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Russian Drug Prices to Rise Again on Global Transport Chaos

Pharma industry faces a perfect storm of cheap ruble, production backlogs, supply chain disruptions and high transport costs.

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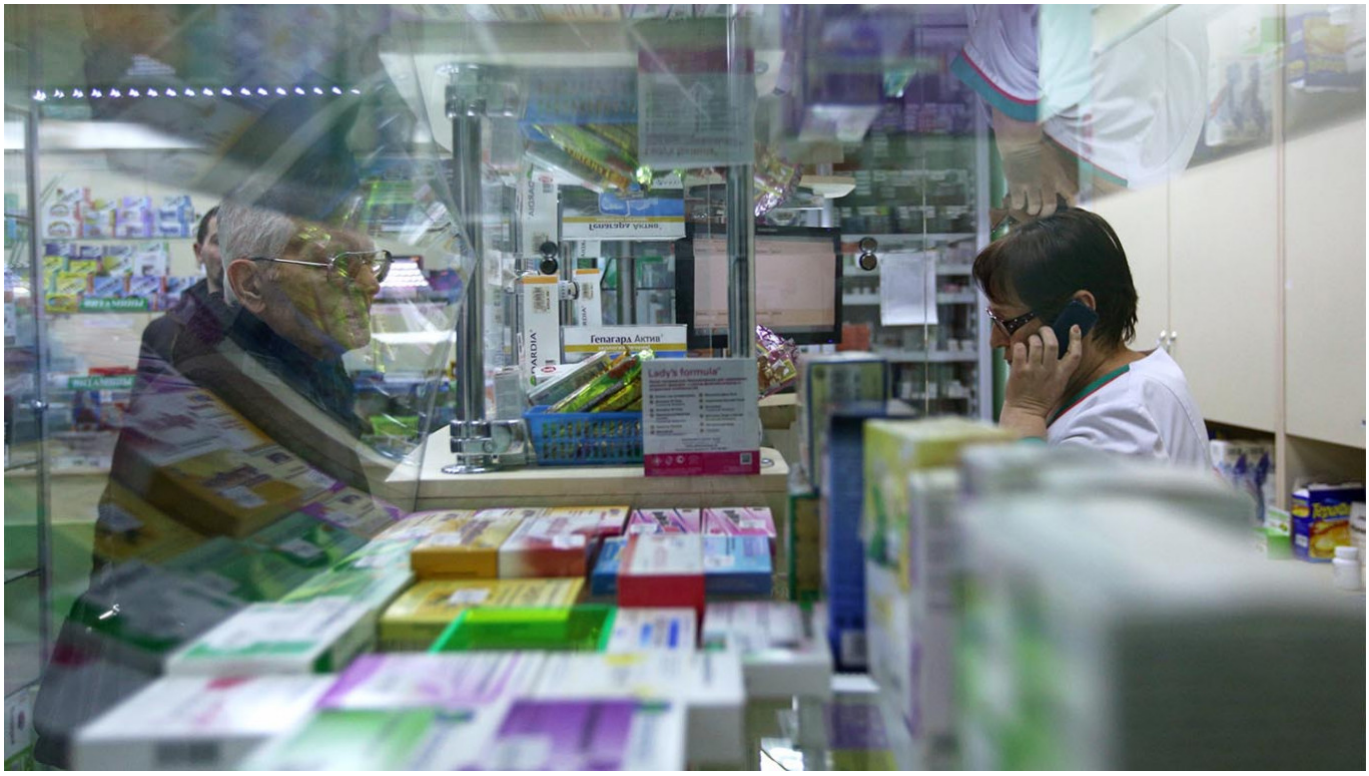

Pharma bosses have said price rises could be on the way. **Moskva News Agency**

Drug prices are likely to rise in Russia as a result of disruption to global travel and supply chains, while some could disappear from the market, pharmaceutical companies have warned.

Transport costs are up six-fold on some routes, Russian daily Vedomosti reported Thursday, meaning some medicines could become loss making to manufacture. More than 75% of the products that go into Russian-made drugs are imported from China and India, according to RNC Pharma.

Medical providers previously told The Moscow Times the shutdown of factories at the start of the coronavirus outbreak in China severely disrupted the import of life-saving cancer

medicine into Russia. Meanwhile, the fall in the value of the ruble has already pushed up prices by 15%, Kommersant newspaper previously reported.

Patients are now being warned to brace for further price rises despite factories coming back online and the ruble seemingly stabilizing, with pharmaceutical bosses pointing to huge increases in transport costs, logistical difficulties, material shortages and production backlogs.

“This is a critical issue,” executive director of Nanolek Maxim Stetsyuk told Vedomosti, adding that soon it would be unprofitable to manufacture some drugs, such as ibuprofen and paracetamol. Immediate price rises will only be seen in pharmacies, as the cost of drugs for public hospitals is fixed by state contracts.

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