

## Rx Supply Chain

# Monthly GLP-1 sales growth accelerates in November; Rx growth in Dec. stabilizing

Industry Overview

## GLP-1 sales growth +60% in November; +12% m/m

With the increased focus on GLP-1 drugs, we are tracking monthly sales and growth of script (Rx) volumes to see real-time trends. In November, GLP-1 sales trends accelerated to 60% y/y compared to 41% in October and 53% in September while GLP-1 total prescriptions (TRx) increased 47% y/y compared to 46% in October and 56% in September (Exhibit 1). On a sequential basis, GLP-1 sales grew 12% m/m in November vs. (23%) in October and GLP-1 TRx grew 5% m/m in November vs. (0.2%) in October (Exhibit 3). More recently updated weekly TRx data (through the week ending 12/22) is showing script growth is stabilizing at 50% y/y vs. 48% last week and 51% the week before (Exhibit 4). Weekly total new script (NRx) growth for GLP-1s (through the week ending 12/22) was 48% y/y vs. 44% last week and 46% the week prior (Exhibit 5). We note that the GLP-1 category we track includes drugs classified under the Uniform System of Classification (USC) as GLP-1 analogs and anti-diabetes hormones.

## The GLP-1 growth story continues to evolve

BofA's US Pharma and Large Cap Biotech team estimates that patients on GLP-1 medications could reach 10MM in the next few years and 30-50MM by the end of the decade ([link to note here](#)). With the increase in pharma companies beginning to trial oral obesity treatments, we expect to see competitive dynamics continue to evolve as new players emerge in the race to develop anti-obesity drugs. While it is still too early to gauge the efficacy of oral treatments, the diverse pipeline for weight loss drugs is indicative of demand remaining strong throughout 2024. Separately, the recent launch of new weight loss programs from OptumRx and Hims & Hers adds to the growing list of weight management solutions from digital health companies including Teladoc, Ro, Everlywell Health, Form Health, and Noom among others. The rapid pace of emerging weight loss programs could indicate elevated demand for solutions that address weight management and access to GLP-1 drugs. It will be important to monitor growth rates of sales and Rx from GLP-1s moving through 1Q'24 given these dynamics.

## Pharma manufacturers expand capacity to meet demand

Monthly total prescription (TRx) growth accelerated in November with more recently updated weekly data showing stabilization over the past three weeks (through 12/22). As of January 2, 2023, various dosages of Wegovy, Trulicity, and Saxenda are listed on the US Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Drug Shortage List as having limited availability. Pharma manufacturers have continued to address intermittent shortages through investments to support increased production capacity for its diabetes and obesity portfolios. For example, Novo Nordisk (covered by Sachin Jain) recently announced the acquisition of Alkermes for \$92.5MM to expand GLP-1 manufacturing. The follows Novo's \$2.3Bn investment last month in a production facility in France. We anticipate manufacturers will continue to expand capacity for these drugs to increase supply and support continued growth rates for sales and scripts.

## We provide recent news/related analysis in body of note

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GLP-1 – glucagon-like peptide-1

GIP – gastric inhibitory polypeptide

## Additional thoughts and readthroughs

Within the Health Care Tech & Distribution sector, we highlight potential GLP-1 implications across our coverage universe and readthroughs from recent news.

### Competitors enter the weight-loss market w/ obesity pills

In early December, Roche (covered by Sachin Jain) entered into the obesity market through an agreement to acquire Carmot Therapeutics for up to \$3.1Bn (purchase price of \$2.7Bn upfront and potential for \$400MM in milestone payments). Carmot Therapeutics is a biotech with injectable dual GLP-1/GIP receptor agonists and an oral GLP-1 drug in clinical development. Carmot is in the process of developing three molecules that could compete in the obesity and diabetes markets alongside Eli Lilly (covered by Geoff Meacham) and Novo Nordisk. While it is too early to assess the competitive profile of the candidates, the acquisition could increase overall competition as new clinical candidates are introduced. For example, Carmot's candidates include an oral treatment, have the potential for use in tandem with muscle-preserving drugs in its pipeline, and could have possible use for treatment for eye/brain diseases. While the assets are relatively early stage, we could see additional entrants position themselves for the obesity opportunity as pharma companies attempt to improve patient accessibility. However, the efficacy of oral obesity treatments are unclear with Pfizer (covered by Geoff Meacham) recently halting its development of its twice-daily version of oral weight loss drug, danuglipron, due to side effects. As drugmakers add additional candidates to its development pipeline, we expect to see competitive dynamics continue to evolve with new players emerging in the race to develop anti-obesity drugs.

### Emerging new weight management programs

In December, OptumRx debuted a new weight management program, OptumRx Weight Engage to consumers of plan sponsors, including employers, beginning January 1, 2024. OptumRx Weight Engage is a comprehensive program that combines clinical and provider network solutions with patient monitoring, motivation, and support tools. The program provides live and interactive coaching and enrollment into wellness support with a health coach to help patients achieve weight loss goals and provide lifestyle support. Given the ongoing high demand for GLP-1 drugs, pharmacy benefit managers and plan sponsors continue to focus on costs as individual therapies can be upwards of \$10K per year. The program helps to improve outcomes while addressing affordability through supporting consumers in navigating their specific benefit coverage.

Hims & Hers (HIMS) launched a new weight loss program in December that includes digital tracking tools, educational content, and access to medications ([link to our takeaways here](#)). The new offering does not include prescriptions of GLP-1 medications for now, but includes medical treatment regimens including personalized combinations of medications with active ingredients to help suppress appetite. The program leverages digital tracking tools to monitor activity levels, movement, food intake, hydration, and sleep along with ongoing clinical support.

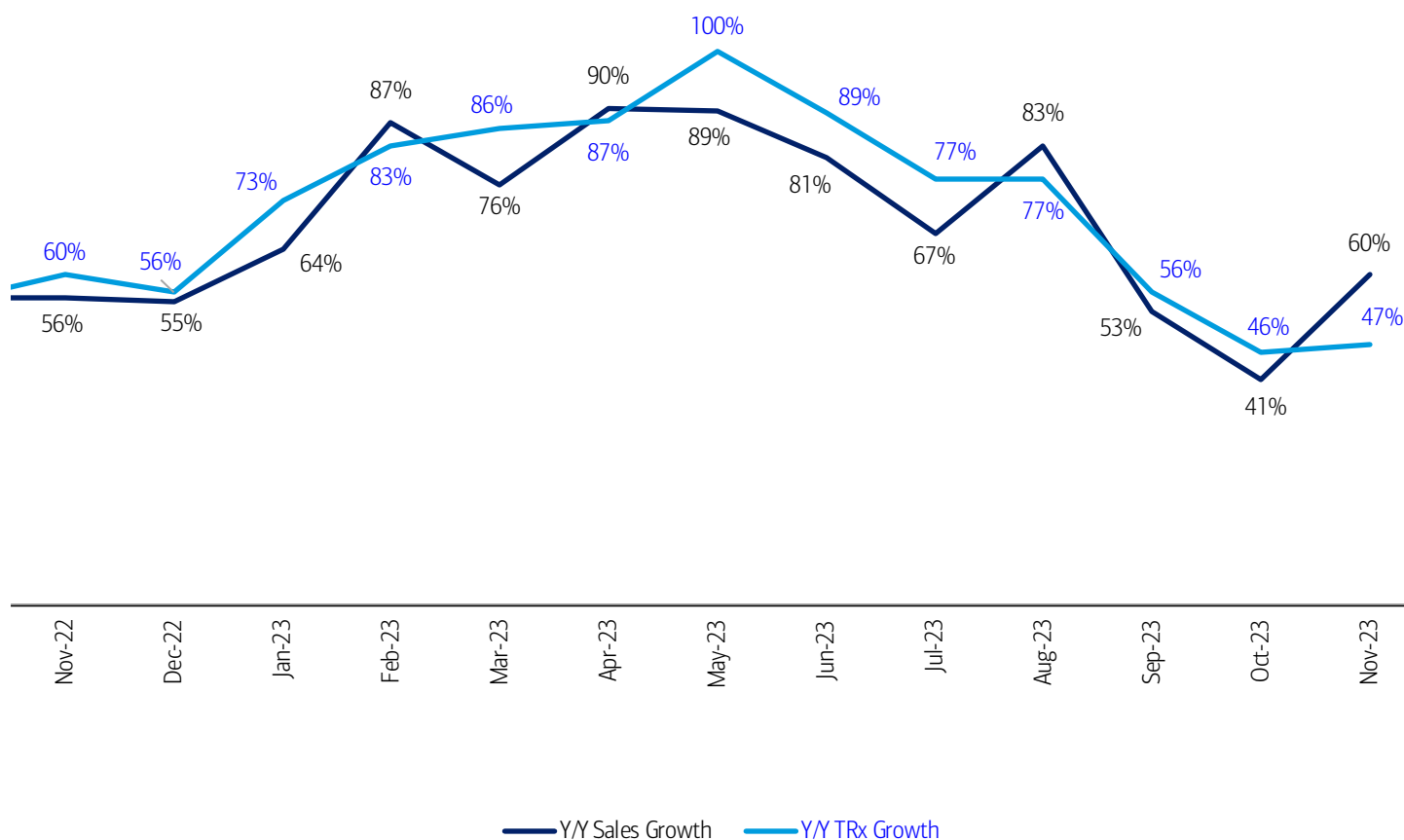
WeightWatchers also launched a new weight management program in December called WeightWatchers Clinic for clinicians to prescribe certain patients GLP-1s and other weight loss drugs. The service will use clinicians previously employed by Sequence, the telehealth provider WeightWatchers acquired in March. Existing Sequence members will begin transitioning to WeightWatchers Clinic and new members will begin the program which will be embedded in the company's app. Additionally, WeightWatchers launched a GLP-1 behavioral program for patients on GLP-1 medications regardless of who prescribed them. The behavioral program supports patients taking GLP-1 drugs with nutrition, hydration, and physical activity.

The elevated demand for GLP-1s have led to an increase in virtual weight management programs that support specific behavioral and nutritional needs patient face while taking the drug. Teladoc (TDOC), Ro, Form Health, and Noom among others have launched virtual weight loss programs with many providing GLP-1 medication prescription

offerings. We note that Teladoc launched a Provider-Based Care for Weight Management & Prediabetes Program in 3Q'23 and we view the company as well positioned to leverage its scale to expand in the weight management space. The biggest question is the potential adoption of lifestyle management programs to manage GLP-1 utilization given elevated cost trends expected for the 2025 selling season. Digital health players offering comprehensive GLP-1 solutions could benefit from the demand for programs that help employers improve outcomes/manage costs. However, higher than expected cost trends could take away from overall digital health budgets in 2025. We continue to see optionality in Teladoc given its ability to leverage its scale through existing relationships with self-insured employers and 90MM members. While it is too early to gauge potential adoption of these programs, the pace of new launches could indicate elevated potential demand for weight management solutions.

#### Exhibit 1: GLP-1 monthly sales and volume growth y/y change (Nov '22 - Nov '23)

In November, total GLP-1 sales grew 60% y/y compared to 41% in October while total GLP-1 Rx grew 47% y/y compared to 46% in October



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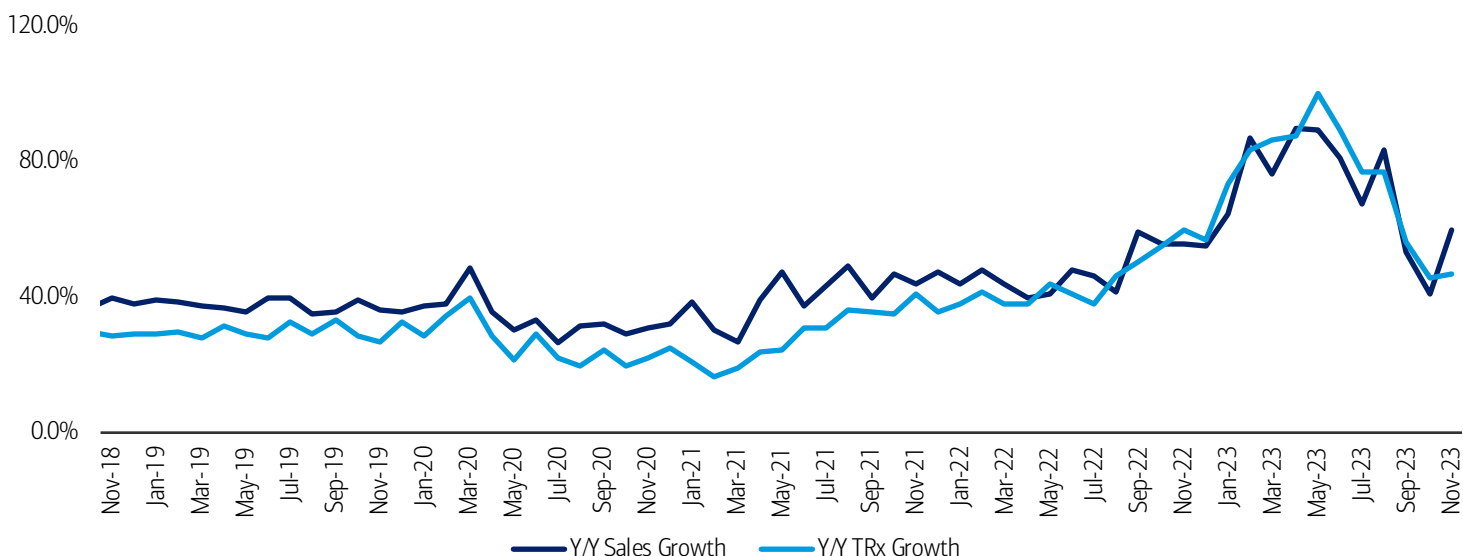
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**Exhibit 2: GLP-1 monthly sales and volume growth y/y change (Nov '18 – Nov '23)**

November total sales and TRx growth for GLP-1s remain elevated, accelerating to the high 50s% and high 40s%, respectively



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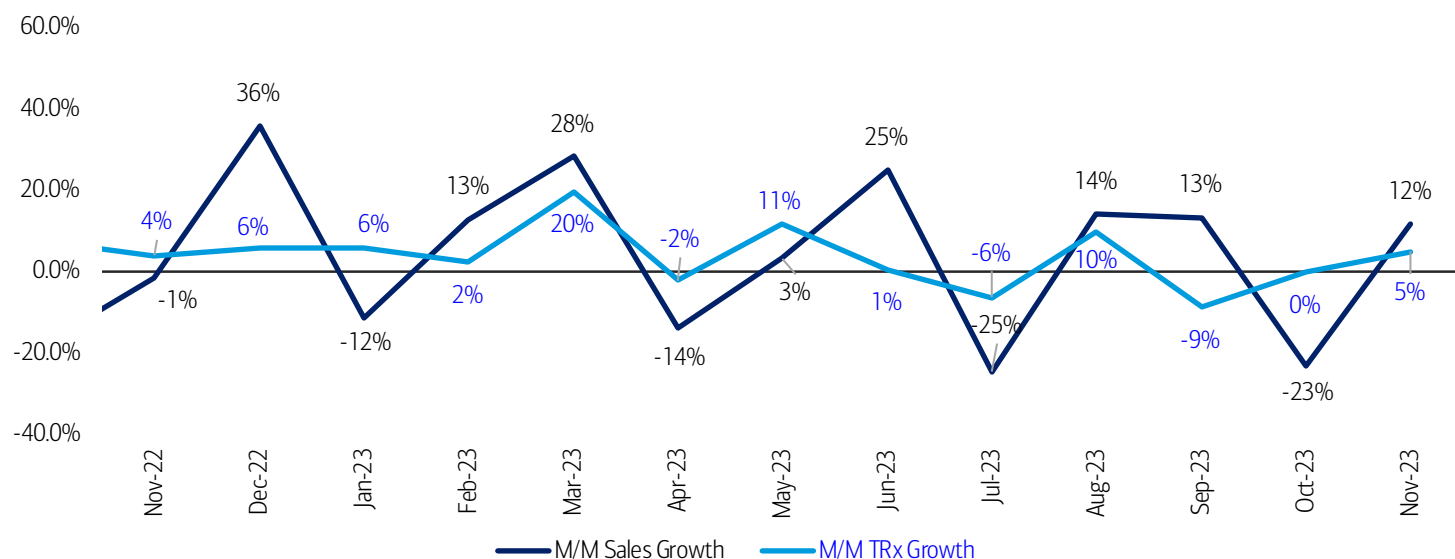
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**Exhibit 3: GLP-1 monthly sales and volume growth m/m change (Nov '22 - Nov '23)**

In November, total GLP-1 sales grew 12% m/m compared to (23)% in October while total GLP-1 Rx grew 5% m/m compared to flat in October



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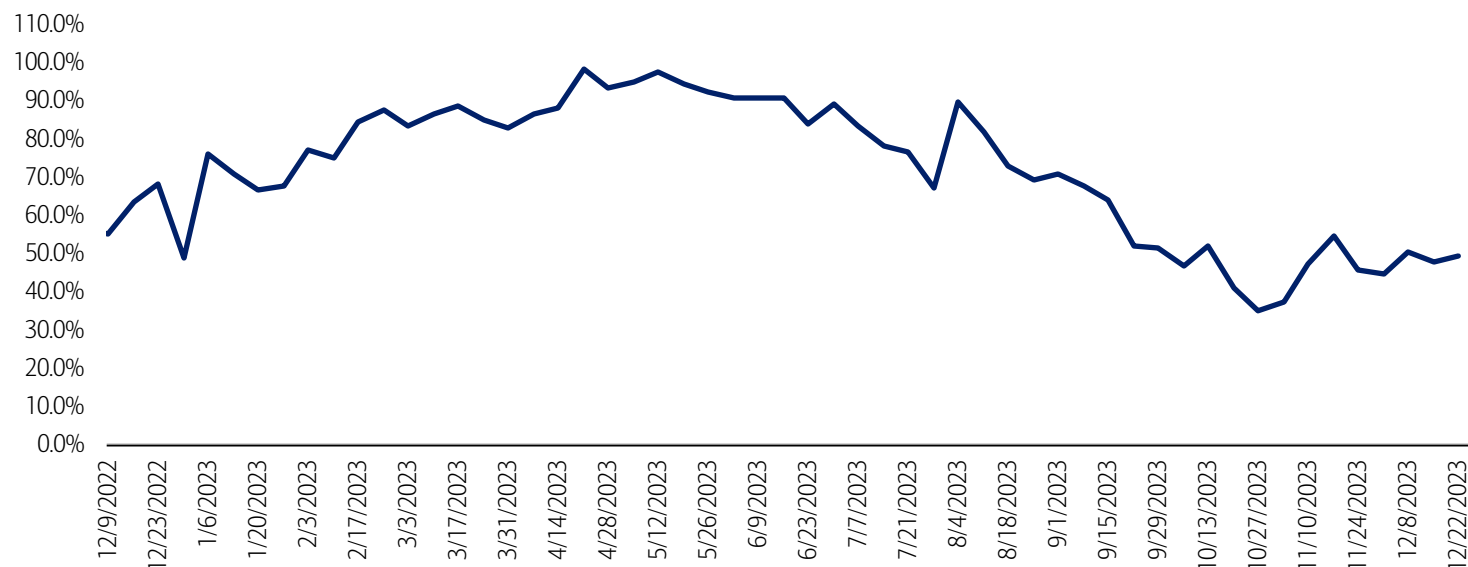
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**Exhibit 4: Weekly Total Rx Volume Growth for GLP-1s (Dec '22- Dec '23)**

Weekly total Rx volumes for GLP-1s increased 50% y/y (for week ending 12/22) vs. 48% y/y the prior week



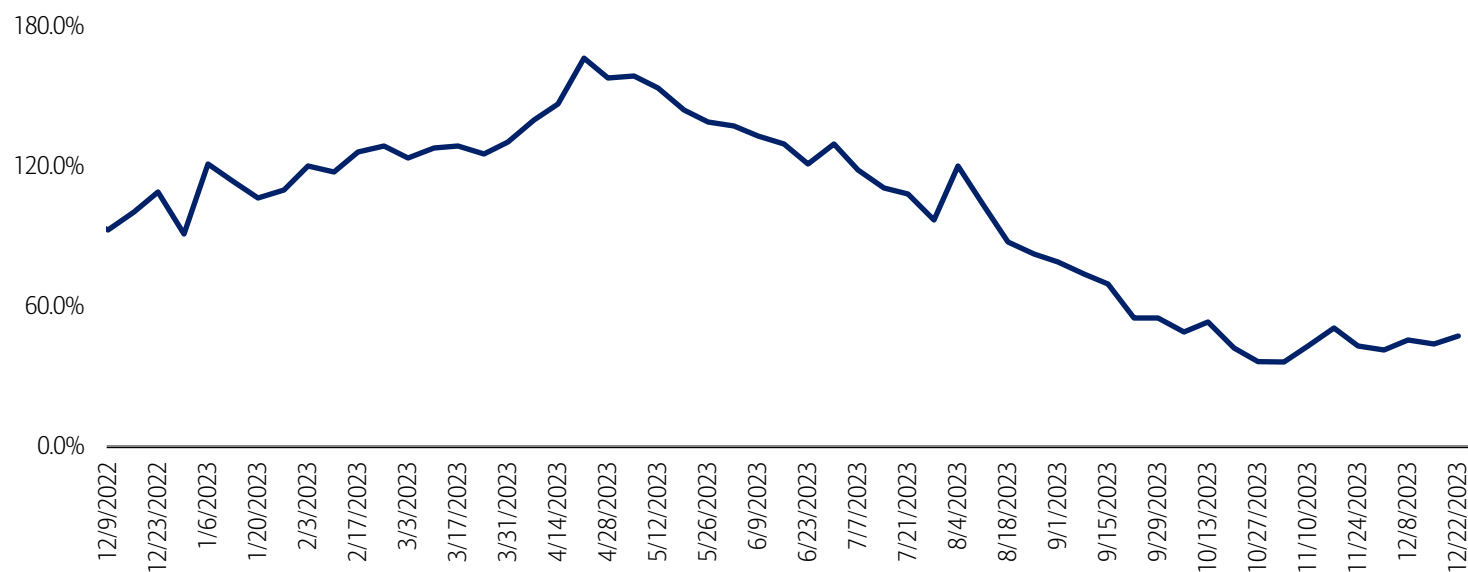
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**Exhibit 5: Weekly New Rx Volume Growth for GLP-1s (Dec '22 – Dec '23)**

Weekly new script growth for GLP-1s is 48% (for week ending 12/22) vs. 44% the prior week



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