

I-MAK Unveils New Study: "The Burden of Patent Thickets" and how they net drugmakers billions in excess revenue

This study exposes the profound impact of extended patent protection that limits biosimilar competition and maintains high drug prices for patients and payers.

UNITED STATES, September 19, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Initiative for Medicines, Access, and Knowledge ([I-MAK](#)), a leading advocate for equitable access to medicines, is proud to announce the release of its latest [study](#), "The Burden of Patent Thickets."

This study exposes the profound impact of extended patent protection that limits biosimilar competition and maintains high drug prices for patients and payers. The study highlights the staggering \$158 billion in revenue amassed by drugmakers after the expiration of primary patent protection from just four biologic drugs: Humira, Avastin, Rituxan, and Lantus.



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Key findings from the study underscore the urgent need for reforming the patent system:

- Market Monopolies Averaged 19 Years After Launch: The four biologic drugs analyzed in the report enjoyed an average of 19.4 years of patent protection following their commercial launch before encountering their first biosimilar competition. This monopoly period was

lengthened through extended patent protection, which stifled competition and limited patient access to more affordable alternatives.

- Annual Revenues are Higher During Extended Patent Protection: The study reveals that all four biologic drugs continued to earn significantly higher revenues per year after the expiration of their primary patent protection. This prolonged period of market monopoly allowed drugmakers to maintain high prices at the expense of patients and the healthcare system.

- Extended Patent Protection Accounts for Majority of Total Sales: During the period of extended patent protection for these four drugs, total U.S. sales more than doubled in less than half the time compared to revenues generated during the primary patent protection period. This fact contributes to concerns about the sustainability of drug prices spending.

The findings emphasize the urgent need for policymakers, stakeholders, and the public to engage in discussions about patent reform that can ensure genuine inventions are only rewarded and not gaming of the system to maximize revenues at the cost of patients.

"Our study of these four drugs shows how pharmaceutical companies have transformed the patent system into a financialised tool to maximise revenue for the benefit of shareholders, CEO's wealth and company power, rather than one of invention that benefits the public as was intended," says [Tahir Amin](#), CEO of I-MAK. "The cost of extended patent protection is harming patients and the sustainability of drug prices. These four drugs are just the tip of the iceberg."

To read the study, visit at www.i-mak.org

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