Global Insights:
GHMC 2026
Healthcare Trends

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As we look ahead to 2026, healthcare systems around the world are navigating rapid change; driven by digital transformation, demographic shifts, regulatory reform, data governance, rising costs, and the evolving role of patients and providers.

At GHMC, our strength lies in bringing local market intelligence together through a global network of independent healthcare experts.

Here are our top trends shaping healthcare globally in 2026.

Get in touch if you would like to know more about these developments and how to navigate them in your market.

Responsible & Trustworthy AI: The defining global trend of 2026 in healthcare

The acceleration of artificial intelligence (AI) stands out as the first and most pervasive trend transforming healthcare systems worldwide. On a high level, we are seeing an emerging shift from tactical AI use cases in healthcare to strategic applications – particularly in diagnostics and decision support; generative AI in drug discovery, and AI powered virtual care. From the healthcare marketing and communications perspective, the use of AI for predictive insights, narrative testing, audience profiling and beyond is likely to dominate.

AI governance remains a pivotal issue that is expected to receive greater clarity in 2026. Significant regulatory uncertainty persists, underscoring the need for trustworthy and ethical systems.

Several other critical trends are emerging across different regions and countries. The following highlights provide a closer look at these region- and country-specific developments.
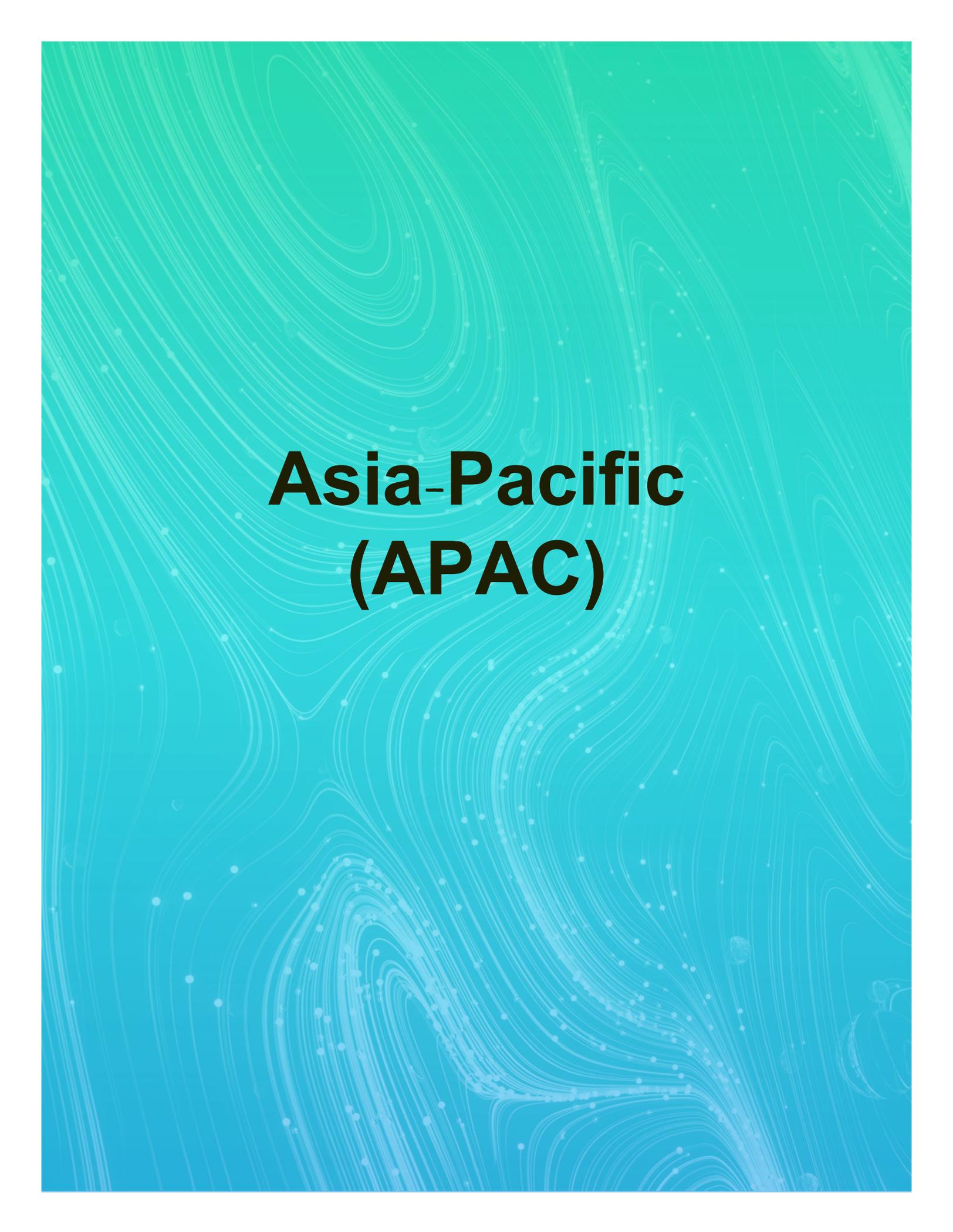
Asia-Pacific (APAC)

APAC

Australia

- **Expansion of digital health & virtual care:** Australia's system is embracing digital models, with telehealth becoming mainstream and tools like wearables and national health records enabling personalized, data driven care that improves access, especially in rural areas.

- **Growing use of AI in healthcare:** AI is helping address workforce shortages and inefficiencies, improving diagnostics, predictive insights and patient monitoring, and enabling proactive, personalized care.

- **Ageing population driving preventive health:** With a rapidly ageing population, the system is focusing on earlier diagnosis, long-term disease management, and preventive strategies to ease pressure on acute services.

India

- **Regulatory evolution:** Initiatives like the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission and the DPDP Act are reshaping healthcare planning, delivery and monitoring, supported by analytics.

- **AI driven healthcare & smart hospitals:** AI tools are being used across early detection, predictive analytics, resource allocation and smart hospital operations, while workforce upskilling supports digital acceleration. reshaping healthcare planning, delivery and monitoring, supported by analytics.

- **Preventive, personalized & virtual care:** Healthcare is shifting towards holistic, connected care models that integrate diagnostics, nutrition, insurance and remote monitoring, with actionable AI and genomic insights supporting chronic disease prevention

Singapore

- **Patient organizations as key partners:** Engagement with patient groups is becoming essential for credibility and impactful communication, especially in crowded markets.

- **Supply resilience & geopolitics as reputational issues:** Healthcare supply chain dynamics are increasingly shaped by industrial policy and geopolitics, influencing access and stakeholder expectations.

- **Value and pricing scrutiny:** Affordability and "value" are under heightened examination, particularly in APAC markets where cost sensitivity and access inequities persist
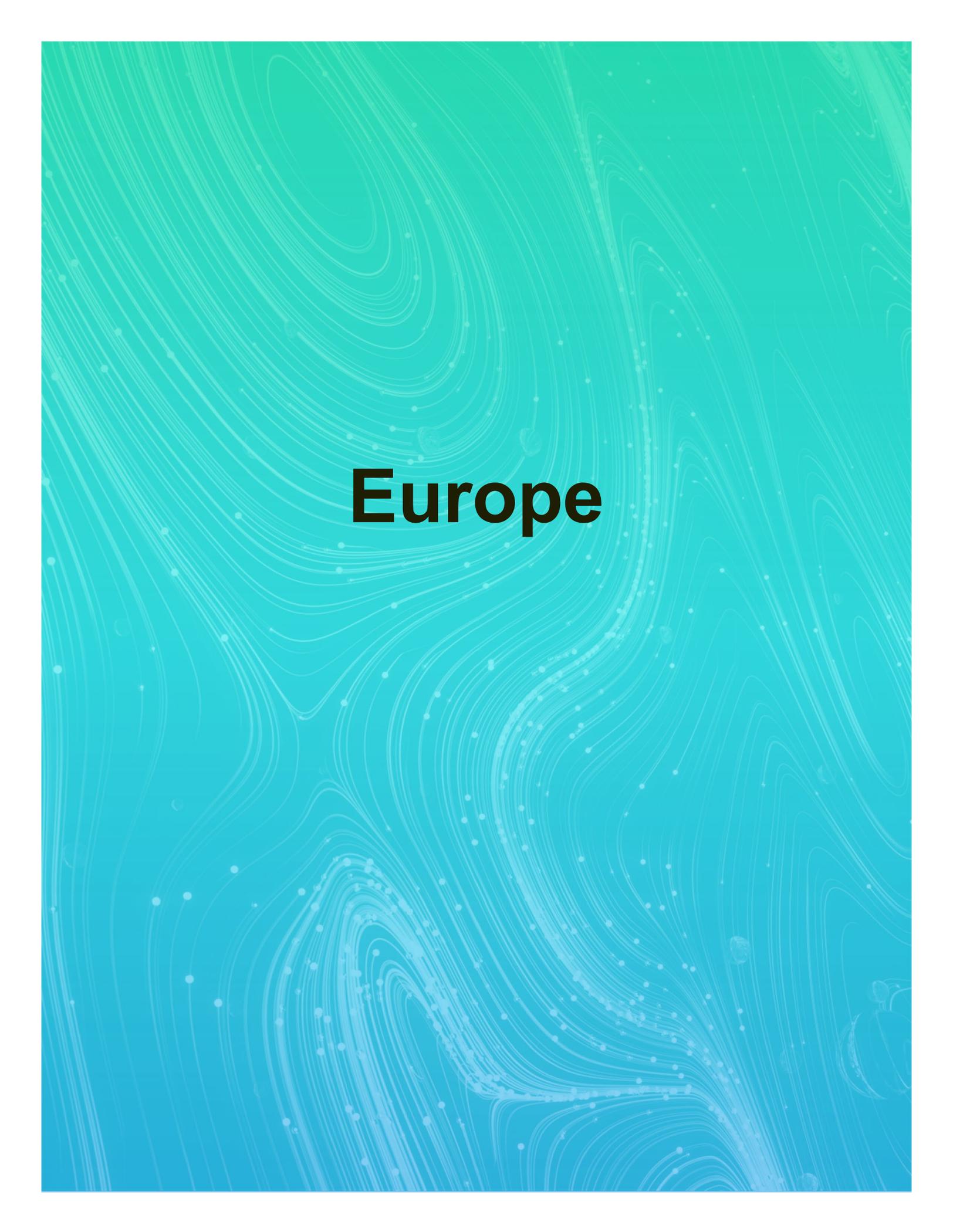
Europe

Europe

United Kingdom

- **From cost control to strategic engagement:** Communications are shifting beyond product claims to narratives on affordability, equity and societal impact, reflecting cost pressures and evolving reimbursement dynamics.

- **Transparency earns trust:** With frameworks like the European Health Data Space increasing cross border- data use, transparency around data governance and patient trust is becoming central to reputation and evidence generation

Spain

- **EU pharmaceutical reform & national Medicines Law:** New regulation will strengthen patient access, supply security and innovation, influencing how medicines are developed and delivered.

- **One Health & sustainability:** Healthcare stakeholders are integrating climate action and social determinants into policy and care design.

- **European Health Data Space (EHDS):** Cross-border data sharing and interoperability are expanding opportunities for delivery, research and innovation.

- **Cybersecurity as strategic priority:** Rising cyberthreats and digitalization make cyber resilience and data governance essential components of healthcare strategy.

Portugal

- **Expansion of home care & hybrid models:** Healthcare services are evolving to combine in person- and remote care, such as home care supported by digital tools, improving continuity and easing hospital pressure

- **Data integration & interoperability:** Advanced analytics and coordinated care require structured, interoperable data despite ongoing governance and technical challenges.

- **Demand for personalized & precision medicines:** Therapies tailored to specific patient subsets, supported by genomics and real-world- evidence, are rising, challenging access, market access strategy and communication planning.

Switzerland

- **Digital health expansion:** Digital transformation continues with Electronic Patient Records (EPR) adoption, telemedicine growth, and AI integration for real-time patient insights. Switzerland's 14th-place ranking in the Global Digital Healthcare Index signals significant room for advancement in this sector.

- **Rising costs and insurance shifts**: Healthcare premiums have increased over 4% due to an aging population, innovative therapies, and medical technology costs. Patients are increasingly choosing telemedicine and GP-referral models to access lower premiums.

- **Pharma and life sciences leadership:** Switzerland maintains its global leadership position through strong investment, political support, and world-class research institutions. The pharmaceutical industry navigates tightening market access constraints while improving early access to innovative medicines and collaborating with patient groups to advance care equity.

- **Precision medicine initiatives:** Personalized medicine is advancing through NAIPO (National AI Initiative for Precision Oncology), a five-year AI integration project for cancer care, and the Swiss Personalized Health Network's new phase, strengthening Switzerland's position in precision health research and clinical data exchange.

Europe (cont'd)

Germany

- **Financial stabilization of Statutory Health Insurance (SHI):** Germany's Statutory Health Insurance system is facing significant financial pressure, with large deficits prompting the government to prepare a strict austerity package aimed at keeping contribution rates stable. As a result, major cost-containment measures are expected, including tougher price negotiations and tighter budget allocations for pharmaceuticals and healthcare services.

- **Hospital reform revision:** The large-scale structural hospital reform, initiated in 2025 to reduce the number of hospitals and centralize clinical expertise, is currently being revised. The updated reform, set to take effect in early 2026, is expected to reshape hospital planning.

- **Advancing digital health through expanded access to research data:** The newly established Research Data Centre (FDZ) is now operational and will grant industry access to longitudinal claims data from approximately 74 million SHI-insured individuals. This marks a major milestone for Real-World Evidence generation.
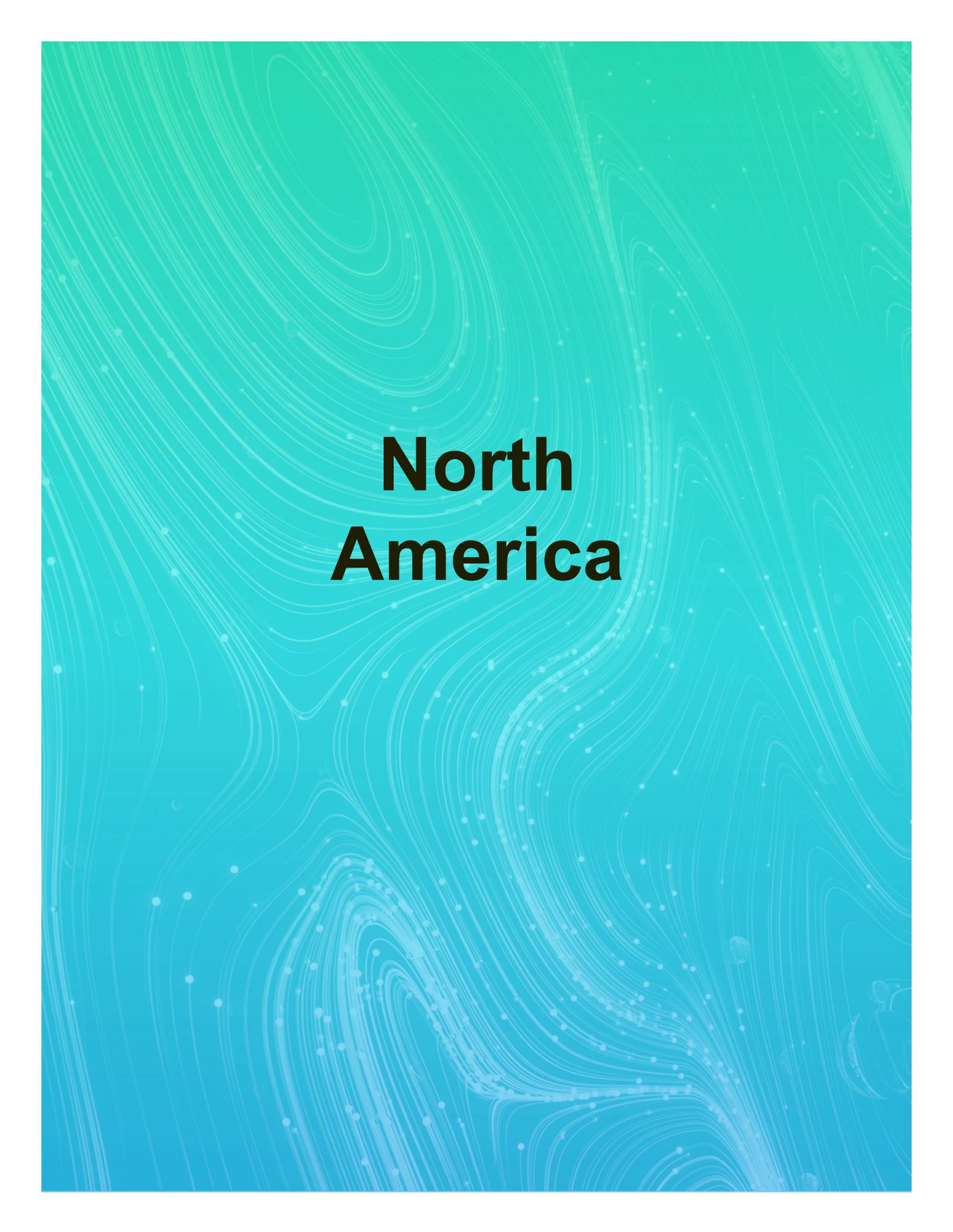
North America

North America

Canada

- **System realities shape communications:** Effective healthcare messaging reflects public system pressures, including access challenges and workforce constraints, to build credibility.

- **Local relevance earns resonance:** Provincial perspectives and local data help tailor communications that connect with regional priorities.

- **Patient voices influence discussion:** Involvement of patients and advocacy groups in policy and public conversations strengthens trust and relevance in healthcare messaging.

United States

- **Drug affordability, pricing pressure, and market access:** Rising healthcare costs and policy uncertainty during Trump's second term, particularly around federal subsidies and Medicare, are intensifying scrutiny of drug pricing, rebates, and formulary access, affecting launch strategies and revenue forecasting.

- **Vaccination policy, uptake, and portfolio risk in biopharma:** Shifts in public health guidance and vaccine confidence are influencing demand for routine and seasonal vaccines, increasing volatility in vaccine markets and elevating the importance of real-world evidence and public engagement.

- **Aging population and chronic-care therapeutics demand:** Demographic aging continues to expand demand for therapies targeting chronic and age-related diseases, driving sustained growth in specialty pharmaceuticals, long-duration treatments, and adherence-focused care models.

Latin America (LATAM)

LATAM

Argentina

- **System-wide efficiency drive:** In 2026, Argentina will step up efforts to optimize healthcare resources and spending across public, private, and social sectors. Focusing on high-impact programs and cost-saving measures will help sustain coverage and quality, with improved productivity and coordination.

- **Public/private system strain:** Ongoing budget constraints will make access harder and may push healthcare professionals toward the private sector. As funding methods and sector roles shift, ensuring fair access and closing coverage gaps will be essential.

- **Telemedicine and digital transformation:** Growth in telehealth, electronic records, and digital prescribing will boost access, especially for underserved groups. Investments in teleconsultation and health apps will support ongoing care, though challenges like interoperability, regulation, privacy, and the digital divide remain.

Brazil

- **Digitalization and AI in pharma:** Companies are accelerating AI use across R&D, clinical trials, market access and supply chains, while digital engagement with healthcare professionals and the public system becomes standard.

- **Access pressure through generics and biosimilars:** Patent expirations and fiscal constraints on SUS (Sistema Único de Saúde) are driving strong growth in generics and biosimilars, forcing multinationals to rethink portfolio strategy and pricing while strengthening local manufacturers.

- **Public-private integration and local production:** Government policies prioritize local manufacturing, technology transfer and long-term supply agreements, making public sector partnerships strategically essential for pharma growth.

- **Regional health diplomacy amid geopolitical shifts:** Brazil's active role in international health diplomacy reflects a trend toward regional multilateralism, affecting vaccine access, surveillance systems and emergency response capacities as global cooperation mechanisms face strain.

Chile

- **Cancer as health priority:** Early detection, access to treatment, prevention campaigns and local research are focal areas for both public and private health sectors.

- **Addressing patient waiting lists:** Initiatives to reduce wait times for consultations, surgeries and treatments are underway through improved primary care and hospital productivity.

- **Infrastructure expansion:** Public and private systems are investing in building and modernizing healthcare facilities to improve reach and equity.

LATAM (cont'd)

Colombia

- **Financial pressure and system sustainability: S**evere financial pressure from rising costs, inflation, aging populations, and high-cost therapies is straining payers and providers and threatening access and stability.

- **Consolidation of digital and hybrid care models:** This consolidation is creating a more accessible, efficient, and scalable healthcare system while opening significant opportunities for to deliver impactful education, communication, and innovation across the medical and pharmaceutical landscape.

- **Shift toward prevention and population health management:** The shift is moving healthcare marketing away from product-focused messaging toward evidence-based, educational strategies that support early diagnosis, adherence, and population-level outcomes while demanding greater scientific rigor and alignment with public health priorities.

Mexico

- **Telehealth & remote engagement:** As smartphone penetration increases, telemedicine and digital health tools are becoming mainstream across Mexico's healthcare ecosystem.

- **Costs & funding challenges:** Balancing cost containment with quality outcomes is shaping policy communications, with focus on workforce efficiency and mental health underfunding.

- **Prevention & wellness models:** There's a clear shift from episodic care to preventive approaches that address chronic conditions, lifestyle factors and broader social determinants of health.