

Editorial

Ramifications of delivery devices on GLP-1 drug shortages

Arumugam Balasubramaniam^{1*}

¹Dept. of Pharmacy, Millennium Group, Nathu Barkheda Road, Near Neel Bad Chouhara, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India

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Think of a situation, a drug is already in demand, national and internationally, and there is a shortfall of this drug. This is further aggravated by the shortage of delivery devices.

This second bottleneck—the pens and auto-injectors that need to be provided with the medication—is rapidly limiting GLP-1 infusions. This may lead to a situation in India where the drug material is available but the delivery-device supply is delayed, making it impossible to distribute the finished injectable at scale.

The scarcity issue is particularly significant in India since the country's injectable pen manufacturing ecosystem is still expanding and GLP-1 medicines are already under strain from growing demand. The introduction of semaglutide and related medicines may be directly slowed by any delay in pen capacity, as reports from the Indian market indicate that pen makers are being positioned as a crucial component of the GLP-1 supply chain. This is more than just a production problem; it also impacts patient access, cost, and the timely launch of generics by Indian pharmaceutical companies.

The identical bottleneck is seen on a global scale. The worldwide demand for GLP-1 medications has resulted in shortages of both the drugs and their delivery systems, particularly single-use pens and auto-injectors. Industry sources indicate that manufacturers are expanding facilities, creating oral alternatives, and rethinking delivery systems; nonetheless, the supply chain remains constrained since device capacity, cold-chain logistics, and API supply must all increase simultaneously. The world is seeing that even a groundbreaking medication can be limited by a plastic pen,

cartridge, needle assembly, and final fill-finish capacity.

Treating GLP-1 delivery devices as a strategic manufacturing opportunity rather than a support item is the answer for India. Building domestic capacity in pen design, tooling, precision molding, assembly automation, cartridge filling, quality assurance, and controlled packaging is the quickest route. Incentives for complex device production, quicker regulatory processes, and collaborations between pharmaceutical companies and device companies to align launch schedules are all ways that policy assistance might be helpful. In order to prevent a single bottleneck from stopping the entire product, a robust Indian model would include diversify suppliers for springs, plungers, seals, and mechanical or electronic injector components.

This opens up a lot of opportunities for Indian entrepreneurs. As component suppliers, contract manufacturers, tooling experts, testing labs, packaging companies, or full-device CDMOs catering to both Indian and foreign markets, startups and SMEs can enter the sector. GLP-1 therapies are expected to grow, and each new therapy necessitates a steady supply of devices, therefore there is a significant demand opportunity. Entrepreneurs who can provide affordable, scalable, and compliance injector systems could be vital partners for both domestic pharmaceutical businesses and international generic launches.

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*Corresponding author: Arumugam Balasubramaniam
Email: abasu68@gmail.com