Reinier Schlatmann – CEO, Philips Central and Eastern Europe



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12.06.2018

Tags: Poland, Philips, Medtech, CEE, Healthcare, Strategy

Reinier Schlatmann, Philips CEO in Central and Eastern Europe, talks about the strategic significance of Poland for the company and how the implementation of Philips' strategy and its focus on the health continuum can benefit the nation. Furthermore, he discusses the long history of Philips in Poland and how the use of data can drive the transformation to an outcome-based healthcare system.

You have been in the role since October 2016. What is your diagnosis of the Polish healthcare landscape?

I started the role of CEO for Central and Eastern Europe in October 2016 coming from the Middle East, where I was responsible for healthcare, while I started working for Philips more than 14 years ago.

There are a few aspects differentiating Poland from the other markets I worked in, although there are also many commonalities. What I noticed when I came here was the high level of education and dedication of healthcare professionals towards better outcomes for patients, and a passion to improve their lives despite some challenges. Poland is experiencing the same global trends as many other countries, including the ageing of its population and an increase in chronic diseases, which is driving the need for transformation. In addition, the Polish healthcare market still has a reimbursement system in place that is focused on activity rather than outcome. However, a

gradual and accelerating change is taking place, shifting the system towards outcome-based care.

When it comes to the top three causes of death in Poland, 50 percent are from cardiovascular diseases, 24 percent from cancer and five percent of deaths are caused by respiratory diseases. Philips is committed to play its role in supporting the Polish healthcare system in each of these areas. Our team is highly motivated to improve people's lives and share the latest solutions, models and best practices with Polish medical professionals to drive better outcomes at lower cost. Philips is partnering with the government, hospitals and academia to develop solutions for the local market along the health continuum.

What are the goals of this health continuum?

The health continuum is a comprehensive and circular approach to manage our health and wellness, from healthy living, prevention, definitive diagnosis, minimally invasive treatment to home care. It aims to support people in living healthy every day, starting with areas such as nutrition, physical activity or dental health. Prevention is an important element in this approach, making sure diseases are detected early, improving chances of successful treatment and quicker recovery.

At hospital level, we provide world-class solutions for first-time right diagnosis. This will ensure effective and adequate treatment for patients, so they may leave hospital sooner and continue treatment at home (when needed). This post-discharge treatment approach is essential to realize better quality of care, improve patients' lives and at the same time reduce costs. For example, chronic heart failure patients, if not looked after properly, can have a repeat episode, which can deteriorate their health further. However, if they are being monitored at home, this will enable a faster and more accurate response in case key metrics deteriorate, thus allowing for a timely intervention. This not only has a positive effect on their health, but also decreases the chances of further complications and may help avoid readmission to the emergency department or ICU, subsequently reducing the high cost entailed by these events.

Focusing on the entire continuum of care is key for effective chronic care management, especially given the ageing population and rise in chronic diseases such as COPD and diabetes.

How significant is data to ensure all these processes have a purpose and function correctly?

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Data is becoming increasingly important. If we are able to collect and combine this information, in different care settings, such as the GP practice, hospital or clinic, it will give us a more comprehensive perspective and as a result allow specialists to make better diagnoses, tailor treatment to the needs of individual patients, and drive better outcomes. At the macro level, unlocking this data will allow the health systems to improve treatment methods, resulting in better outcomes at lower costs.

How can Poland effectively use this data?

Having comparable and standardized data is key for understanding how new models impact the standard. As without a standard, it is hard to measure change and support continues improvement. Poland, as well as other countries, will benefit from unlocking the full potential of data to make its healthcare system more cost- and care-efficient.

This leads us to another key enabler of outcomes-based healthcare – reimbursement schemes. Leveraging the power of data will not only support a shift towards an outcome-based healthcare model but will also stimulate market access and innovations.

What innovation does Philips deliver to Poland to achieve an outcome-based healthcare model?

We have a wide range of medical products, services and solutions in the areas of healthy living, prevention, diagnosis and treatment as well as connected care and home care. This includes a diversified healthcare IT portfolio that is focused on making information readily available in different care settings where and when it is needed by healthcare professionals. Information systems are connecting the dots across the full health continuum. This is not easy as many parties are involved, and this is precisely the reason why Philips is teaming up with all key stakeholders.

What is the strategic importance of Poland for Philips?

Poland has always been an important growth country for Philips, and soon we will have our 100-year anniversary here. The importance of this market is illustrated, for example, by our recent opening of the Philips Global Competence Centre in Łodź as well as launching of the ninth Philips Reference Centre in partnership with the Polish Mother’s Memorial Hospital Research Institute. Both events were a part of celebrating of the World Day of the Sick in the presence of the Polish President and First Lady, Minister of Health as well as many other guests and representatives of the medical and scientific community. It was a very special moment for Philips, a great honor and a result of our commitment to building long-term partnerships, establishing strong local connections

and dedication towards patients in the country.

What are these two initiatives about?

In the Global Competence Centre teams of highly qualified specialists will deal, among other things, with the process of preparation and delivery of medical equipment, while the Reference Centre at the Polish Mother's Memorial Hospital Research Institute will provide a platform for knowledge exchange and education to enable utilization of medical technologies and new solutions to their full extent and help catalyze new ideas in Poland.

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We truly believe in long-term partnership and cooperation in the innovation triangle of academia, government and industry. Poland is a great example where we have implemented many such projects with partners including the Medical University in Warsaw, Medical University in Łódź and Silesian Centre of Heart Diseases. Another initiative worth mentioning, due to its scale and organizations engaged, is the "Think-Tank Innovations for Health" initiated by prof. Maciej Banach from the Polish Mother's Memorial Hospital Research Institute. Philips is one of the partners in this initiative created to strengthen the dialogue and cooperation between the public and private sectors as well as develop and implement innovative projects within the healthcare system. This effort is strongly supported by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Science and Higher Education.

From your experience, what can Poland take from other markets to implement here?

As I have mentioned, many countries are facing similar challenges and trying to find the best solutions to deal with them efficiently and effectively. First of all, the decision to invest up to 6 percent of GDP by 2025 to strengthen healthcare in Poland is a positive development. This should, however go hand in hand with an improvement in efficiency and quality – and this is where innovative solutions can play an important role.

What will make the difference between success and failure for Philips Poland in the future?

This relates to the overall vision of Philips, where we aim to make the world healthier and more sustainable, with the goal of improving the lives of three billion people each year by 2025.

This vision is guiding our employees and myself. It is the reason I get up and come to work every day, because if I do my job well I can improve the lives of patients, be it a diabetic, a chronic heart-failure patient or a young, first-time mother. By establishing stronger partnerships in the innovation

triangle I am sure we will be successful.

Within my company, I aim to establish an environment where people can learn and develop. This involves creating growth opportunities for everyone, including young talents, enabling them to go abroad and bring their international experience back to Poland.

What do you want to achieve in the next three years?

First and foremost, we aim to further strengthen partnerships with key Polish stakeholders. Secondly, we want to constantly assess our contribution across the health continuum, evaluate how we have performed and get better. All these are fundamental in taking the next step and focusing on value-based and high-quality healthcare that is both accessible and affordable for patients.

You have worked all over the world for Philips. What are the key lessons you have learnt throughout your career?

I get inspired by the ambitious and engaged people I work with. Working with different cultures and countries gives me better insight into how to make healthcare personalized and improve people’s lives further. To get the most out of this experience, it is important to take a step back and listen, making sure you truly understand the perspective of others.

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