

Interview: Wendy Adams, General Manager, Galderma, Canada

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Wendy Adams, General Manager of Galderma Canada, speaks about the importance of the Canadian market for the global company, what sets Galderma apart from its competitors, and where she sees the company's continued expansion rising to in the next three-five years.

With over 20 years of history in Canada, what was the company like then, compared to present day operations?

Galderma is a global pharmaceutical company founded in 1981 as a joint venture between worldwide leaders Nestlé and L'Oréal and was established in Canada in 1989. When I joined the company nearly two decades ago we were 16 people, and today, with a staff of 70, we service approximately 3,500 physicians with our sole focus being dermatology.

In our early days, Galderma Canada primarily focused on the over-the-counter (OTC) business, which generated 70 percent of our revenues. Our flagship products at that time were the Cetaphil line, available in the pharmacies, and MetroGel, which is a prescription treatment for rosacea. Our expertise spans a broad spectrum of skin diseases. Our growing portfolio now includes treatments for skin conditions such as acne, rosacea, psoriasis, actinic keratosis and superficial basal cell carcinoma.

When I joined the company I was fortunate to lead the launch of Differin, for the treatment of acne. Differin was Galderma's first homegrown dermatology product. At the time that it was launched, it was the first new molecule present for acne in over 20 years, and it has proved quite successful for the company.

With approximately 20 percent of revenues invested each year to discover and develop new products and access innovative technologies, we are one of the world's leaders in dermatology research and development. As such, we are reaping the benefits of novel molecules that are addressing unmet needs in the market place and increasing the success of patient outcomes with innovative products.

Could you highlight some of your most notable achievements in your tenure as General Manager?

We have grown the company progressively and have achieved double-digit growth over the past several years.

We believe dermatology plays a critical role in improving people's lives since the skin is our largest organ and our interface with the world. The incidence and impact of skin diseases is growing.

This is why we are more committed than ever to offering safe and effective treatments for people's dermatological needs throughout their lifetime while continuing our focus to serve healthcare professionals. We recognize the benefit of maintaining healthy skin as opposed to only treating patients with a disease state. Our Cetaphil brand of products used in conjunction with our prescription portfolio help to achieve this objective.

In my five-year tenure as General Manager, we have doubled sales and doubled headcount, as well as increased our innovative product offerings. Over these five years, we have launched nearly 10 products in the market, which has been a success story for the company. One of these offerings is Tactuo® gel, launched in 2010. Tactuo is a novel prescription topical combination product for the treatment of acne. This product combines a retinoid with a benzoyl peroxide, which in turn helps eliminate the potential long-term use of antibiotics to manage the condition. This is significant since resistance to antibiotics has been shown to be on the rise.

Naturally, success is based on the fact that we are reinvesting our earnings back into research and development to continue to allow us to launch products that are helping to address unmet patient needs.

Finally, success is not just about the molecular or active ingredient in products, it's also about improving the quality of life of people with dermatologic concerns or conditions in partnership with healthcare professionals.

Are there any products you are excited about launching on the Canadian market?

Everyone is anxiously anticipating the launch of our new topical indicated for the persistent facial erythema (redness) of rosacea, which is now available in the US. I expect to see this product launched in Canada by next year.

The most altruistic product in our portfolio is Metvix, an innovative non-melanoma skin cancer treatment. This is an amazing product. In fact we have been involved with the London Healthcare Cancer Centre that adopted Metvix as their treatment of choice.

Being one of the world's leading investors in dermatology research and development, we are dedicated to providing a wide range of innovative medical solutions, which meet the highest standards of safety and efficacy. That being said we expect to launch many more successful products with positive patient outcomes to the Canadian market in the future.

Does Galderma manufacture products in Canada?

In fact, Galderma's largest manufacturing plant is based in Canada, which represents close to 50 percent of our global production. This rapidly expanding manufacturing plant employs 300+ people, has five manufacturing skids and nine production lines offering a combined production capacity of 75 million units/year. The site supplies products for Canada, USA and 35 other worldwide affiliates.

Galderma's manufacturing is spread across five sites, the other four being in France, Switzerland, Sweden and Brazil. In addition to manufacturing, we have five research and development sites across the world.

Canadian dermatologists conduct amazing research and are known worldwide for their ability to deliver strong clinical research. Therefore, Canada benefits substantially from the 20 percent of our

revenue that is reinvested in skin research.

Galderma has been in Canada since 1989, why has the country been such an important market for the company?

The Canadian pharmaceutical market is the world's seventh largest, representing about 2 percent of global pharmaceutical sales. In line with these statistics, Galderma Canada has a strong global presence.

Canada truly represents the world in many ways. In terms of the aging population and the ethnic diversity, Canada can provide "international knowledge". That is, there can be the benefit for many other markets based on our population make up. This is specifically true since we are always interested in how our products benefit other skin types as well as Caucasian skin.

On top of that, we take opportunities wherever we can to train consumers and Healthcare professionals to secure good health outcomes through the use of our products. Especially for acne, the impact of our dermatology portfolio goes beyond health since it has a tremendous positive impact on self-esteem. There is a significant quality of life issue with acne. That is, the impact of acne can extend beyond the disease itself, influencing an individual's psychosocial well being. Increased self-esteem leads to a healthy, confident individual that contributes to society.

How would you describe the Canadian environment in launching dermatology products?

I would have to say, it is quite favourable. Health Canada has done a good job speeding up timelines over the years.

We expect about 12 months from submission to approval. Naturally, we always like to see this faster, but in relative terms that has somewhat been the benchmark. Moreover it has been quite consistent lately, whereas in the past it could be anywhere between eight months and three years.

What really sets Galderma apart is that as a result of our substantial investment in research and development, our claims are solidly backed by clinical data.

It has been said that the traditional pharma model is long gone. There are so many stakeholders to engage with today that it creates a system or a network, which has changed pharma's operating model. To what extent has Galderma Canada's operating model changed over the years?

Frankly speaking, some things have stayed the same. Since our inception, we have chosen to solely focus on dermatology. Doctors and dermatologists are still the predominate prescribers and still deliver most specialized skincare.

That being said, we are seeing a shifting landscape. As an example, how is the government going to manage a growing and aging population in an efficient manner? It will take some time for people to learn about diagnostics and treatment, which will be a challenge while changing stakeholders.

As healthcare costs are becoming more scrutinized, the challenge is to efficiently manage the healthcare system in a socialized environment. As a result, in the prescription business we see more nurses being able to take on the dermatology field. This will likely be limited to certain areas as their comfort level only stretches to a certain point; however, it will help shorten waiting lists for patients.

We work with health care professionals through our field sales force and with educational initiatives to help keep them at the forefront of developments in dermatology. That delivery of information then

presents an opportunity for physicians to reinforce their relationship with patients when dealing with dermatological conditions.

What would you like to have achieved in five years from now?

We have exciting ambitions for Galderma in Canada. First and foremost, doubling our sales. We aim to continue to lead in prescription rosacea treatments. On the acne frontier, we will assume a leading role—we aim to be market leader in three years. Within five years, our Aesthetics & Corrective business unit should fully materialize.

In addition, we aim to continue the amount of research and development conducted in Canada. As you may know, many pharmaceutical companies are shifting their research and development to low cost countries. However, we have outstanding dermatology clinicians in Canada and this is paired with a diverse ethnicity for skin research. As such, we are poised to continue our level of research and development in the country.

People with skin concerns are at the heart of everything we do at Galderma. With this in mind, we are completely committed to creating further awareness about the importance of dermatology in the improvement of human health.

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