



# *Finding* **THE RHYTHM**

Focused on neuroscience and oncology with operations around the world, Jazz Pharmaceuticals has established itself as a rising star in its sector. We spoke to COO Chris Tovey to discover the secret to Jazz's momentum.

**CHRIS TOVEY**

Chief Operating Officer (COO),  
Executive Vice President and Managing  
Director of Europe and International  
@ Jazz Pharmaceuticals





Since being founded in 2003, Jazz Pharmaceuticals has embarked on a remarkable nineteen-year journey. A series of acquisitions and collaborations have seen the company grow to become a significant player across multiple continents. Headquartered in Dublin, the company has a strong commercial and operational footprint across Europe and North America and is rapidly expanding its presence in the Asia-Pacific region. Jazz is a market leader in narcolepsy and a world leader in cannabis-based medicines, with products currently available in nearly 75 countries worldwide.

COO Chris Tovey joined Jazz in May 2021, following the company's acquisition of GW Pharmaceuticals, and was immediately struck by the enormous potential of his new surroundings at Jazz.

"We're lucky. We have some really good people, and importantly, we take our responsibilities incredibly seriously. Anyone working in our sector needs to do that. In pharmaceuticals you have the opportunity to help improve people's quality of life. The acknowledgment of that, the central-

ity of the end users, patients, is at the forefront of everything we do. It is what Jazz is all about."

#### Getting in the groove

Tovey approached his new role with the benefit of thirty years' experience in the sector. Prior to taking up his post at GW, his CV included positions at entities of all sizes, including UCB Pharma and GlaxoSmithKline, and encompassed most sides of the business, from sales to



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marketing to general management, with a largely international focus. Neurology, oncology, psychiatry, vaccines, anti-infectives—Tovey has worked on all of it.

"By the time I took up an executive role at GW in 2012, I was experienced in many facets of the pharma business," he explains. "I felt ready for a new challenge. Joining GW, I could see that if we achieved what we wanted to achieve, there would be huge benefits for patients, and that really stuck with me. It was simply the right opportunity at the right time."

Tovey then spent the next nine years at GW helping to build the company. A new class of medicines—and several new products—were brought to market, including treatments for childhood-onset epilepsies, while the company was listed on the US stock exchange under his operational leadership. Then the acquisition by Jazz, he says, arrived "at an interesting point."

"By that time, GW had established itself as the world leader in cannabinoid science and developing regulatory approved cannabis-based medicines. What we needed, though, was greater power as an organisation to get to the next level. Jazz has a strong presence →





in neuroscience and oncology and is a market leader in sleep medicine, so there was a complementary set of products and experiences. So the Jazz acquisition heralded the start of another extremely exciting period.”

**Pulling it all together**

A process of integration followed the acquisition with GW and Jazz operations combining to form a unified team. Due to the will on both sides to forge ahead for the benefit of patients, the acquisition has been smooth and relatively painless. Importantly, the genesis of both companies was around improving the lives of patients and their families, meaning that their corporate philosophies were able to combine seamlessly, and there were many more commonalities than differences.

“Both companies were set up by people who were passionate,” Tovey says, “and really believed in what they were trying to achieve. So when I first started working for Jazz, it was immediately apparent to me how similar the two companies were, which obviously has been a tremendous help in getting started as a new single organisation.”

A year on from the acquisition in May 2021, most aspects of the business have now been fully integrated—commercial, manufacturing, R&D—with only some elements of the IT systems yet to be completely merged. As acquisitions go, it appears to have taken shape extremely quickly.

**Looking ahead**

With the integration behind them, the executive team at Jazz has a bold vision for the company’s immediate future. Known as ‘Vision 2025’, the plan is to develop key areas in its neuroscience and oncology portfolio. This ambitious programme will not only boost revenue but see a significant increase in the number of patients who benefit from Jazz’s products around the world.

Jazz continues to invest in its expanding R&D capabilities to grow and leverage its in-house expertise. In the last five years, Jazz has increased its R&D efforts in scale, investment, and scope. Jazz’s existing pipeline has expanded four-fold since 2015 with 18 novel candidates currently in preclinical and clinical development (as of April 2022). By the end of the decade, the company intends to have introduced at least five novel medicines. By any company’s measure, this is an ambitious goal—but one which Chris feels passionate about delivering against.

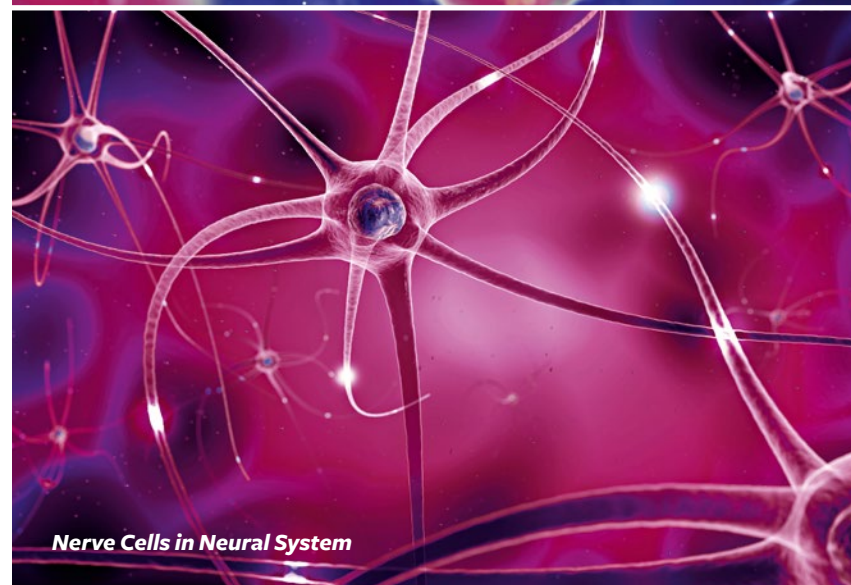
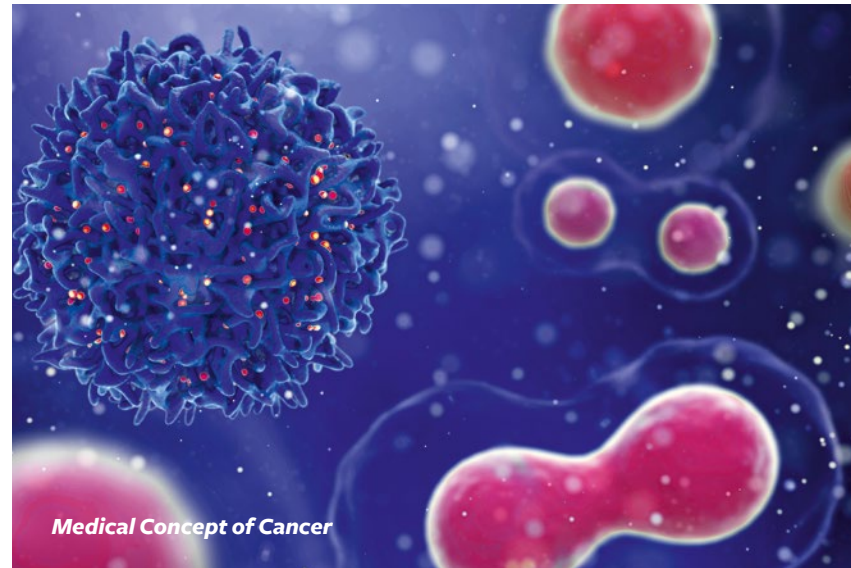
“The good news is that Jazz is commercially smart,” Tovey explains. “It has a strong commercial product offering, which not all science-led companies have. We’re working in important disease areas, and our future promise of even more of this is a really invigorating effort to be involved with. We’ve put that flag in the ground for 2025, but we’re going to continue to develop the way we work and what we offer to achieve sustainable growth well beyond 2025.”

Alongside Jazz’s plans for further growth and expansion lies something else which underpins its success so far. While a patient-centric approach influences all aspects of the business model, the company takes its responsibility to its own people very seriously too. Baked into

the Jazz DNA is the belief that it should be a great place to work, somewhere where good people stay and feel they can thrive in an atmosphere of shared values.

**The new normal**

One big challenge that all organisations have faced and been tested by in the past few years is COVID. It is a great testament to the Jazz staff that post COVID, Jazz’s manufacturing facilities in Athlone, Ireland; Villa Guardia, Italy; and Kent Science Park, UK, are fully operational with employees working on-site and remotely as business needs require. And the company currently expects to have adequate global supply of all products for 2022.



“It’s all about making Jazz the best place to work and delivering for patients,” Tovey says. “I really believe we show a huge commitment to our people here, and that has multiple effects on staff retention and engagement. This is a people business in every way, both internally and externally. We want our people to produce their best work and to be their best, authentic selves.”

Naturally, sustainability is also a key focus. As with companies in all business sectors worldwide, environmental issues play an ever-increasing role in Jazz’s day-to-day concerns. Environmental-, social-, and governance-related issues are central to Jazz’s strategy, and the company is guided by third-party frameworks such as the *Sustainability Accounting Standards*



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Board (SASB). These criteria are then used to inform all aspects of the business, from R&D to manufacturing and across the supply chain.

All of this contributes to an image of a company very much ‘riding a wave’ towards a bright future. The past has been impressive, but with impetus from its recent acquisition providing a further jolt of energy, there is little reason to doubt that Jazz will continue to grow its business and its reputation.

“I’m very proud of what we do,” Tovey says, “and I’m also proud about how we do it—and the people in our organisation responsible for that. I know we’re out there making a positive difference in the world. That’s what it’s all about, isn’t it?”