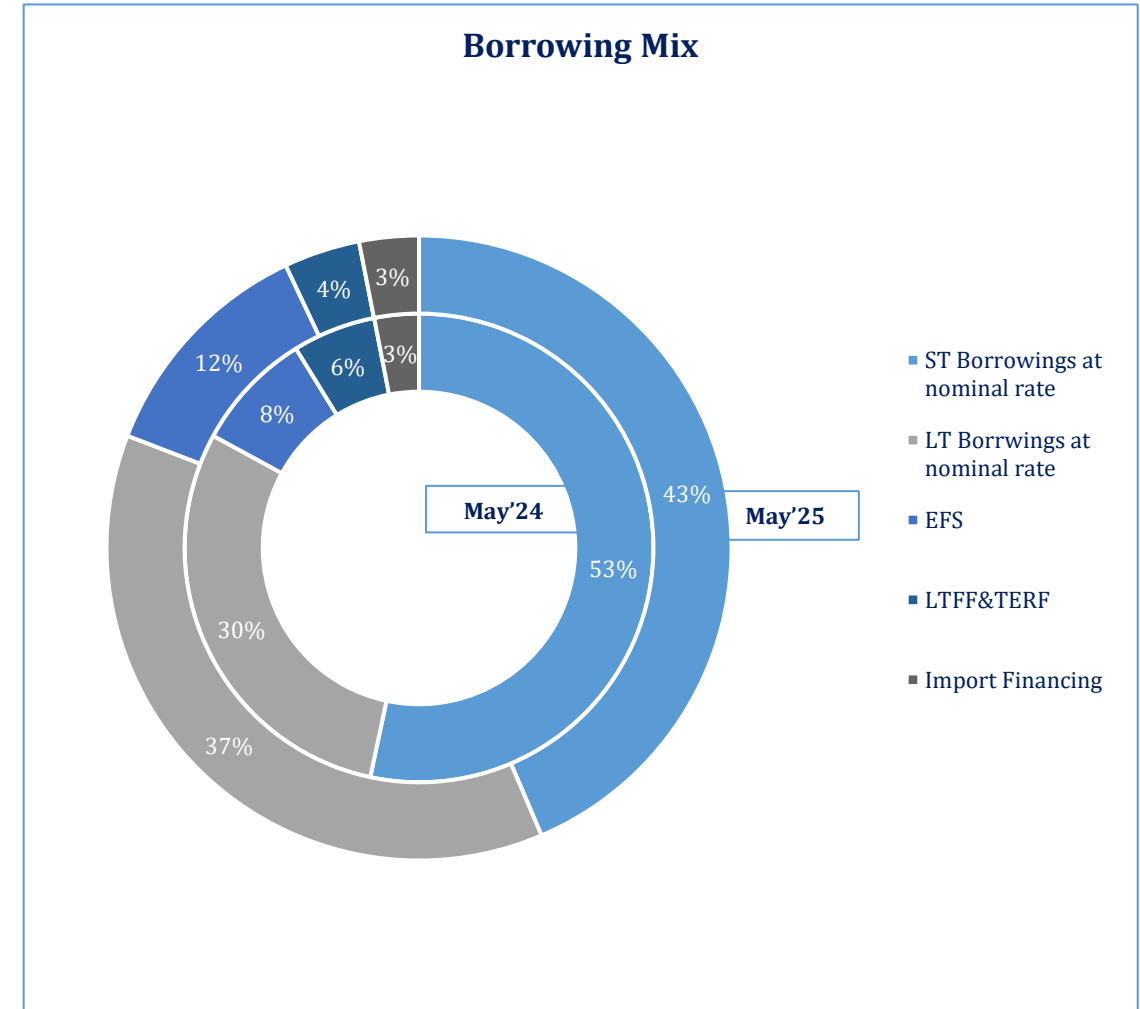


Note: Calculations are revenue-weighted and based on PACRA-rated/ listed companies;

Pharmaceuticals

Financial Risk | Borrowing Mix

- As of End-May'25, the sector's overall borrowings stood at PKR~104.4bln, down by ~3.3% YoY (End-May'24: PKR~108.0bln).
- Short-term borrowings (STBs) at nominal rate stood at PKR~44.9bln, down ~22.0% YoY and held the largest share in the sector's borrowing mix at ~43.0% (SPLY: ~53.0%).
- Long-term borrowings (LTBs) at nominal rate stood at PKR~39.7bln, up ~24.2% YoY and held a share of ~37.0% in overall borrowings (End-May'24: ~30.0%).
- Discounted borrowing (LTFF & EFS) stood at PKR~16.5bln (End-May'24: ~14.1bln), and held a share of ~16.0% in the overall borrowing mix.
- Import financing stood at PKR~3.2bln (End-May'24: PKR~3.3bln) and held ~3.0% share in the total borrowing mix.



Pharmaceuticals

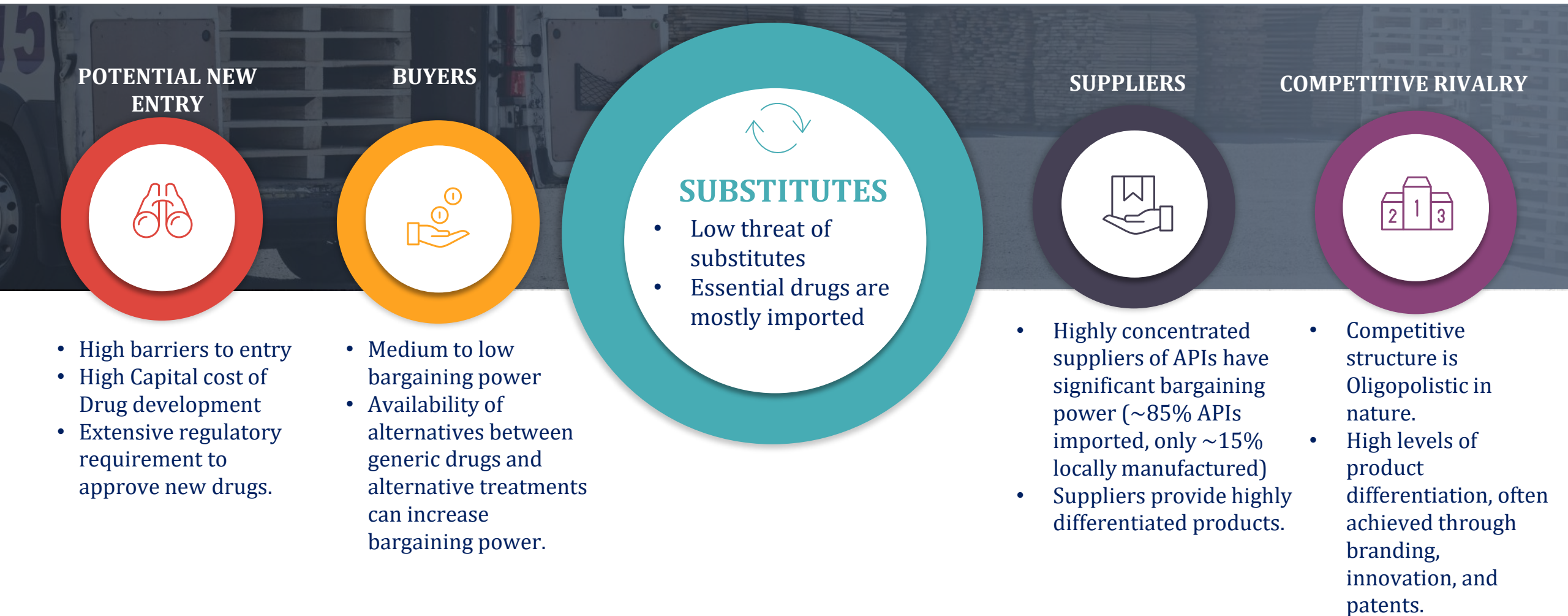
Duty Structure

HS Code	Description	Customs Duty		Income Tax		Sales Tax	
		FY25	FY26	FY25	FY26	FY25	FY26
2933.5990	APIs	11%	10%	10%	12%	1%	18%
2933.7990		0%	0%				
2933.9990		11%	10%				
3004.9099		11%	10%				
1104.2900	Excipients	16%	15%	10%	12%	1%	18%
2710.1995		3%	0%				
2810.0020		3%	0%				
2915.2100		0%	0%				
3402.4200		16%	10%				
3002.4190	Drugs	0%	0%	10%	12%	1%	18%
3002.9010		0%	0%				
3002.9090		11%	10%				

- Certain categories, such as Oncology (cancer products), have ~0% customs duty.

Pharmaceuticals

Porters 5 Forces



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SWOT Analysis

- Steadily increasing demand.
- High reliance of customers on the product.
- High profit margins in non-essential drugs.
- Regulatory approvals from agencies like DRAP ensure drug safety and efficacy.

- High level of competition.
- Rising Interest rates.
- Rising costs of imported raw material.
- Changes in healthcare policies, pricing regulations can impact profitability.
- Difficulty in differentiating products and maintaining market share.



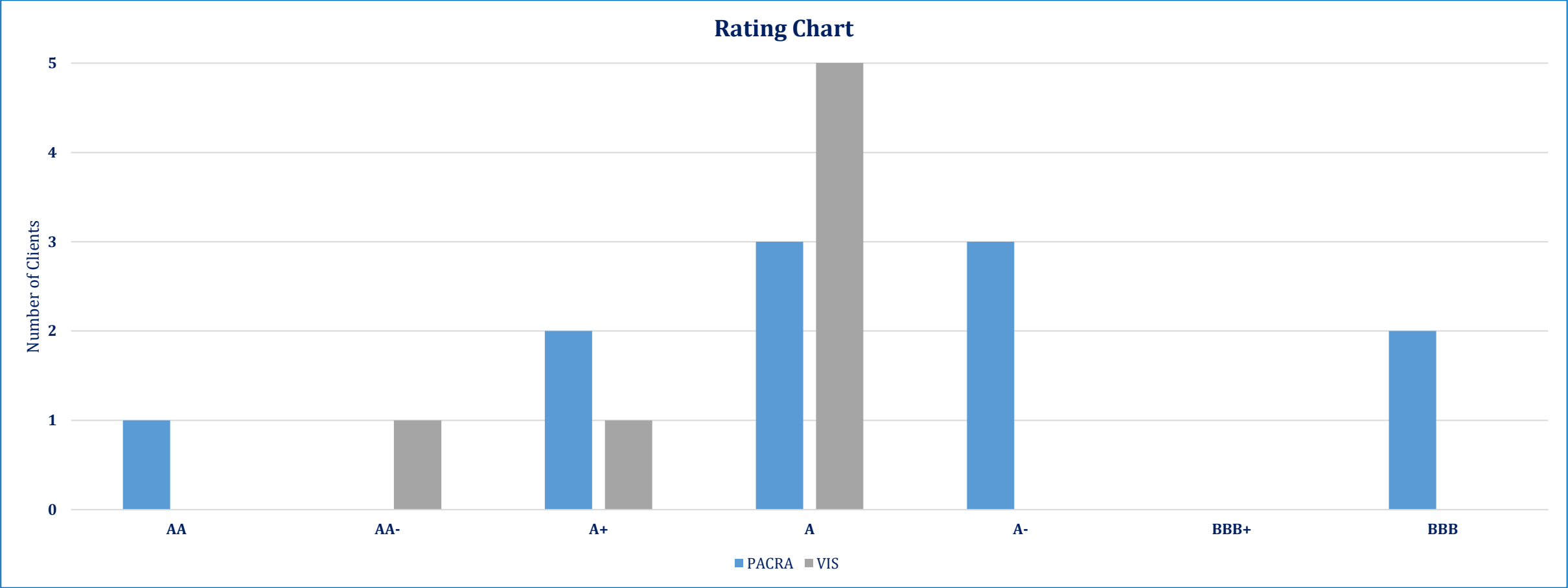
- Largely import dependent (APIs/Excipients).
- Exposure to exchange rate volatility.
- Extensive regulatory requirements.
- Inability to pass on the increased cost of production to end consumers for drugs regulated by DRAP.
- Significant financial resources are required for drug development and clinical trials.

- Growing healthcare needs.
- High profit margin opportunities in non-essential drugs and products.
- Room for research and drug development.
- Potential to develop more effective and targeted treatments.
- Chronic disease management and long-term care offer growth potential.

Pharmaceuticals

Rating Curve

PACRA rates 11 clients in the pharmaceutical sector. The rating bandwidth of the sector is from AA to BBB.



Pharmaceuticals

Outlook: Stable

- In FY25, Pakistan's GDP (nominal) stood at PKR~114.7trn, increasing, in real terms, by ~2.7% YoY (FY24: ~2.5% YoY). Industrial activities during the year held ~18.1% share in the GDP, while services made up ~58.4%.
- Monetary policy rate at the end of FY24 was recorded at ~20.5% while in FY25 the policy rate was reduced to ~11.0% owing to significant improvement in the overall economy of the country, among which the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was the driving factor. CPI remained high and was recorded at ~23.9% on average in FY24. However, in 11MFY25, inflation on average dropped to ~4.8% due to the high base effect and lower commodity prices.
- The pharmaceutical sector has shown positive growth in both FY24 and 6MFY25, up by ~14.0% and ~19.0 compared to same period of last fiscal year. The sector's weight in QIM was recorded at ~5.2% during FY25, while it experienced a growth of ~2.3% YoY in LSM during 9MFY24. Local companies dominate the sector, holding over ~67.0% of the market share in terms of revenue, with the top 10 companies accounting for ~48.7% share.
- During FY24, pharmaceutical imports were recorded at PKR~245.6bln (FY23: PKR~255.9bln), down by ~4.0% YoY. In 11MFY25, pharmaceutical imports rose to PKR~304.1bln, up by ~7.1% from the same period of the last fiscal year. Exports of pharmaceutical goods rose significantly during FY24 and 11MFY25. In FY24, total pharmaceutical exports were recorded at PKR~96.1bln (FY23: PKR~80.6bln) and increased by ~19.3% YoY, while in 11MFY25, total exports rose to PKR~119.3bln, up by ~35.2% compared to the same period of the last fiscal year.
- Sector's margins remain strong due to improved pricing and the introduction of new products in the sales mix. Gross profit margins improved to ~34.0% in FY24 (FY23: ~26.0%) and ~33.0% in 6MFY25 (SPLY: ~19.0%), operating margins saw marginal improvement clocking in at ~12.0% in FY24 and ~8.0% in 6MFY25 (FY23: ~10.0%; 6MFY24: ~8.0%) while net margins clocked in at ~5.0% in FY24 (FY23: ~4.0%) and ~3.0% in 6MFY25.
- With the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) overseeing drug pricing, profit margins remain sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations and changes in raw material costs. However, as macroeconomic indicators improve, marked by declining inflation, a relatively stable exchange rate, and a growing population, the pharmaceutical sector is expected to remain stable.

Pharmaceuticals

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