

Market Pulse

February 2026

Market Highlights

- Biopharma dealmaking remained strong, highlighted by Gilead's \$7.8B Arcellx partnership and Eli Lilly's \$2.4B Orna acquisition, while IPO markets reopened with Eikon's \$381M raise despite a softer debut from Generate Biomedicines.
- Clinical and regulatory momentum advanced, with positive mid-stage obesity data, FDA acceptance of a CAR-T BLA for multiple myeloma, and early prostate cancer immunotherapy signals reinforcing pipeline progress.
- Venture funding extended its rebound for a second consecutive quarter in 2025, with capital concentrating into fewer, larger asset-centric and platform-driven biotech companies as exit momentum gradually improve.

Investment and M&A Activity

- **M&A:** Gilead Sciences \$7.8B cancer therapy partner Arcellx, expanding their cell therapy development collaboration on CAR-T therapy for myeloma.
- **M&A:** Eli Lilly \$2.4B Orna Therapeutics, strengthening Eli's commitment to cell and gene therapy for autoimmune diseases.
- **IPO:** Eikon Therapeutics priced an upsized \$381M Nasdaq offering at \$18 per share, with proceeds allocated to Phase 2/3 trials of lead cancer therapy drugs.
- **Partnership:** Novo Nordisk partners with Vivtex (up to \$2.1B), leveraging the platform's drug delivery technology for oral obesity drugs.



Academic & Clinical Insights

- **Key Breakthrough:** Novo Nordisk and United Laboratories report positive Phase II data for UBT251, demonstrating ~19.7% weight loss and improved metabolic markers in obesity patients in China.
- **Approvals:** FDA acceptance of the BLA for anito-cel CAR-T therapy signals progress toward approval for a transformative multiple myeloma treatment.
- **Clinical Milestones:** Early clinical data for VIR-5500 show significant PSA reductions, marking a meaningful clinical milestone in prostate cancer immunotherapy.

Company Spotlights

- **Nasdaq debut and market performance:** Generate Biomedicines completed its IPO, raising ~\$400 m; shares closed ~6 % below the IPO price in initial trading, reflecting cautious investor sentiment despite strong capital raise.
- **AI-driven drug discovery strategy:** The company uses AI to design novel protein therapeutic candidates and will use most of its funding to advance late-stage development of its lead asthma drug, GB-0895.
- **Pipeline focus:** GB-0895 remains in Phase III trials for severe asthma, representing a key proof-point for AI-enabled biotherapeutics.

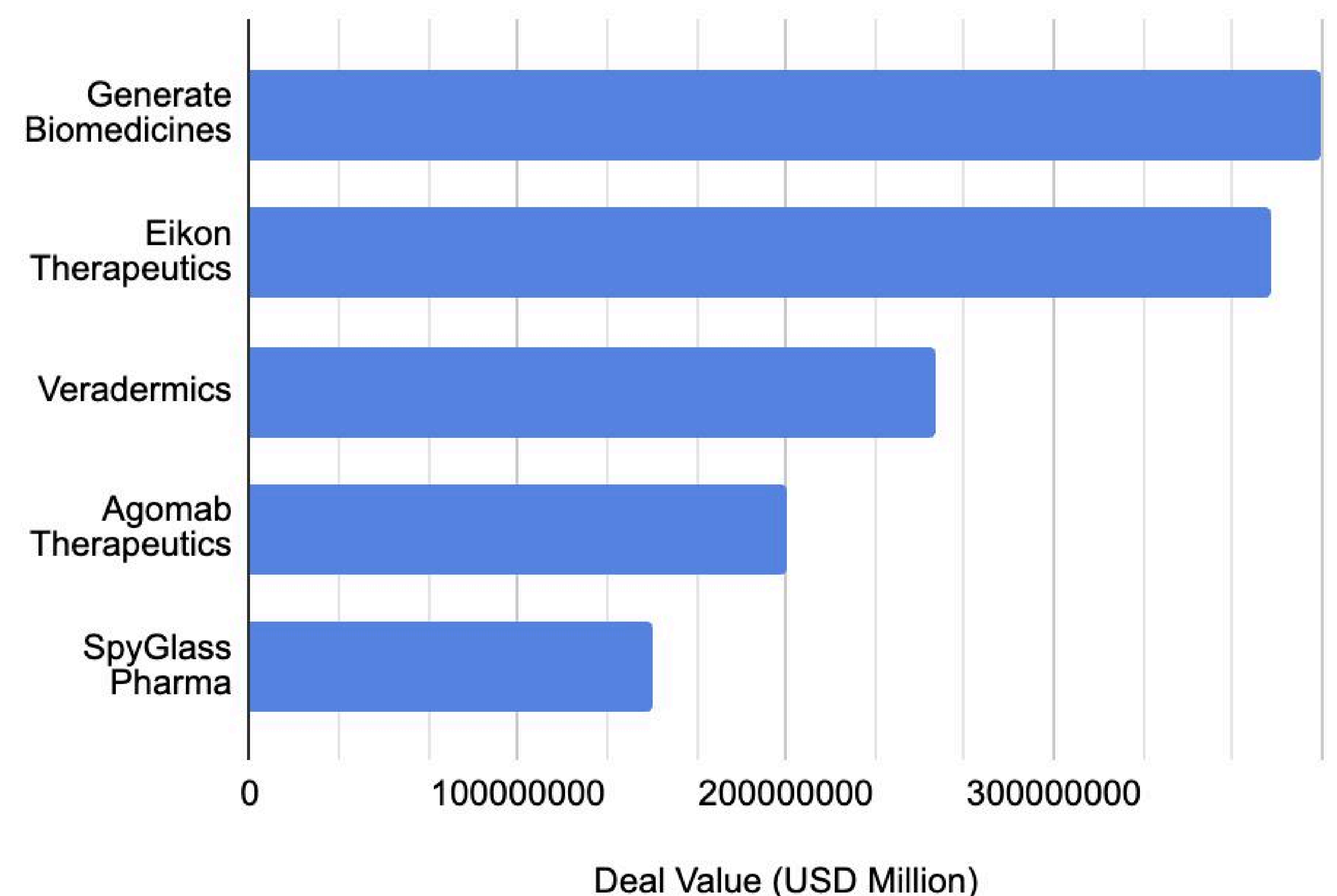
Regulatory & Policy

- FDA announced pilot bonus programme for reviewers completing drug evaluations ahead of schedule, part of broader changes aimed at speeding reviews and reshaping approval processes.
- UK MHRA paused puberty-blocker (Pathways) clinical trial due to safety concerns, highlighting ongoing regulatory scrutiny of trial protocols and participant protections.
- FDA proposes faster approvals for personalised and gene therapies, allowing smaller early-stage trials to support approval, with further data required after launch.

Investor and Market Sentiment

- **Market Outlook:** Biopharma's recovery in venture funding is contingent on a steadier FDA and policy backdrop, with ongoing regulatory volatility identified as a central threat to maintaining this disciplined rebound.
- **VC Pulse:** Biopharma VC funding rose for a second straight quarter in 2025, concentrating into fewer, larger deals, as exit momentum improved around asset-centric and platform biotech companies.
- **Biotech IPOs:** Biotech equity markets are re-opening in 2026, with IPO volumes recovering from 2025 lows but remaining disciplined and focused on late-stage, data-rich companies in high-demand therapeutic areas.

Top Biotech Capital Raises & IPOs (Feb 2026)



Regional Activity (Greater Manchester)

- **New lab and R&D facilities:** Vortex Biotech opened a state-of-the-art laboratory facility at Manchester Science Park, expanding regional capacity for precision oncology research, clinical validation, biomarker discovery and molecular profiling work
- **Innovation support:** Following the Old Trafford Mayoral Development Corporation launch, ongoing long-term frameworks are in place for regeneration, new jobs, and infrastructure, supporting Greater Manchester's wider innovation ecosystem.