

05 Sep 2024 | News

Quotable: Words Of Wisdom From Our Recent APAC Coverage

by Ian Haydock

Scrip's APAC team selects notable quotes from recent interviews, conferences and other coverage to highlight the views of senior executives and officials on major topics facing the biopharma sector in the region and more widely.

During the course of conducting interviews, attending conferences and providing other coverage across the region, *Scrip's* on-the-ground team in APAC often hears comments and views that are worth highlighting by themselves, valuable for the insights and perspectives they provide from those on the front lines on key topics of interest to the regional and global biopharma industry.

Below we have selected the most notable recent quotes from CEOs, other senior executives and regulatory officials that you may have missed in our coverage over the past few months, along with a link to the wider story in which they originally appeared.

Not surprisingly, AI and obesity emerged as some of the key themes, reflecting the prominence of both on the global biopharma stage at the moment.

Please enjoy this collection of notable quotes on a broad range of industry topics as selected by our APAC team.

“I think AI technology will become a trend that is a must, not an option, in the pharma

market, where unmet needs continuously emerge.” - HeaKyoung Cho, chief strategy officer and president of Syntekabio Inc. on why Korea needs more mature AI drug development technology.

Find out more: [*Korea Looks To Close Gap In AI Drug Development Capabilities*](#)

“Our experiments with models like ChatGPT and Anthropic Claude have shown promise in reducing the time and effort required to generate these documents, while also improving their accuracy and compliance with regulatory standards.” - Tarun Mathur, CTO, Indegene, on using GenAI in automation of regulatory and clinical documentation.

Find out more: [*GenAI Reality In Pharma Amid Hype, Advances in LLMs For Therapeutics*](#)

“What is wonderful is that after years of searching for effective treatments for obesity and obesity as a precursor to so many other diseases, we now have a drug that not only causes people to lose weight, but we're uncovering almost weekly, it seems, additional unanticipated benefits and I just think it's a really good news story.” - Parexel International EVP, Clinical Data and Digital Services, Stephen Pyke.

Find out more: [*Parexel Execs On Obesity Drug Hurdles, Parexel GPT, India RWD Opportunity*](#)

“That experience taught me that, like Edwards Syndrome, there were 7,000 rare diseases back then and today there are close to 11,000 named rare diseases. Most of them still don't have even a single treatment option approved by the [US] FDA.” - Jeeva's founder and CEO, Dr Harsha Rajasimha on efforts to improve participation in oncology trials, especially in under-represented communities, against the backdrop of a heartbreaking personal tragedy.

Find out more: [*CAR-T To N-of-1 Studies: How Jeeva Is Helping Drive Trial Efficiencies*](#)

“For me, it was just an honor to be able to serve patients with a rare condition because I always felt that we should not discriminate patients based on the low prevalence of the disease they have or the fact that they have a very tough disease for which there is nothing. The fact that there's a disease out there that has no therapy is an opportunity as opposed to being a challenge - that's what motivated me personally.” - Giacomo Chiesi, Head of Global Rare Diseases, [*Chiesi Farmaceutici S.p.A.*](#), when asked about what inspired him to start a dedicated rare disease division within the Italian company.

Find out more: [*Chiesi Takes Long View To Build Japan Rare Disease Presence*](#)

“We only aim at the diseases that are under-researched globally but make up the overwhelming majority of all rare disease types.” - Kevin Huang, secretary-general of the Hope for Rare Foundation, China’s first non-profit to focus on R&D for rare disorders.

Find out more: [*China’s First Non-Profit Rare Disease Foundation Pleas For Therapies*](#)

“The main point here is that we tried to maintain the positive functions of GLP-2, but the nutrient absorption function of GLP-2 can be an obstacle in obesity treatment. So, we took a strategy to minimize nutrient absorption activity, while maintaining activity to resolve inflammation and leaky gut.” - ProGen president and CEO Jonggyun Kim on how the Korean firm's GLP-1/2 dual agonist was developed.

Find out more: [*ProGen’s Dual Agonist Obesity Contender Gains Momentum With Rani Partnership*](#)

“For every asset developed by NGGT, we are going to get the clinical data based on the Chinese patient population as fast as possible.” - Lixin Jiang, Next Generation Gene Therapeutics' (NGGT) CEO, on the Chinese company's clinical strategy.

Find out more: [*NGGT Progresses First US Gene Therapy Trials For Rare Conditions*](#)

“Korea has really distinguished itself as an emerging hub for biotech and medtech R&D and it's a really promising innovation ecosystem.” - Sharon Chan, Vice President, Johnson & Johnson Innovation - JLABS Asia Pacific, on why South Korea has been chosen as its third JLABS destination in Asia.

Find out more: [*JLABS Korea, The Next Evolution Of J&J's Innovation Model*](#)

“But it'll be untrue that there is no hope at all.” - Nanjing BIONCE Biotechnology chairman Guangzuo Luo on market opportunities for Chinese-originated rare diseases drugs outside China. Luo observed that many Chinese firms' pursuit of me-too drugs had stacked the odds against their global reach.

Find out more: [*China Rare Disease Firms Aspire To Global Stage*](#)

“If you can only fund 10% of the grants, the tendency of a committee is to fund the most conservative ones. How do you get committees to be responsible and take reasonable risks, but not too much risk and also move forward quickly? It’s a difficult challenge.” - Nobel Laureate Professor Jack Szostak on the pros and cons of committee-based decision-making pertaining to government and VC funding.

Find out more: [*Biopharma Leaders Talk Radical Steps, Regulatory Reform, Open AI To Spur India R&D*](#)

“Companies often second-guess the development of even melanoma because of its commercial scale. We have been turned down by companies regarding melanoma research. We were confident of success from our basic research to date, so we tried several times to obtain funding from AMED [the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development] and were fortunate to receive support...which made it possible.” - Dr Taku Fujimura, vice-chair of the Department of Dermatology at Japan's Tohoku University Graduate School of Medicine, about his journey to develop a new candidate for melanoma through investigator-led trials and without partnering with private pharma firms.

Find out more: [*Japan Academia Progresses Novel Melanoma Drug Despite Pharma 'Reluctance'*](#)

“I don't think we had any baggage of being a generic company hampering us on the specialty side.” - Sun Pharma CEO (North America), Abhay Gandhi, on whether competition tends to run down generic rivals vying for a share of the specialty products pie.

Find out more: [*Sun's Gandhi On Specialty Journey Sans 'Baggage', Deuruxolitinib*](#)

"You can't be stuck in managing the present or the past; the past is very different from the future because these markets are very dynamic. In a way, that's what we're trying to do in India, when we say that we're resetting the footprint.” - Rodolfo Hrosz, managing director, Sanofi India on realigning resources in India, hoping to “crack the code” in an ultra-competitive market.

Find out more: [*How Sanofi Is 'Playing To Win' In India, Watch Diabetes Space*](#)

“They can now go out and buy CDMOs [contract development and manufacturing organizations] just to expand capacity. But it's also putting pressure on the peers to invest and not be left behind further.” - Parexel International chief strategy officer Kushal Gohil, on [*Novo Nordisk A/S*](#) and [*Eli Lilly and Company*](#)'s obesity drugs creating hurdles for peers.

Find out more: [*Parexel Execs On Obesity Drug Hurdles, Parexel GPT, India RWD*](#)

Opportunity

“It’s a difficult marketplace given the high investment in not only the development costs but also for access to market. Then, it depends on what the [innovator] brands end up doing as well” - Lupin CEO Vinita Gupta on the market for biosimilars in the US.

Find out more: Lupin: [*Glad To Have Dodged Humira Bullet, Lucentis Biosimilar Closer As Phase III Trials Succeed*](#)

“What we need is 50 CAR-Ts, 50 RNA, DNA products or companies. These isolated shots need to become a movement and the number of successful ventures needs to explode exponentially.” - Dhananjay Patankar, former VP, Syngene International on the need for startups and venture capital funding.

Find out more: [*India Inc Calls For Regulatory Easing: Looks To Biosimilar Launches Including Keytruda*](#)