

Japan Accelerates Medical Innovation and Patient Access

Japan connects universities, clinical trial specialists, pharmaceutical partners and digital platforms to accelerate medical innovation and expand patient access worldwide. BY DANIEL DE BOMFORD AND BERNARD THOMPSON

Japan's health care system combines universal access, advanced clinical expertise and one of the world's longest-lived populations. At the same time, it faces pressures that will increasingly confront medical systems worldwide. An aging population, shrinking workforce and the concentration of specialists in major cities are making care harder to sustain, while drug lag and drug loss continue to delay access to treatments available overseas. Japan's response is an interconnected ecosystem spanning academic research, clinical development and care delivery. Medical universities form the foundation of Japan's evolving health care ecosystem. Founded in 1916, Tokyo Medical University combines scientific and clinical education with an emphasis on humanity, judgment and service to society. This balance is becoming increasingly important as AI, demographic change and more complex patient needs transform medicine. "Medical science seeks universal truths," President Keisuke Miyazawa said. "Medicine, however, is ultimately practiced one patient at a time." The university's Inverted T-Shaped Model reflects this philosophy, preparing physicians with both broad clinical competence and deep specialist expertise.

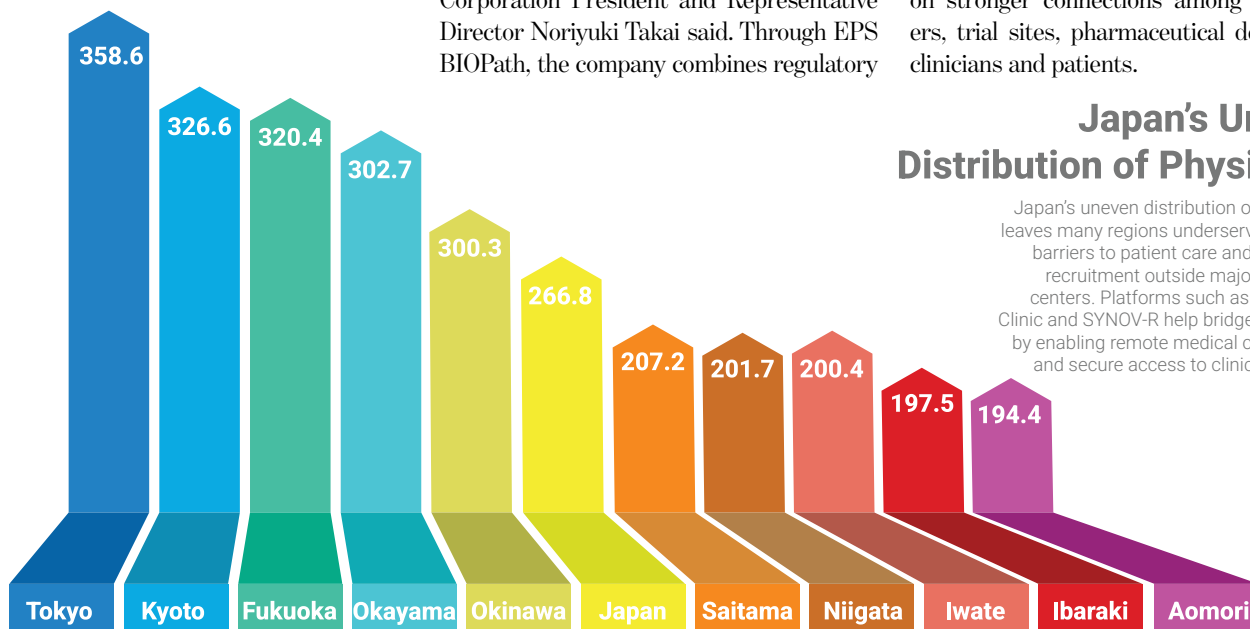
Creating Opportunities With Technology

Turning discoveries into accessible therapies requires faster and more inclusive clinical trials. EP-Link is addressing one of trials' most persistent bottlenecks: finding eligible patients. Its nationwide network of medical institutions, clinical research coordinators and Patient LINK service helps sponsors plan recruitment, select sites and connect patients with suitable studies. Its SYNOV-R platform also enables secure remote access to medical records, reducing administrative pressure on trial personnel. "Ultimately, we see our role as building the infrastructure for clinical trials in Japan and serving as a bridge between Japan's medical field and the global pharmaceutical industry," Representative Director, President and Representative Executive Officer Hironao Nakajima said. Japan's development environment is also becoming more accessible to overseas innovators through EPS Corporation, a sister company of EP-Link. Regulatory changes have reduced the assumption that every global program must conduct a separate Japanese Phase 1 trial, while the country's experienced investigators and stable site performance offer sponsors greater predictability. "Japan should no longer be viewed as a market that joins development later," EPS Corporation President and Representative Director Noriyuki Takai said. Through EPS BIOPath, the company combines regulatory

strategy, development planning, biostatistics, project management and clinical execution for biotech companies entering Japan.

CMIC extends this integrated approach across the pharmaceutical value chain, having broken it down, restructured it horizontally and combined CRO, CDMO and CSO capabilities into an integrated system. "To create greater value, PVC must continue to evolve," Keiko Oishi, president and representative executive officer of CMIC Holdings, said. Its Pharmaceutical Value Creator model can support international companies from clinical research and manufacturing through authorization and commercialization, while its regional presence connects global innovation with markets across Asia. The final challenge is ensuring that expertise reaches patients wherever they live. Allm's Join platform allows medical professionals to securely exchange messages, images and specialist guidance, while Join Mobile Clinic combines that network with portable diagnostic equipment. "We are building an environment where geography is no longer a barrier to medical excellence," President Takaaki Otani said.

Japan is creating a continuum from discovery to development to delivery, showing that the country's medical future depends on stronger connections among researchers, trial sites, pharmaceutical developers, clinicians and patients.



Japan's Uneven Distribution of Physicians

Japan's uneven distribution of physicians leaves many regions underserved, creating barriers to patient care and clinical trial recruitment outside major population centers. Platforms such as Join Mobile Clinic and SYNOV-R help bridge these gaps by enabling remote medical collaboration and secure access to clinical trial data.

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), Physician Maldistribution Index (published April 2026).

EPS Expands Integrated CRO Support for Biotech Companies Entering Japan



The company addresses Japan's drug lag while helping position Japan as a regional hub for pharmaceutical development.

BY DANIEL DE BOMFORD AND BERNARD THOMPSON

Japan's health care system is among the most advanced in the world, famed for its accessibility and for supporting one of the globe's longest-lived populations. One might reasonably assume it has robust medical research and development infrastructure; however, that isn't how overseas innovators perceive it. Drug lag and drug loss continue to affect Japan, and biotech companies remain hesitant to enter the market. EPS Corporation believes this perception no longer reflects Japan's current development environment. "One of the most persistent misconceptions is that Japan remains a slow, highly conservative and challenging market," Noriyuki Takai, president and representative director, said.

Japan's regulatory environment has shifted. The Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency now evaluates overseas clinical data to determine whether an ad-

ditional Japanese Phase 1 study is scientifically necessary. This regulatory reform complements Japan's operational strengths: a mature health care system, experienced investigators, stable site performance and dependable enrollment projections, allowing sponsors to plan trials with confidence.

In July 2026, the company launched EPS BIOPath, which differs from traditional contract research organization (CRO) engagements by providing integrated support for biotechnology companies entering Japan. The service connects regulatory strategy, development planning, biostatistics, project management and clinical trial execution, helping developers in Japan and overseas navigate the Japanese market. It helps companies define Japan's place in their global strategy, design appropriate development and regulatory pathways and identify the evidence required for approval. Its biosta-

tistics and project management teams then turn those decisions into workable study plans, while its clinical operations expertise supports trial execution, site coordination and patient recruitment. EPS Corporation's services are particularly valuable to biotech and pharmaceutical startups with promising science but lacking local regulatory knowledge, personnel and infrastructure.

The company differentiates itself from other CROs by providing services across the whole development cycle. Its services extend from clinical development and regulatory submissions to pharmacovigilance, post-marketing surveillance and commercialization support. "Pharmaceutical companies in Japan often prefer working with partners who can provide support across multiple functions rather than managing a large number of separate vendors," Takai said. These services have implications beyond Japan; data generated in Japan may also contribute to regulatory submissions in other Asian markets. EPS Corporation's ambition is tied to both commercial expansion and earlier patient access: attracting more innovators could help reduce drug lag and drug loss. "Our vision is to become Asia's most execution-driven Global Gateway CRO, connecting Japan, Asia, and global innovation ecosystems," Takai said.



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Building Clinical Trial Infrastructure to Eliminate Japan's Drug Lag

EP-Link accelerates clinical trials through extensive medical networks, CRC expertise and Patient LINK, improving recruitment and pharmaceutical access nationwide. **BY DANIEL DE BOMFORD AND QUENTIN LANGE**

While many patients throughout Japan continue to be forced to wait for access to promising pharmaceuticals, EP-Link is building the networks and digital pathways needed to bring clinical trials and new treatments closer. The country faces persistent drug lag and drug loss, leaving patients waiting for medicines already available overseas. Cost and quality are central to clinical trials; Hironao Nakajima, representative director, president and representative executive officer of EP-Link Co., Ltd., identifies speed as the most critical factor. "By improving speed, it is likely that costs will also decrease, creating a positive cycle," he said, adding that one of the most practical areas for improvement is patient recruitment. "Recruitment is directly linked to how quickly trials can progress, so we are focusing heavily on this area."

EP-Link addresses these barriers through a nationwide medical network, experienced clinical research coordinators and Patient LINK, which helps identify suitable participants. By improving trial preparation, recruitment and execution while maintaining quality, EP-Link supports faster, more efficient drug development across Japan for patients nationwide. The system shifts clinical trial recruitment from reliance on individual hospitals to a coordinated network of medical institutions. By identifying potential participants across this broader network, EP-Link can reduce recruitment delays and connect eligible patients with appropriate studies more efficiently. The system is also incorporated into clinical trial design from the planning stage, allowing sponsors to assess patient availability, select suitable sites and develop realistic recruitment strategies.

With EP-Link's SYNOV-R platform, the company is addressing labor shortages by digitizing clinical trials and reducing the administrative burden on medical institutions and researchers. The platform enables secure remote access to electronic medical records in a secure and controlled environment. "The primary strength of SYNOV-R is its ability to operate within a highly secure environment where the risk of data leakage is minimized as much as possible," Nakajima said. Rather than developing every system independently, EP-Link collaborates with external IT partners that provide specialized technical expertise. This open development policy helps the company introduce practical digital tools faster while responding flexibly to evolving clinical trial needs. EP-Link plans to extend its networks nationwide, improving recruitment and trial efficiency across Japan. By connecting more medical institutions, patients and sponsors, the company aims to accelerate access to innovative therapies and reduce drug lag. This infrastructure will also strengthen Japan's role in global pharmaceutical research and connect domestic trials with international markets.

EP-Link Co., Ltd.



"We see our role as building the infrastructure for clinical trials in Japan."

Hironao Nakajima
Representative Director, President
and Representative Executive Officer,
EP-Link Co., Ltd.

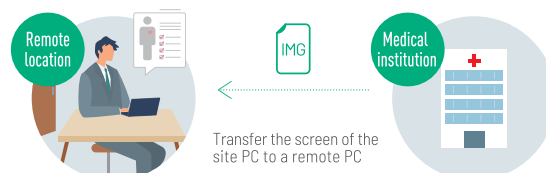


<https://www.ep-link.co.jp/>



SYNOV-R:

Through EP-Link's SYNOV-R platform, the company is advancing the digitalization of clinical trials and reducing the burden on Clinical Research Associates and Clinical Research Coordinators, thereby addressing challenges related to improving efficiency in clinical trial operations and labor shortages.



Patient LINK:

EP-Link connects trial sites with partner medical institutions to refer eligible patients—speeding up subject recruitment and shortening trial timelines.



ALLM Connects Health Care Across Geographic Boundaries

Through telemedicine, portable clinics and secure data sharing, ALLM connects medical professionals with underserved communities, helping specialist care reach patients regardless of location or circumstances.

BY DANIEL DE BOMFORD, QUENTIN LANGE AND ARTHUR MENKES

In a remote village, at an isolated mining site, or amid the wreckage of a disaster, reaching a hospital can be an incredibly urgent challenge. Whether it's urgent access to care or a routine check with a specialist, geography can be a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. Allm Inc. tackles the approach from a different angle. When patients cannot travel to medical expertise, medical information and clinical support should travel to them. Allm Inc. is a Japan-based medical ICT company that develops digital solutions connecting hospitals, health care professionals, medical institutions and medical

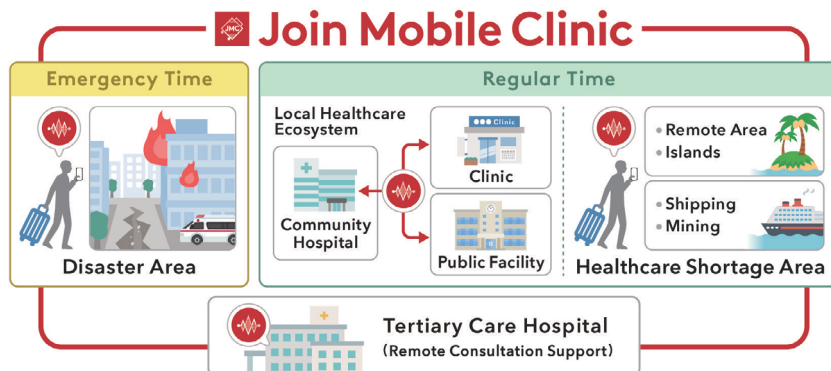


resources. Its work addresses a growing problem in health systems worldwide. Specialists remain concentrated in major cities, while aging populations, workforce shortages and hospital closures are leaving many communities with limited access to care.

As remote communities shrink in Japan and services shutter, the challenge is being compounded by fragmented medical data. Patient information is often siloed by individual hospitals and clinics in systems that cannot communicate easily, making it difficult to coordinate treatment and support telemedicine. Allm President Takaaki Otani said that wider adoption of international data standards could allow medical information to move securely between institutions while remaining protected.

Allm's principal clinical platform, Join, provides a secure communication layer for medical professionals. Accessible on smartphones, tablets and PCs, the application connects with hospital systems and has been adopted in 20 countries. Join lets clinicians exchange messages, hold video consultations and share medical images such as CT and MRI scans.

By connecting data, Join allows hospitals to operate in a regional network, where a specialist in one location can advise doctors



elsewhere. The model has relevance across the world where vast distances and an uneven distribution of specialists can restrict access to timely care. "We are working toward a future where geography is less of a barrier to quality care," Otani said.

Allm's Join Mobile Clinic builds on the Join platform, combining portable medical equipment with remote specialist support to enable telemedicine beyond traditional hospital settings. Building on the experience and proven capabilities of Join, the company developed the suitcase-sized package to deliver medical care to remote regions and isolated islands without medical institutions. It combines portable diagnostic equipment with Join, allowing health data to be shared securely with medical professionals elsewhere.

The same approach can support health care during natural disasters and in rural communities, isolated islands, mining regions and ships at sea. Rather than operating as a stand-alone facility, the mobile clinic serves as a satellite connected to a broader medical network, giving frontline personnel access to specialists elsewhere.



But technology is only part of the equation. Telemedicine adoption also depends on reimbursement rules, regulations, clinical practices and patient confidence. Allm therefore works with governments, medical institutions, development organizations and nonprofits to adapt its services to local conditions. Its collaboration with Japan Heart in Cambodia, for example, helped identify the equipment, connectivity and clinical support that medical workers needed on



the ground. As Allm looks toward 2030, its focus extends beyond using AI to reduce administrative workloads or support clinical decisions. Otani envisions a broader redesign of health care delivery for an era in which care can no longer be provided by a single hospital or physician.

This means developing technology alongside new ways of working for doctors and nurses, while reconsidering how medical value is delivered throughout the patient journey. By connecting these elements, Allm aims to improve the overall patient experience and build a more collaborative, sustainable health care system.



Evolving the Pharmaceutical Value Creator: CMIC's Strategy for an AI-Enabled, Partnership-Driven Future

BY CIAN O'NEILL, LISA KAYASTHA AND JANANI SAMPATH

For more than three decades, CMIC has supported pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies across the product lifecycle. At the heart of its approach is the Pharmaceutical Value Creator (PVC) model, integrating expertise across drug development, manufacturing, regulatory affairs and commercialization through CMIC's long-standing and proprietary one-stop health care service provider position.

As drug development becomes more complex and expectations for speed, quality and efficiency increase, CMIC is evolving this model. Keiko Oishi, president and representative executive officer of CMIC Holdings, explains how partnerships, AI and people will drive its next phase.

How is CMIC's Pharmaceutical Value Creator model evolving?

Keiko Oishi: PVC remains at the center of our strategy. The fundamental idea is to create value by bringing together the capabilities pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies need across the product lifecycle.

But our industry is changing rapidly. Drug development is becoming more complex, therapeutic modalities are increasingly diverse, and clients are under greater pressure to deliver innovation faster and more efficiently. To create greater value, PVC must continue to evolve. That means combining our expertise with external partnerships, leveraging AI to enhance quality and speed, and investing in people who can make decisions, take responsibility and build trust.

Why are partnerships increasingly important?

No single organization can possess every capability, technology or area of expertise needed to address today's health care challenges. We want to combine CMIC's capa-



bilities with the knowledge, technologies, talent and resources of strong partners around the world. Through strategic alliances, we can broaden the solutions available to our clients and create combinations of capabilities that would be difficult for one organization to provide independently. For us, partnership is about bringing together the right expertise and resources to solve each client's specific challenges.

What role will AI play in CMIC's strategy?

We see AI as more than an efficiency tool. Used appropriately, it can enable better decisions, faster execution and higher-quality services. Our AI Transformation, or AX, strategy focuses on three priorities: high-quality data foundations, operational excellence and robust AI governance.

We are strengthening our data foundations while integrating AI into processes where it can meaningfully improve quality, speed and productivity. At the same time, health care is highly regulated, and we work with sensitive information and intellectual property. Strong governance is therefore essential to ensure AI is used responsibly, particularly around confidentiality, data protection and regulatory compliance.

As AI becomes more important, what does this mean for people and talent development?

People become more important, not less. AI can analyze information and automate routine activities, but health care remains fundamentally human-centered. Judgment, accountability, empathy and trust cannot simply be automated. As technology takes on more routine work, people can focus on areas where human capabilities create the greatest value—making complex decisions, understanding clients and patients, collaborating across organizations and taking responsibility for outcomes.

That is why talent development is one of our highest strategic priorities. Our competitive advantage will not come from technology alone, but from combining advanced technology with highly skilled professionals who understand health care and can translate knowledge into action.

What will define the next phase of CMIC's PVC strategy?

The next phase will be about integration—bringing together technology, human expertise and collaboration more effectively. We will continue strengthening PVC with a broader ecosystem mindset: combining CMIC's capabilities with those of our partners, using AI and data to improve quality and speed, and investing in people who can create meaningful value. Our purpose has not changed.

We want to help pharmaceutical and biotechnology innovators bring better solutions to patients more effectively. By connecting the right expertise, technology and partnerships, we believe CMIC can create greater value for our clients and contribute to better health care outcomes around the world.

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