

Sergio Rodriguez - CEO, Pfizer Spain



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Sergio Rodriguez, CEO of Pfizer Spain, highlights the strength of the affiliate and the importance for the company in Europe, as well as the key areas that are driving their growth. Furthermore, he gives an overview of the need for innovative companies to partner with key stakeholders and illustrates what the future holds for Pfizer Spain.

Pfizer has a 66-year presence in Spain; could you begin by introducing the company's presence here and what your priorities have been since becoming CEO of the Spanish affiliate in April?

Pfizer is one of the leading pharmaceutical companies in Spain, with a team of 1133 employees committed to study, develop and offer vaccines and medical treatments that help and protect people's health. Being in charge of a company like Pfizer Spain is a responsibility and an exciting challenge, not only because of its size but also because of what defines us and for the mission in which more than 1,100 people work in this country: helping people to live more and to have a healthier life. A mission inspired by a universal value, good health, something that is essential for individuals and families, and what transcends the economic activity of any agent of the health system.

Because of that, our main aim in Spain is to bring innovation into the country. 2017 was an extremely good year for us as we were able to bring five new innovative medicines to market here.

This year, we expect to bring two to three new indications to market. We are currently in a very good moment at Pfizer!

We are very strong in oncology, inflammation and rare diseases. Our Internal Medicine business unit leads the NOAC (New Oral Anticoagulant) market and also leads the smoking cessation market in Spain. Furthermore, in Spain we have a production plant in San Sebastian de los Reyes, Madrid, which is the only Pfizer plant in the world that manufactures, packages and distributes recombinant products for the treatment of haemophilia A and B. We distribute products manufactured in this plant to 15,000 patients in 75 different countries.

The other area is vaccines, where we have a strong presence in Spain - Prevenar is part of the national immunization plan for all of the regions - and we are able to vaccinate all infants in the country.

Our established products division, Pfizer Essential Health - a leader in non-viral anti-infectives, biosimilars and sterile injectable medicines - makes up 45 percent of our business in Spain, meaning that we continue to provide all of our legacy brands plus antibiotics, anti-infectives, anti-fungicals and biosimilars.

Our responsibility is to bring new innovations to the market but also to help the national health system remain sustainable. It is very important for us to ensure that all patients have access to innovation. Internal medicine is important for us as well in cardiology.

How strategically significant is Pfizer Spain relative to the company's other European operations?

Spain is an important market for Pfizer globally, not just in Europe. We are the fifth largest market in Europe and the national health system in Spain is one of the leading health systems within Europe and we want to be an important actor within that. We have important medicines and innovation to bring to the patients.

Furthermore, Spain has a large talent pool of researchers working in universities, hospitals or research centres with extensive experience, which makes our country an excellent partner for research. Because of the quality of the national health system, and of our physicians, we have developed a large number of clinical trials - we have 77 clinical trials for 38 molecules and agreements with 564 clinical centres. Spain is also comparatively fast in approving the different stages of clinical trials. We, therefore, have a very strong environment for clinical trials here and

Spain is one of the leading countries for Pfizer in Europe in developing clinical research.

For example, in the investigation of tanezumab, a molecule against chronic pain, Spain is the second country in the world, only behind the United States, in the number of patients recruited for clinical trials.

What role does your manufacturing facility here in Spain play within your global supply chain?

Pfizer manufacturing site in Spain combines qualified aseptic processes and facilities for the manufacturing of injectable products, in order to supply more than 70 countries around the world. It is the only Pfizer manufacturing site in the world that produces and supplies recombinant products for the treatment of Haemophilia A and B.

In terms of your local product portfolio, what are your star performers and how is demand evolving?

For us, all of our treatments—as long as they meet unmet medical needs of patients and improve their lives— are leading medicines. In particular, we investigate and develop treatments for the following areas: oncology, cardiovascular, metabolic disorders, inflammation and immunology, rare diseases and vaccines.

In oncology, we have been strong in renal cancer for many years. In lung cancer, we are also strong and our latest launch has increased our standing in metastatic breast cancer. We are also strong in haematology. These are the areas in which we have more presence, products, investigations, research and where we have been able to make a difference to the lives of more patients.

In inflammation, we have been the market leader for a number of years. This year we expect to launch two new indications in this area. These products are suitable for chronic patients.

In rare diseases, we have a number of medicines in haemophilia and metabolic disease and we are focused on sending a message to society that rare disease is an important area. We have several clinical research projects ongoing in this area. Unfortunately, rare disease is a very complicated area – there are over 14,000 rare diseases – and many that currently have no solutions. In this area, we are collaborating with Mendelian: a Spanish startup that has created a platform to help

physicians diagnose rare diseases more quickly. This platform is much needed as it takes rare disease patients seven years on average to get a diagnosis.

With five launches last year, how has Pfizer been so successful in gaining market access for its products?

The main reason for the success in launching five medicines last year is the benefit that all those medicines and vaccines provide to patients, improving their health and quality of life.

Innovative medicines provide solutions to unmet needs and in many occasions provide more efficient treatments that might help the sustainability of the National Healthcare System. Our objective is to facilitate access to innovation to patients and help the sustainability of the Health System, and this is our approach with the Health Authorities, putting patients first.

How much of a concern is the fact that Spain has changed its government? Do you expect to maintain the same good working relationship with the new administration?

We had a 'stability protocol' with the previous government, meaning that we were linking the growth in pharmaceutical expenditure to the growth of the economy overall. This allowed us to continue to bring innovation into the system and provided us with stability over the past three years.

The new government, given their actual weight in the Parliament, needs to facilitate consensus and support from other parties for each specific issue. They have named a cabinet in which all of the ministers have strong backgrounds and expertise in their respective areas of responsibility which is a positive signal to manage so critical areas like health.

Looking at the sub-ministerial level, the new team is quite professional and knowledgeable as well. If they are successful in applying a professional management style and provide some stability, then this will be positive.

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