CLOSER LOOK

MEMORANDUM

China's NMPA approves Pfizer and Sciwind's GLP-1 RA ecnoglutide for weight management in China – March 6, 2026

Ecnoglutide conferred 15% weight loss at Week 48 in Chinese adults with overweight or obesity

Hangzhou, China-based Sciwind Biosciences just announced that China's National Medical Products Administration (NMPA) approved cAMP-biased GLP-1 RA ecnoglutide for weight management in adults with overweight or obesity. The approval is based on the phase 3 SLIMMER trial (n=664), in which ecnoglutide conferred 15% weight loss from the baseline weight of 91 kg (201 lbs) and BMI of 32.5 kg/m² at Week 48.

As background, ecnoglutide is a cAMP-biased, long-acting GLP-1 RA aimed to improve biological activity, stability, and scalability.

Table of Contents

Ecnoglutide conferred 15.4% weight loss at Week 48 in the phase 3 SLIMMER trial

In the phase 3 SLIMMER trial (n=664), conducted in Beijing, China, participants with a baseline weight of 91 kg (201 lbs) and BMI of 32.5 kg/m² were randomized to ecnoglutide 1.2 mg, 1.8 mg, 2.4 mg, or placebo. According to the treatment policy estimand, which accounts for treatment discontinuation or switching, ecnoglutide conferred dose-dependent weight loss by up to 15.4% reduction (vs. 0.3% with placebo). Up to 87% of the treatment arm achieved ≥5% weight loss, compared to 16% in the placebo group.

Moreover, participants did not reach a weight loss plateau, potentially indicating additional weight reduction. Beyond weight loss, ecnoglutide also improved waist circumference, blood pressure, lipid levels, A1c, insulin resistance, and liver fat.

The safety and tolerability profile was consistent with other GLP-1 RAs, with the most common adverse events being mild-to-moderate GI events.

Sciwind partnered with Pfizer China and Verdiva to commercialize ecnoglutide

Previously, in January 2026, ecnoglutide received approval for T2D in China, based on the phase 3 EECOH-1 and EECOH-2 trials that demonstrated significant A1c reduction. Just last month, Sciwind entered an up to $495 million partnership with Pfizer China to commercialize ecnoglutide. Pfizer has commercialization rights in China, while Sciwind is responsible for R&D, registration, manufacturing, and product supply.

Pfizer entered a partnership with Sciwind last month. Under the terms of the agreement, Pfizer has the commercialization rights for ecnoglutide in China, while Sciwind is responsible for R&D, regulatory filing, and manufacturing. Sciwind can receive up to $495 million in upfront, regulatory, and sales milestone payments.

In January 2025, Sciwind also partnered with the UK-based Verdiva Bio for $70 million, granting the company rights to develop, manufacture, and commercialize oral GLP-1 RA ecnoglutide and amylin agonist (oral and injectable) outside China and South Korea.

Expanding GLP-1 RA landscape in China amid imminent patent expiration

The competitive landscape for weight management continues to expand in China at a time when semaglutide may lose its main patent this month. We are curious how the new incretin-based therapies will remain competitive with generics. In addition to ecnoglutide, currently approved treatments include:

- Novo Nordisk's GLP-1 RA semaglutide and liraglutide;
- Lilly's dual GLP-1/GIP RA tirzepatide;
- Shanghai Benemae Pharma's recombinant human GLP-1 RA benaglutide; and
- Innovent's dual GLP-1/glucagon RA, mazdutide.

Close Concerns' Questions

1. When does Sciwind plan to launch ecnoglutide in China?
2. What regions will Sciwind target after China?
3. At what dose does Sciwind expect to achieve a weight loss plateau?

--by Kat Moon, Monica Oxenreiter, and Kelly Close