

Constanza Losada – President & CEO, Pfizer Mexico



Our priority is improving patient access to our products. The [Mexican] government's expansion of coverage to those segments of the population that do not have the resources to obtain private healthcare plans is in line with our own access goals

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Recently appointed CEO and president for Pfizer Mexico, Constanza Losada, outlines the exciting challenge of taking on leadership for such an important affiliate during the COVID-19 pandemic and how Pfizer is contributing to the fight against the virus. Losada also outlines her strategy for ensuring patient access to Pfizer's innovative portfolio of products and gives some sage advice for other female pharma executives.

Constanza, you were appointed CEO and president of Pfizer Mexico in April 2020, your first country manager role. How did you prepare yourself for the role and what support have you received?

It is important to highlight that I am not yet physically in Mexico due to the COVID-19 restrictions, but I am already leading the country's operations and have been doing so for about four weeks.

It has been a very exciting time for me and my family. Their support has been extremely important as this represents a big opportunity for my career, but also a big change for them.

Pfizer has also been wonderfully supportive. Ever since I started working for the company in 2008, they have shown that gender equality is one of their core values. They have also made the

transitional process exceptionally smooth.

How will you draw on your previous experiences at Pfizer in this new role?

I started working for Pfizer in Argentina as finance director for the Southern Cone at a moment of great economic and political change in the country. I also have experience leading the innovation side in emerging markets as diverse as China, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. More recently I led the Biopharma branch in Latin America.

My varied experiences in different markets, both global and regional, as well as in challenging and dynamic emerging markets, have made me the perfect candidate for the Mexico country manager position. I have also consistently built effective teams throughout my career, so I am immensely proud of that.

What is the significance of the Mexican market for Pfizer within Latin America?

Mexico is the second most important market for Pfizer in Latin America. It holds great potential, not only in terms of financial gains, but also in terms of changing patients' lives through significant innovation. We are expecting to reach out to five million patients in Mexico this year, with the hope of reaching even more in the coming years. Our plan by 2022 is to launch up to 15 new products, which will allow us to keep working on changing the lives of more Mexicans. The challenge is to ensure that as many Mexican patients as possible have access to the best innovative therapies.

Given all the uncertainties around the ongoing pandemic, how are you having to adjust your previous 2020 plans for the affiliate?

We are standing by our previous decisions and have already launched five products in 2020: three in oncology and two in inflammation. In oncology, we just launched the first oncology biosimilar in Mexico, which fills us with pride.

The team in Mexico is exceptionally talented and has achieved a lot in recent years, including maintaining a position as one of the leading companies in the domestic market over the last seven years. The organisation has grown consistently, so I am sure that I have the best team and resources to achieve all our planned product launches in the next few years.

Mexico is seen by many as having a slow uptake for new product launches. With a new government in place, what challenges are there in the product launch applications?

The reality is that we have already launched products this year, so the trend has rather been positive for Pfizer.

In addition, Pfizer globally, and in Mexico in particular, is focusing on developing access and we have developed programs that are well suited to different markets. One of our great strengths is ensuring that we have the necessary human resources in this area.

In terms of our relationship with governments, we work directly with the authorities of each country in which we have a presence to help improve the healthcare and the quality of life of the patients. In Mexico the situation is no different; we have been working alongside the Mexican state for the last 70 years, and this will continue with the current administration. We are dedicated to the transformation of patients' lives in Mexico and we believe we can create synergies to ensure a healthcare system centred on people that is preventative, humanistic, transparent and fair to help all patients, both now and in the future.

It is highly promising to see that this administration has identified healthcare as a priority. This means that we share common ground. Pfizer is working with the Mexican government to increase healthcare innovation and encourage greater levels of research and development. We both want greater access to life-saving innovations and sustainably financed healthcare services with broader coverage. Closing or reducing the access gap to our products is one of our main goals and fits in directly with the government's goals.

What access programs that Pfizer promotes to increase the levels of access can be deployed in Mexico?

Pfizer is working globally to improve access and affordability, including through innovative outcome-based market access agreements. We have been applying this to other markets and will surely also bring it to Mexico, hopefully facilitating better access to our products in the country.

Our priority is improving patient access to our products. The government's expansion of coverage to those segments of the population that do not have the resources to obtain private healthcare plans is in line with our own access goals.

How will these planned new product launches help Pfizer cement its position as one of the top multinational pharma companies in Mexico?

We have great expectations for what these launches could mean for patients, beyond any financial gain. Our top priority is the patient, who is at the centre of everything we do. In fact, we measure our global success by the number of patients we reach.

Our goal for 2022 is to have impacted 225 million patients in Mexico with all our products, including the 15 new ones.

What therapeutic areas are you prioritising within 2022 on the horizon?

Oncology is where we will have the most launches, but we are also present in inflammation, vaccination, rare diseases, and internal medicine.

Globally, Pfizer has 91 products in its pipeline. Of these, six are already in the registration phase, and 21 are already in Phase III. All our therapeutic areas are represented in this pipeline of 91 products. This year, of the five products we have launched in Mexico, three are in oncology and two in inflammation but in the future, we will advance in other therapeutic areas such as vaccines here.

What is Pfizer Mexico's clinical trials footprint?

Pfizer has a very large presence in clinical trials in Mexico; the trials conducted here represent 11 percent of the company's global total and a significant financial investment.

In the last decade, Pfizer has invested one billion pesos (43.4 million dollars) into clinical research in Mexico, which makes us one of the largest investors in R&D in Mexico. Every year, Pfizer invests 15 percent of its resources into R&D, which represented eight billion dollars globally and 15 million dollars nationally last year.

What would you like to share with our readers about Pfizer's work on a COVID-19 vaccine?

Right now, in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis, we are showing the real purpose of Pfizer: changing patients' lives through significant innovation.

Pfizer is developing a vaccine in collaboration with BioNTech based on messenger RNA, a highly innovative technology that allows for an accelerated evaluation and production process. On April 22nd, the regulatory authority in Germany approved clinical studies for Phase I and II of this program, and on May 5th, the dose level escalation portion (Stage 1) of the Phase I/II trial in the US that will enrol up to 360 healthy subjects in two age segments (18 to 55 and 65 to 85) was made public.

Pfizer and BioNTech are working to expand the production and global supply and Pfizer is planning on expanding its large production network to be able to produce a COVID-19 vaccine as quickly as possible to benefit the people who need it most around the world.

If everything goes according to plan, the results from these clinical trials should be shared with the regulatory authorities in October 2020, marking a significant milestone in the battle against this pandemic.

How is Pfizer Mexico adapting its work to the lockdown measure during the pandemic?

Pfizer has taken the same approach across the world. All staff were asked to work from home from March 18th on, as for us, the wellbeing of our colleagues and their families is a priority. We have put certain tools in place to help them during this situation, not only technological tools so that they can work from home, but other kinds of tools to help their psychological health, such as coaching, exercise, and meditation.

From a personal point of view, I am able to work on something that I feel passionate about and this gives me extra energy. Today, more than ever, I feel proud of working at Pfizer and everything we're doing at the moment.

What would be your advice to younger women starting out in the pharmaceutical industry?

Something I often speak about with the women on my teams and at other companies in the industry is that we have the ability to make choices. It is not an "either/or" choice between family and career. You can have a family and be a mother and a wife and still have a successful professional career. Family support is crucial, in my case, as my husband has always been a great supporter of my career.

I also believe that in companies, we as leaders have a responsibility, regardless of our gender, to uplift our colleagues at different stages of their lives, making sure that they can be their best selves in the company and at home.

I have had the privilege of having mentors that have supported me so that I could take on and accept new challenges. I believe that it is important to pass this on to new generations so that they can feel supported and continue to grow.

Do you have any final message for our international audience?

I would like to highlight the importance of innovation in healthcare. Without a doubt, it is synonymous with improving quality and even saving lives, as we are now seeing in the context of COVID-19.

Pfizer mission is breakthroughs to change patient's lives. In Mexico, we are following that path and are aiming to impact the lives of five million patients this year. We hope to keep impacting their lives and those of many more to come with these 15 products for 2022.

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We will keep doing this in the same way as before, offering our expertise to work with key stakeholders in the industry, so that the best therapeutic alternatives reach more Mexicans.

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