

# Healthcare Entrepreneurs Express Hope, Concern Over RFK Jr. Confirmation

Startups hope Robert F. Kennedy Jr. will streamline federal regulation and funding

[Brian Gormley](#) Feb. 14, 2025 at 5:30 am ET



While several entrepreneurs expressed optimism, some said they were concerned vaccines could become more difficult to develop under his tenure. Kennedy has previously linked

vaccines to autism and called for more testing and making vaccine-safety data public.

The Trump administration's pro-business tone bodes well for life sciences and the Food and Drug Administration could grow more efficient under Kennedy's leadership of HHS, said Stephanie Sirota, partner and chief business officer of healthcare investor RTW Investments.

"In an ideal world, RFK Jr. would embrace the theme of government efficiency and apply that to the drug approval process, making lifesaving therapies more rapidly available in this country," Robert Williamson, president and acting chief executive of biotech company Triumvira Immunologics, added.

Kennedy is a proponent of using [food as medicine](#), leading some executives to believe he will push for increased insurance coverage for preventive-health services.

"The best way to make America healthy again is to double down on investment in services to prevent illnesses before they start," said Casey Hite, co-founder and CEO Aeroflow Health, which helps patients gain access to insurance-covered medical equipment and supplies.

Some hope for faster turnaround times for federal grants.

For example, Dr. Hernan Bazan, co-founder and CEO of

biotech startup South Rampart Pharma, said the National Institutes of Health has supported his company with grant funding. Still, it can take nine to 12 months for a successful applicant to receive the funding, a timeline that, if condensed, would help startups be more innovative.

"There is a lot of capital that gets burned while you're waiting for funding," Bazan added.

Kennedy's skepticism of vaccines could lead to policies that deter venture investment in vaccines, a field that already receives relatively [little funding](#), said Michael Schrader, who previously co-founded and headed Vaxess Technologies, a developer of a patch used to deliver vaccines and drugs, and now leads a neurotechnology startup.

Now, the FDA could make requirements even more stringent and federal agencies may provide less funding for vaccine research, Schrader added, noting that, "The process of seeking approval for vaccines is grueling."

While traditional vaccine development might slow, investment in alternative therapeutics, immune-boosting treatments, and decentralized biotech innovation could surge, said Amir Heshmatpour, executive chairman of biotech company NeOnc Technologies.

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