



Almac will also invest about £5 million (\$6.24 million) into an additional laboratory and office facility at its Craigavon, Northern Ireland headquarters site. About 170 existing chemists and analysts involved in R&D work will transfer to other sites when the new lab opens. In Ireland, the CDMO will spend £2 million (\$2.5 million) to further develop the Athlone facility it acquired from Arran Chemical Co. last year (*November 2015 B/POR*). The Athlone expansion will add manufacturing capacity, along with additional distillation and drying capabilities.

Catalent Pharma Solutions (Somerset, N.J., USA) has joined the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain Initiative, a non-profit organization set up in 2006 to tap into the combined supply chain expertise of various pharmaceutical, contract manufacturing and healthcare companies.

Idifarma (Noáin, Navarra, Spain) will add Bosch GKF702 capsule-filling equipment with capacity of 3,000-42,000 capsules/hour to its manufacturing site in Pamplona, Spain, in early 2017. The equipment also can be used to produce supplies needed during pharmaceutical development. The Pamplona facility already has a Hüttlin Oyster high-shear mixer and dryer for wet granulation processes, bin blenders with capacity up to 70 kg and a Clinipack IMA blistering machine. It can work with Alu/Alu or any thermosformable material, along with narcotics and products with low-humidity requirements.

Juniper Pharma Services (Nottingham, UK) generated revenues of \$10 million for the first nine months of 2016, reported its parent company Juniper Pharmaceuticals (Boston, Mass., USA). The \$10 million represented a 19% increase over 2015, but the UK-based operation actually delivered a 31% increase in local currency terms.

Marken (Durham, N.C., USA) has opened a new clinical supply hub in Chicago, Ill., USA that will offer direct-to-patient services and cell and gene therapy handling capabilities, in addition to other clinical supply collection and shipment services.

Merck (Darmstadt, Germany) has launched a polyvinyl alcohol-based excipient intended to enhance solubility in poorly bioavailable APIs. The Parreck Melt Extrusion PVA (MXP) is designed for use in hot melt extrusion; it can achieve drug loads of 30% or more. Parreck MXP can maintain stability at temperatures above 200°C.

PAREXEL International (Waltham, Mass., USA) now offers services to help clients meet Identification of Medicinal Products (IDMP) ISO standards, including use of standardized data formats and maintenance processes required over a product's life cycle. The European Medicines Agency requires IDMP submissions starting in the first quarter of 2017.

Vetter Pharma International (Ravensburg, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Germany) has manufactured a double-digit number of batches on the new clinical syringe-filling line at its Skokie, Ill., USA plant for use in customers' early clinical trials. In addition to the new syringe-filling line, Vetter is also increasing storage at the Skokie facility by 150%, including six chest freezers, two upright freezers and two refrigerator units. Storage expansion is expected to be complete by the end of this year.

Vetter also recently received certification from TÜV Süd, a German industrial testing organization, for the new data processing center at its Ravensburg site. Half of the 3,800-square-foot center is dedicated to technical equipment like servers, while the other half houses media systems, such as power supply and climate control technology. The certification—to the European DIN EN 50600 standard—indicates that customer and process data are adequately protected.

World Courier (New Hyde Park, N.Y., USA) last month launched a new temperature-controlled packaging system for pallet-sized shipments, dubbed Cocoon. The Cocoon system uses honeycomb vacuum-insulated panels to reduce weight. It supports three temperature range requirements: 15–25°C, 28°C and 15–25°C. Internal temperatures can be maintained for as long as two weeks in uncontrolled warehouse temperatures without use of an external power source.