

Jayashri Kulkarni - Managing Director, Johnson & Johnson Taiwan



We want to position Taiwan as the go-to environment for pragmatic pilots that balance self-pay and reimbursement

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Tags: [Taiwan](#), [J&J](#), [Access](#), [Strategy](#), [Leadership](#), [Clinical Trials](#)

Jayashri Kulkarni Managing Director of Johnson & Johnson Taiwan, brings 27 years of experience across pharmaceuticals and medical technology in Asia Pacific. Since assuming her Taiwan role, she has focused on outcome-based healthcare, patient advocacy, and leadership development, bringing a perspective that bridges emerging market innovation with healthcare system optimisation.

After more than a year leading Johnson & Johnson Taiwan, having transitioned from India and Southeast Asia, what initial impressions has the market made upon you?

Taiwan's healthcare infrastructure stands out for its efficiency and accessibility. With more than 400 hospitals offering a range of expertise, the system minimises barriers for patients seeking care from healthcare professionals, nurses, and technicians. This level of accessibility sharply contrasts with markets where delayed access and significant disparities between urban and rural communities are prevalent. Taiwan's uniformity in healthcare delivery across cities and regions, supported by a well-designed tiered capacity, ensures consistent and high-quality access nationwide.

In addition to robust infrastructure, Taiwan's healthcare system benefits from strategic prioritisation at the governmental level. Authorities focus not only on budget allocation but also on

addressing critical population health challenges, including cancer-related mortality, suicide prevention, and management of an aging population. Substantial government investment in these areas demonstrates a commitment to pursuing effective and forward-thinking strategies.

How comprehensively does your portfolio address Taiwan’s therapeutic needs, and which areas receive primary emphasis, aligning with Healthy Taiwan Agenda?

Taiwan has articulated a comprehensive “Healthy Taiwan” vision, prioritising preventive care, the promotion of healthier lifestyles, and the delivery of sustainable, equitable healthcare for its ageing population. This strategy is underpinned by clear targets for 2030 and is supported by substantial public-private collaboration. For oncology, the national objective is to reduce standardised cancer mortality by one-third by 2030. In the area of mental health, efforts are focused on strengthening resilience between 2025 and 2030.

Johnson & Johnson shares this commitment to advancing public health and has dedicated nearly seven decades to innovation in cancer elimination. In Taiwan, this global mission is realised through patient-centric initiatives, including the introduction of innovative medicines and treatments for lung cancer, multiple myeloma, and prostate cancer, as well as expedited access to therapies for bladder and head & neck cancers.

The company also delivers neuroscience treatments for schizophrenia and depressive disorders, and maintains robust immunology and pulmonary portfolios addressing conditions such as psoriasis, inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), rheumatology, and pulmonary arterial hypertension.

Johnson & Johnson demonstrates a strong commitment to Taiwan by ensuring that new therapies are introduced as close to global launch timelines as possible. Taiwan’s regulatory and healthcare environment enables rapid access to innovative treatments for patients nationwide.

Regulatory approvals in Taiwan proceed efficiently, yet reimbursement can take over 700 days for certain indications. How are you accelerating patient access despite these challenges?

Taiwan’s healthcare sector is distinguished by the approachability and responsiveness of key decision-makers, which facilitates transparent dialogue with the National Health Insurance Administration and the Ministry of Health and Welfare. This openness enables effective

partnerships focused on advancing patient priorities. Multiple engagement mechanisms instil confidence among stakeholders, supporting the feasibility of ambitious initiatives at both regional and global levels.

Despite these strengths, the reimbursement approval process remains complex. As in many healthcare systems, balancing affordability with timely access to advanced therapies particularly those endorsed by international guidelines presents ongoing challenges. Local access barriers and gaps between domestic and international standards of care may influence global pharmaceutical companies' decisions regarding research, development, and commercial investment in Taiwan.

However, we're also glad to see government policies and mechanisms are likewise being elevated this year. The Cancer Drug Fund, launched this year, is enabling faster access to oncology treatments: by Oct, approximately 36 therapies received reimbursement approvals or extensions through the Fund, delivering substantial benefits to patients and their families in both health outcomes and financial relief. Conditional listing pathways for innovative therapies are also facilitating market entry for new launches. Together, these measures offer meaningful advantages in navigating a challenging landscape. I believe this is just the beginning, and we look forward to continuing to collaborate with the government, industry partners, healthcare providers, and patient groups to accelerate patient access in Taiwan.

Given Taiwan's advanced data infrastructure, how feasible is the adoption of outcome-based healthcare models?

Highly feasible. Examining infrastructure exclusively, Taiwan possesses arguably the most advanced readiness globally. Technology adoption exists, AI experimentation willingness exists, data science deployment enabling sophisticated decision-making exists. I observe hospitals embracing robotics - even for patient movement and hospital navigation. This represents remarkably advanced existing infrastructure, readiness for outcome-based healthcare models for care delivery.

Taiwan maintains global recognition as a clinical trial centre of excellence. How does Johnson & Johnson leverage this capacity?

We have introduced numerous trials across key hospitals. Taiwan globally earns recognition as a centre of excellence regarding clinical trial approval timelines and hospital readiness and feasibility

for rapidly initiating patient therapy. It ranks among the world's best. I hope this distinction persists, enabling us to build upon this foundation and continue expanding access for patients seeking cutting-edge experimental therapies before commercial availability.

Looking forward, what roles can global pharmaceutical companies like Johnson & Johnson play in supporting Taiwan's ambitious healthcare improvement agenda?

Pharmaceutical investment operates across multiple dimensions. It begins with clinical development, exposing healthcare professionals to new therapies and outcome generation. Commercialisation then creates jobs, expands patient access, and drives behaviour change in disease management beyond clinical trials. A third pillar is capability building: partnering with and upskilling clinicians and patient groups through medical education and advocacy to support new ways of working and outcome-focused care.

Beyond our core work, we invest in communities by supporting local talent and volunteer programs. At Johnson & Johnson, a career provides boundless opportunities to shape the experience of our people, strengthen teams, and improve patient outcomes. Guided by the Credo, we empower individuals to take ownership of their development through education, practical experience, and mentorship—recognising that every career is a personal journey. By building a strong early-career pipeline through internships in Taiwan, we cultivate future leaders and align our talent strategy with our mission to advance science responsibly for patients.

We also embrace responsibility for the civic and social well-being of the communities where we live and work. Employees are encouraged to take four days of paid volunteer leave each year. In addition to annual Global Community Impact (GCI) initiatives with NGOs, we support region-wide programs such as Cycling for Children across Asia-Pacific. This year, more than 100 employees in Taiwan participated to support children's vision health.

Finally, we pursue structured public-private partnerships with government and major hospitals aligned to national priorities in areas such as oncology and mental health. Drawing on global experience in upskilling frontline healthcare workers and supporting policy reform, we help mobilise coalitions of clinicians, experts, and patient organisations. Ultimately, these investments are about people: attracting talent, building future leaders, and creating environments and patient impact that advance together.

Can you share more about how J&J cultivates this working environment as an industry leader?

Reflecting on my 15 years at Johnson & Johnson, I'm grateful for the opportunities to grow across six or seven distinct roles. Each position challenged me in new ways—sometimes deepening my market expertise, other times broadening my strategic capabilities. I've learned to lead both through authority and through influence and collaboration. What truly set these experiences apart was the focus on learning agility and the consistent emphasis on developing people, building relationships, and cultivating networks.

One aspect I value deeply is the organisation's commitment to personal development. Whenever I've sought coaching, mentoring, or guidance, senior leaders have always made time. This culture of support encourages exploration and continuous learning, with accessible guidance—even over email—making it easy to invest in my own growth.

I've also experienced genuine flexibility in shaping my career path. I started in medical technology, working nationally and regionally, then transitioned into pharmaceuticals to expand my commercial leadership skills. Today, I'm in a different market, taking on new challenges. This ability to pivot and leverage my strengths has been uniquely valuable, allowing me to define my own leadership journey.

Drawing on experience from emerging markets, what lessons could Taiwan apply to address healthcare sustainability?

I would highlight two areas.

First, **Funding sustainability**.

1. **Self-pay feasibility:** In emerging markets where healthcare systems act primarily as providers rather than payers, strong self-pay models have evolved to complement public funding and support efficient healthcare delivery. Taiwan's GDP per capita is comparable to Japan's, so ability to pay is not the constraint; willingness and mind-set are. With global budgets finite, parallel funding mechanisms for areas such as long-term care and assisted living will be necessary, and emerging markets offer useful lessons in building these frameworks.
2. **Strengthen Data-Driven Policy for resource allocation:** Leverage Taiwan's advanced data infrastructure to monitor outcomes and inform resource allocation, ensuring that

strategic priorities remain aligned with emerging health trends.

3. **Foster Public-Private Collaboration focused on impact of investment:** Encourage ongoing collaboration between government, healthcare providers, and industry to address complex challenges such as cancer and mental health, maximizing the impact of public investment

Second, **Healthcare delivery.**

1. **Sustain and Expand Tiered Access:** Continue to invest in and refine the tiered hospital system to maintain equitable access, especially as demographic shifts increase demand for services. Also, given Taiwan's high literacy levels and compact geography, it is striking that home care and self-administration for maintenance therapies remain limited. Shifting stable patients to home-based treatment, following hospital-based initiation and training, could significantly reduce pressure on infrastructure. Mental health has begun this transition, but similar approaches could be transformative across many other therapeutic areas.
2. **Promote Preventive and Community-based Care:** Consider policies that further support preventive health measures and community-based care models, particularly for aging and vulnerable populations.

Looking toward the next twenty-four to thirty-six months, what constitute your top three priorities?

First of all, strengthening Johnson & Johnson's external equity in Taiwan. We have established J&J as the fastest and most reliable introducer of first-in-category innovations to the market. We are an employer that creates exceptional, global career pathways for both emerging and experienced talent, and as an industry peer that shapes policy through measurable, effective contributions.

Secondly, building Taiwan's strategic role as a center of experimentation and innovation. We want to position Taiwan as the go-to environment for pragmatic pilots that balance self-pay and reimbursement. We will run focused, high-quality small-scale programs that prove impact and can be scaled and replicated across other markets, reinforcing internal confidence in Taiwan-led initiatives.

Finally but most importantly, creating a workplace where people choose to give their best. We design experiences and opportunities that motivate every employee to engage, grow, and deliver. Our culture will enable performance, development, and ownership at every level ensuring that our teams are empowered to make a meaningful impact.

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