



IFPW Holds 1st CEO Roundtable Meeting Since Pre-Pandemic

(Source: An article by Christina Tucker of IFPW)

March 7th marked IFPW's first CEO Roundtable since May of 2019, and the New York City event did not disappoint its attendees. The enthusiasm for meeting again in-person was evident by all those who attended and presented. For those that were unable to participate due to continuing COVID restrictions, the meeting was livestreamed via Zoom so it could be watched in real-time. More than 30 companies from 19 countries were represented.

The event kicked off with a welcome reception and dinner at the Pierre Hotel, also the location of the meeting. New York City provided a perfect backdrop as mask and vaccine mandates were dropped by the city just prior to the meeting due to extremely low COVID infection rates.

The following morning, attendees received a warm welcome from IFPW President Mark Parrish and IFPW Chairwoman Ornella Barra (Chief Operating Officer, International for Walgreens Boots Alliance) to open the day's business program.



IFPW Chairwoman, Ornella Barra, welcomes participants to the first IFPW CEO Roundtable in nearly three years.

A full day of timely and relevant sessions began with a live presentation from perennial favorite Doug Long of IQVIA, along with colleagues Per Troein, Jeff Spaeder, Simon Tottman and Max Newton who provided recorded presentations. The IQVIA

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In Brief...

- ◆ **Novartis** has signed an initial agreement with **Carisma Therapeutics**, a biopharmaceutical pioneer in engineered macrophage-based therapeutics, to manufacture the *HER 2* targeted *CAR-M* cell therapy, which is tested in initial trials for the treatment of solid tumors. Under the terms of the initial agreement, the Carisma Therapeutics manufacturing process will be transferred to the Novartis Cell Therapy Site in Morris Plains, U.S, starting in the coming days. Clinical manufacturing is planned to begin in 2023.

- ◆ **Sanofi** and **AstraZeneca (AZN)** remain in a strong position in the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) market after the release of Phase III data, with Pfizer closely behind. Sanofi/AZN's Melody Phase III results showed that their antibody *nirsevimab* cut cases of medically attended lower respiratory tract infections caused by RSV by 74.5% compared to placebo. However, less encouragingly, the trial failed to produce a significant improvement in the risk of hospitalization from RSV, which represents the biggest risk to infants.

- ◆ **Pfizer** has signed a distribution agreement with China's state-owned **Meheco Group** for the distribution in the country of Pfizer's oral antiviral for COVID-19 *Paxlovid* (*nirmatrelvir* with *ritonavir*). Meheco appears to have been chosen for the partnership due to its contributions to China's control of the pandemic so far, and received the "Group Award to Fight COVID" from the Chinese Communist Party, the State Council and Central Committee of the People's Liberation Army, noted on the company website. *Paxlovid* gained emergency use approval in China in early March.

- ◆ Nanomedicines - typically drugs hidden within nanoscopic fatty membranes ('liposomes') - have potential to transform chemotherapy treatments, improving drug delivery and reducing toxic side effects for thousands of cancer patients every year. Now, the world's first research conducted by the **University of South Australia** has identified that the frequently used chemotherapy drug (*5-FU* or *Fluorouracil*) is 100% more effective at targeting tumors (rather than surrounding tissues) when administered using an optimised liposomal formulation. Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide accounting for nearly 10 million deaths a year (nearly one in six deaths).

- ◆ The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** has given the green light to **Anneal** for **Releuko** (*filgrastim-ayow*), a biosimilar to **Neupogen** (*filgrastim*). The medication is used to treat neutropenia which is commonly experienced by patients undergoing chemotherapy. Anneal expects to launch **Releuko** in the third quarter of 2022, along with a full patient support program.

- ◆ Some of the largest drugmakers tackling Alzheimer's disease and its related dementias are banding together to ensure

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review covered a global review of the industry as it emerges from the pandemic. Presenters covered where the industry stands as the world emerges from the pandemic, how COVID-19 has been a catalyst for change for the pharmaceutical industry, the digitalization of healthcare and analytics, and implications for the pharmaceutical supply chain. Presenters also touched upon how patients are increasingly taking an active role in their own healthcare.



Pfizer's Angela Hwang and Brian Tyler of McKesson discuss Pfizer's journey to create and distribute its Comirnaty vaccine

Next up was an in-depth “fireside chat” led by Brian Tyler, CEO of McKesson Corporation with Angela Hwang, Group President of Biopharmaceuticals for Pfizer Inc. During the conversation, Ms. Hwang (who was ranked #11 on Forbes’ 2021 Top 50 Most Powerful Women list) went into detail of how Pfizer brought its *Comirnaty* COVID-19 vaccine to fruition and the incredible effort by the entire Pfizer team. Her riveting story conveyed her passion for the project as she described the company’s journey and its culminating success, as well as how Pfizer continues to handle COVID variants, which continue to rise in all parts of the world going forward.

Following a networking break, Eric Percher of Nephron Research gave his perspective of topics such as shifting investor sentiment and outlook following the opioid settlement, as well as the evolution of the pharma supply chain and the rise of pharmacy benefit manager contracting entities. He spoke in detail regarding the effects of these strategies on pharma, as well as how consolidation is changing the industry landscape.

The program continued with a presentation by IFPW board member John Graham of Zuellig Pharma and Merck & Co’s Brian Thornley, who gave their valuable insights and perspectives on AI and the use of blockchain in the pharma industry. Included was a deeper dive into *Pharmaledger*, a blockchain-based platform/ecosystem designed for use in supply chain, clinical trials, and health data. Mr. Graham also detailed Zuellig’s *EZTracker* system which was pioneered to create an interoperable future with global pharma players using blockchain with the goal of making safe healthcare more accessible. *EZTracker* features product authentication, electronic product information, cold chain monitoring, sales rechanneling, patient engagement and auto-replenishment in one system.

The afternoon sessions began with a discussion between EY presenters Todd Skrinar (EY’s Health Sciences and Wellness Practice Leader in the U.S. West Region) and Arda Ural (EY

Americas Health Sciences and Wellness Industry Markets Leader) who gave fascinating overview of how companies can best create and sustain long-term value (LTV). Among the discussion topics was how COVID-19 has affected LTV and culminating secular trends in the life sciences post-COVID. They also cover how the “Great Resignation” is affecting healthcare stakeholders, and the difficulties attracting and retaining talent in healthcare. Companies are confronted with how to effectively deal with obstacles such as decreased clinician satisfaction, inconsistent or insufficient onboarding for new employees, antiquated benefits, lack of communications, and limited ability to positively impact patient care. Additionally, pharma companies face intense supply chain pressures in a world that is geopolitically intense in the face of global decoupling.

Another challenge that faces the pharma industry was addressed by IFPW’s ESG panel discussion, moderated by Susan Lorenz-Fisher, Vice President of Corporate Responsibility and Sustainability for AmerisourceBergen. Susan was joined by Meaghan Krohn who leads McKesson Corporation’s sustainability, ESG and environmental responsibility efforts, and Jean-Gaetan Guillemaud, Government Affairs & Sustainability Director of Zuellig Pharma (who joined the panel virtually from Cambodia.) After a short overview of IFPW’s ESG efforts by Mark Parrish, the panel members each gave their insights into how ESG will drive the pharma industry in the future and how companies can best prepare for the ESG opportunities that lie ahead.

The day ended with a final panel discussion on digital health/pharmacy moderated by Eric Percher. The panel (which included Kevin Ban, Chief Medical Officer for Walgreens Boots Alliance; Nimesh Jhaveri, President, Community Pharmacy and Health McKesson Corporation; and Jenni Zilka, Senior Vice President, CSP Solutions and President, AmerisourceBergen’s Good Neighbor Pharmacy) gave their thoughtful perspectives on the evolution of digital pharmacy and the current landscape, as well as how it is recreating the customer experience and providing opportunities for companies to improve that experience. They also covered potential marketing strategies for companies to effectively implement digital health in their organizations.

Mark Parrish wrapped up with an overview of the day’s highlights, as well as an announcement that IFPW’s General Membership Meeting will be held October 18-20, 2022, in Milan, Italy. More information will be forthcoming very soon, and IFPW looks forward to seeing everyone in Milan!

In Brief (cont.)...

their pursuits make the best use of the truly massive amounts of digital data that can be gathered from patients as the companies look to track their progress. In a collaboration being led by the nonprofit **Digital Medicine Society**, Big Pharma players such as **Biogen**, **Eisai**, **Eli Lilly** and **Merck** plan to establish a core set of digital measurements that can be applied in their clinical trials. They will be joined by researchers from **Boston University** and **Oregon Health & Science University** as well as the **Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation**.

(Sources: Company Press Releases, Drug Store News, Fierce Biotech, Scrip Intelligence and World Pharma News)