

PHARMACCEUTICALS

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12 new African countries to receive malaria vaccines

Reuters reported on 5 July that Global vaccine alliance GAVI will provide 18m doses of malaria vaccine over the next two years to 12 African countries. In 2021, Africa accounted for about 95% of global malaria cases and 96% of deaths, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The first doses of the RTSS vaccine are expected to reach the 12 African countries during the last quarter of 2023.

New drug slows Alzheimer's by 60% in early-stage patients

Reuters reported on 17 July that Eli Lilly's experimental drug, *donanemab*, has shown promising results in slowing the progression of Alzheimer's disease by 60% for patients in the earliest stages of the disease. *Donanemab* is an intravenous antibody designed to remove deposits of the beta-amyloid protein from the brains of Alzheimer's patients. The drug's effect on cognitive decline was nearly twice as effective for these patients, compared with the overall treatment group.

Adcock Ingram starts producing more drugs locally

News24 reported on 24 August that pharmaceutical company Adcock Ingram has transferred the production of certain essential products to SA due to ongoing global shortages of key ingredients, affecting medicine supplies. The company has started producing Panado tablets locally to minimise dependency on imports and drugs like Myprodol and Gen-Payne is transitioning to Adcock's facility in Wadeville.

FDA scrutiny for weight-loss drugs over suicidal thoughts

The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) is evaluating reports about patients' complaints regarding side-effects such as depression when taking diabetic drugs (like *Ozempic* and *Mounjaro*) approved for weight loss, reported **MedicalBrief** (5 October 2023).

The FDA received 265 reports of suicidal thoughts or behaviour from patients while taking these or similar medicines since 2010.

After a review by the news agency *Reuters*, it also filed public records requests for 113 more-detailed narratives for individual incidents among the 265 reports in the FDA database.