

May 2025:

UK Healthcare M&A Update

A look back at April 2025

We see things
differently.

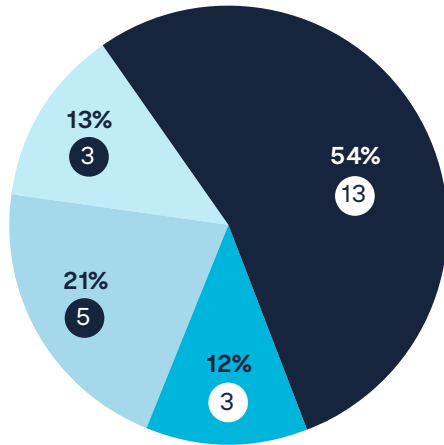
Executive summary

- There were 24 healthcare deals in the UK last month, with 5 announced and 19 completed. This is in line with the 25 deals in April 2024, and marks a strong start to Q2 2025.
- Health and social care deals accounted for 54% of total deal flow, and notably occupational health deals are heating up again. AIM-listed Optima Health (AIM: OPT) announced its second acquisition of the year, acquiring Cognate Health, thus expanding its presence in the Republic of Ireland. Meanwhile, Spire (LSE: SPI) completed its acquisition of Acorn Occupational Health.
- In a similar vein to March 2025, oncology deals continued to dominate the pharma and life science subsector. Notably, Epsilogen completed its acquisition of TigaTx, to create the world's leading pan-isotype cancer antibody company.
- Strategic buyers continued to account for c.80-90% of deal volumes, reinforcing our view that Private Equity will continue to consolidate sectors through bolt-ons. Notably, this month saw a considerable proportion of high value deals, with listed players being particularly acquisitive, across sectors. UK buyers continued to focus strongly on UK-assets, with internal deals accounting for 63% of deal flow.
- The UK obesity crisis is driving innovation and M&A across pharma, digital health, and clinical services. With demand rising, investors are targeting scalable, consumer-focused weight management solutions—from GLP-1 drugs and digital platforms to natural supplements that may aid appetite regulation and metabolic health, offering more accessible and holistic alternatives.
- Following from Q1's trend, April has set a strong stage for the coming months ahead, and Q2 looks poised for increased deal volumes and high value deals. Health and Social Care will likely continue to dominate deal flow, whilst pharma and life sciences could continue to take a large slice of the pie.



Total deals

■ Health & Social Care ■ Pharma & Life Sciences
 ■ Medical Equipment & Devices ■ Healthcare IT

Inbound vs Internal vs Outbound ¹

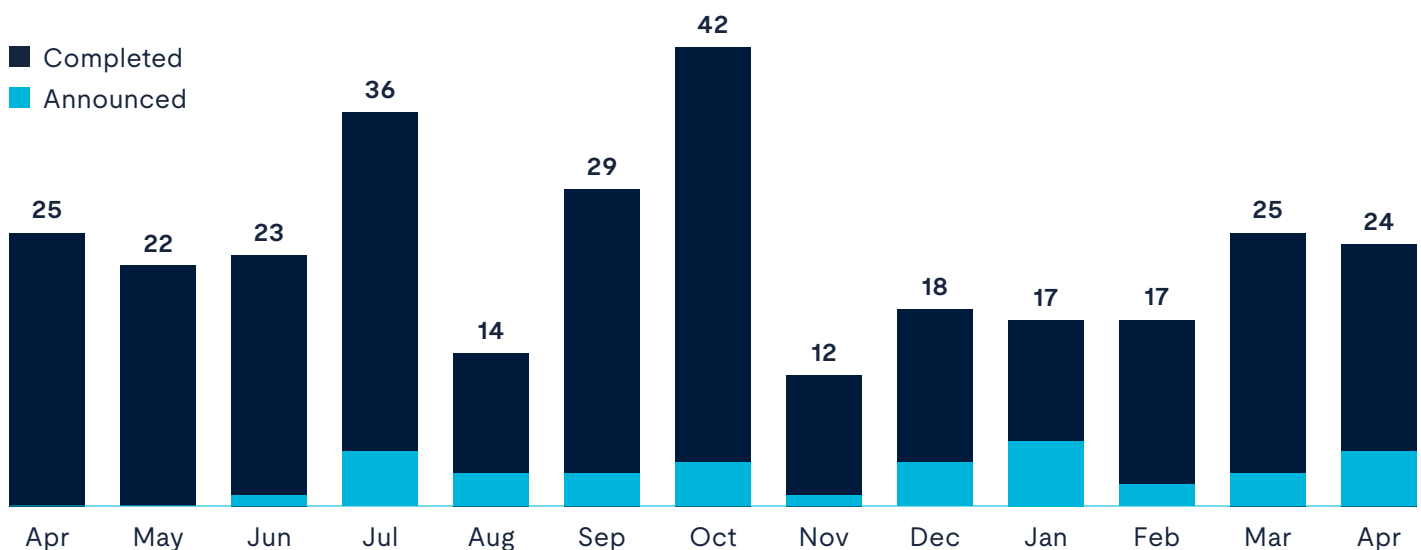
Strategic vs PE buyers

Strategic buyer

PE buyer

Rolling monthly M&A deal flow ²

■ Completed
 ■ Announced



Notes: (1) Inbound: UK target company and non-UK buyer; Internal: UK target company and UK buyer; Outbound: non-UK target company and UK buyer; (2) Data is accurate at the time of publication and accounts for the status of announced and completed deals. Announced deals are counted in the month of announcement and are still live and ongoing, and may or may not complete. Once completed, these deals will be removed from the month of announcement, and will be counted as completed in the relevant month of completion.

Completed deals

Continuing with March's trend, the completed deals occurred predominantly in the health and social care, and pharma and life sciences subsectors, which together accounted for 75% of total deal flow.

Pharma & Life Sciences

Pharma and life sciences deals in April followed March's trend, with three further deals centred around oncology. Similarly to March, two of the three total announced and completed deals featured UK buyers for international assets, and one deal saw an international buyer for a UK-based company.



Mumbai-based **Lupin Healthcare** acquired UK-based **Renaissance Pharma** for £12.3 million, valuing the pharmaceutical company at an EV/Revenue of 3.50x. Renaissance is the sole supplier of 4 speciality products in the UK, including branded injectable cephalosporines for infectious diseases, a topical treatment for ear pain and a branded quinazoline-like diuretic for cardio-vascular and renal indications. The transaction enables Lupin to further enhance their branded medicine portfolio.



UK-based **Epsilon**, acquired US-based **TigaTx**. Epsilon is the global leader in the development of immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibody therapeutics whilst TigaTx is a biotechnology company developing engineered immunoglobulin A (IgA) antibodies. This acquisition will create the world's leading pan-isotype cancer antibody company, bringing improved therapeutics to cancer patients.

Management



UK-based **F-Star Therapeutics** was acquired by **management** and John Lash of the US, from invoX Pharma, a subsidiary of Hong Kong listed Sino Biopharm. F-Star Therapeutics is an innovation focused biotech company, and its proprietary tetravalent bispecific antibody format is designed to ensure focused, potent and safe activation of the immune system in individuals with cancer and other illnesses.

Health & Social Care

Health and social care deals continued to dominate deal flow, accounting for 54% of all healthcare deals. Occupational health and deals in the complex care space dominated this subsector.



UK-based **Spire Healthcare** (LSE: SPI) acquired UK-based **Acorn Occupational Health**, for £3.3 million, with a smaller potential deferred consideration payment being made dependent on EBITDA in the first 12 months post-acquisition. For the period ending December 2024, Acorn Occupational Health reported an EBITDA of £0.63m, at a margin above that of Spire Group, and the implied EV/EBITDA was 5.2x. Acorn provides Occupational Health services to a wide range of corporate clients in multiple industry sectors; as well as public-sector clients, including the NHS.



UK-based **Achieve Together**, one of the leading providers of support for people with learning disabilities and complex needs, acquired **18 homes from Outcomes First**.



UK-based **Assura**, a healthcare REIT, accepted a takeover offer of 49.4p from a consortium formed by **KKR and Stonepeak Partners**, that values it at £1.61bn on a fully diluted basis. Assura is the UK's leading diversified healthcare real estate investment trust (REIT), specialising in the development, investment and management of primary care centres, hospitals and other healthcare properties.

In addition to the deals above, **Sameer Rizvi** acquired Nottingham-based **Monarch Healthcare**, a group of 13 care homes, from Angela Bir, Amit Bir and Hiten Shanghavi. **Greater Manchester Pension Fund**, managed by Tameside Metropolitan Council, acquired care home **Sherwood Grange** for £14.2 million. **St. Bernard's** residential home in Solihull was bought by an undisclosed multi-care home operator. **Uniq Healthcare**, who deliver home healthcare, acquired **Haldane House**, a private nursing home group of 3 homes, in Surrey. Further, **Potens**, who provide specialist residential and supported living services for children and adults with learning disabilities and complex needs, acquired an **Exeter learning disability home**. **The Park Clinic**, a group of 7 dental clinics, was acquired by **Mosaic Dental Group**. **The Counting House Private Day Nursery** acquired **Yorkshire Montessori Nursery Company**. An undisclosed buyer acquired **Pitter Patter Nursery**.

This sector also has representation on page 7;
Deep dive: Case management.

Medical Equipment & Devices

The medical equipment and devices subsector saw two completed and one announced deal.



UK-based **Skyports Drone Services** acquired Australia-based **Redbird Aero**. Redbird Aero leverage cargo Aeromedical Aircraft to bridge critical gaps in emergency medical supply to enhance remote and rural healthcare support efforts. Skyports Drones is the global leader in drone delivery and inspection services for healthcare, maritime, logistics and energy use cases.



UK-based **Dental Directory Group**, backed by Sun European Partners, acquired Italy-based **Elident Group** from the Salvi family. Established >50 years ago, DD Group is the only integrated distribution and demand creation platform for products and services for both dental and medical aesthetics customers, with a catalogue of >30,000 dental, medical aesthetics and adjacent products. Elident is a leading supplier of a wide range of professional consumables and small equipment for dental clinics and dental laboratories across Italy. With an online catalogue of >9,000 items, and advanced logistics, Elident is an important milestone in Dental Directory's ambition to "build the leading dental distribution platform across Europe."

Healthcare IT

Healthcare IT notably saw deals across data analysis, supply chain fulfilment, and marketing.



UK-based **Finlayson Media**, backed by Coniston Capital, completed the acquisition of an unknown majority stake in UK-based **Xcelerator Dental**. FMC is a dental media brand, connecting dental professionals through multiple channels including online via dentistry.co.uk, exhibitions, and publications including Dentistry and Private Dentistry. Xcelerator Dental is a dental digital marketing agency, helping dental clinics grow their customer base.



UK-based **REAL Digital International** acquired UK-based **INICIO**. REAL Digital provide healthcare supply chain fulfilment, management and medical kitting services whilst INICIO offer clinical system integration, intelligent automation and bespoke Oracle Cerner enhancements.

This sector also has representation on page 8;
Deep dive: Enhancing patient experience.



Deep dive: Case management

There has been an increase in interest and acquisition appetite in case management providers. Case management helps individuals with long-term conditions with care planning, care co-ordination, and monitoring. The UK's case management market size is projected to grow further, facilitated by digital health technologies which place a strong emphasis on patient-centric care models.

In April, there was 1 relevant deal in this sector:



UK-based **Health & Care Management**, backed by Apposite Capital, a provider of rehabilitation case management and occupational healthcare services, acquired UK-based **Independent Living Solutions**, a provider of case management services for children, young people and adults with catastrophic injury. Acquiring ILS will add an additional 40 specialist case managers into HCML. This acquisition comes following the addition of CA Case Management, specialists in brain injury case management and expert witness to HCML in 2023.

Deep dive: Enhancing patient experience

The last few years have seen an increase in the development and adoption of apps and other technology enhancements, in order to enhance the patient experience. Technology has been used to improve case management, patient coordination, operational efficiencies, and overall patient satisfaction.

In April, there was 1 relevant deal in this sector:



UK-based **VitalHub** agreed to acquire UK-based **Induction Healthcare Group** (AIM: INHC) for £9.4m, and each Induction shareholder will be entitled to receive £0.10 in cash for each Induction share held. The cash consideration represents a c. 66.7% premium to the closing middle-market price. The transaction represents an EV/Revenue of c. 0.51x. VitalHub supports healthcare organisations to transform the way they capture and analyse data to improve patient flow and better coordinate patient care services across planned and unplanned care, mental health, and workforce and compliance. Induction Healthcare Group supports healthcare professionals through digital solutions to enhance operational efficiencies, reduce costs and elevate the patient experience.

Other relevant announced deals



UK-based **Investindustrial** acquired Ireland-based **DCC Healthcare** for £945 million, with £820 million being paid in cash, and a £130 million unconditional deferred amount. The transaction valued DCC at £1.05 bn, at an EV/EBIT of 12.0x. DCC Healthcare operates through the UK and America in manufacturing, distribution and commercial centres, marketing and selling a range of high-quality own brand and third-party medical products and devices.



UK-based **Optima Health** (AIM: OPT) agreed to acquire Republic of Ireland-based **Cognate Health** for a total transaction value of £7.6m, comprised of c.£6.0m cash and a c.£1.6m cash earn-out. The transaction values Cognate at an EV/Revenue of 1.2x. Optima Health is the UK's leading provider of technology enabled corporate health and wellbeing solutions, and Cognate Health is an occupational health services company, and so the acquisition gives cross selling opportunities, as well as revenue synergies. This marks Optima Health's second acquisition of the year, having acquired BHSF in January for £1.4m.



Canada-based **Medicus Pharma** (Nasdaq: MDCX) acquired UK-based **Antev** for £8.3m. Antev is a clinical stage biotechnology company, developing Teverelix, a next generation GnRH antagonist, a first in market products for cardiovascular high-risk prostate cancer patients and patients with first acute urinary retention (AURr) episodes due to enlarged prostate. The transaction is for all of the issued and outstanding Antev shares, on a fully-diluted basis, in exchange for 2.67m common shares of Medicus.



UK-based **Haleon** (LSE: HLN) agreed to acquire a 12% stake in **Tianjin TSKF Pharmaceutical Co.** for £168m, giving Tianjin an implied enterprise value of £1.40bn. The transaction will be through a combination of cash and debt. Haleon is a global leader in consumer health, overseeing a portfolio which includes brands such as Panadol and Sensodyne. TSKF was founded as a JV between Haleon, TPG and DRTG, and manufactures and distributes OTC products in China under Haleon's branding. The transaction brings Haleon's stake from 55% to 88%, enabling them to cement their footing in China, which they see as a key strategic market.

Deep dive: UK weight loss market M&A opportunities

Obesity remains a major public health issue in the UK, with over 26% of adults classified as obese and 38% overweight, placing a heavy burden on the NHS and the wider economy. The rise of GLP-1 receptor agonists such as Wegovy and Mounjaro has driven a rapid shift in the weight-loss landscape, with strong clinical outcomes but also significant supply constraints and regulatory scrutiny. As demand soars, both digital and physical pharmacies have expanded access, while invasive surgical options remain available but increasingly complemented by non-surgical clinics.



This has sparked a wave of M&A activity. Pharma giants like Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, and Roche have made billion-pound acquisitions to strengthen obesity drug pipelines. Smaller UK firms like Chronos Therapeutics and Zhipp have also been acquired, proving mid-market players remain attractive. Meanwhile, WeightWatchers has seen a significant decrease in demand for its services due to competition from Wegovy, and was a significant reason for its £860m debt write-off and bankruptcy filing.

Alongside pharmaceutical treatments, demand is rising for non-drug GLP-1 alternatives. Nutraceutical and supplement brands now offer OTC products claiming to boost natural GLP-1 production, using ingredients like berberine, bitter melon, and chromium to promote appetite control and weight loss. Innovations such as Kind Patches' transdermal "GLP-1 patches" aim to deliver similar effects without injections or prescriptions. While scientific backing varies, growing consumer interest is driving a parallel weight-loss market that could appeal to wellness and healthcare investors seeking alternatives to pharma-led models.

Solutions are emerging through vertical integration of pharmaceutical supply chains, holistic weight management centres, and tech-enabled platforms leveraging AI and telemedicine.

HELIGAN INTELLIGENCE

Looking ahead, solutions are emerging through vertical integration of pharmaceutical supply chains, holistic weight management centres, and tech-enabled platforms leveraging AI and telemedicine. With the UK market projected to reach £1.5 billion by 2027, the next wave of growth will likely come from scalable, integrated care models and digital tools—particularly as global policy shifts, like RFK Jr.'s appointment in the US, inject uncertainty into pharma-led approaches. Investors that anticipate the consumer-led, tech-driven evolution of obesity care will be well-positioned to benefit.

For more information, see our blog post [here](#).

Corporate Finance healthcare team

Our Heligan Corporate Finance team, seasoned across sectors and mid-market deal sizes, delivers exceptional, insight-driven results through deep expertise and a robust network.



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