

What to expect from big pharma in 2017

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Last year, the Food and Drug Administration approved just 22 new therapeutic drugs, which is less than half the number approved in 2015. The cover story in *Chemical & Engineering News* (C&EN), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society, explains why 2016 was such a lackluster year for new medicines, and whether it was an anomaly or the start of a longer term pharmaceutical slow-down.

Lisa M. Jarvis, a senior correspondent for C&EN, reports that the dip in approvals was partly due to delays. Some pharmaceutical manufacturing plants weren't in compliance with current standards and needed to be brought up to snuff. Also, the number of new cancer drugs, which often account for several drug approvals a year, suffered a cut. Only four drugs targeting cancer got the green light in 2016 whereas during the previous year, 14 did.

Ultimately, seven big pharma companies didn't get a single product to market in 2016. Forecasters expect numbers to turn around next year and return to the average of 30, including a boost in cancer drug approvals, but some industry watchers interpret last year's poor showing as a sign of uncertain times ahead.

More information: "The year in new drugs,"
cen.acs.org/articles/95/i5/year-new-drugs.html

Provided by American Chemical Society

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