


Interview with Roberto Servi, Managing Director of Eli Lilly Poland, Eli Lilly Polska

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nd in November 2008 as a Marketing Director and you have been leading the affiliate since January 2010. Moreover you are co-chairing the LAWG – Local Area Working Group – a group of R&D based pharmaceutical companies in Poland, since July 2010, so 2010 was a hot year for you. How have you been coping with your new responsibilities, especially in this continuously changing and challenging environment?



2010 was indeed a very interesting year for me, when I faced many opportunities and challenges from different perspectives. I tried to learn as much as possible about all industry-related matters and environmental aspects. My activity and involvement in the industry association INFARMA, as well as holding the position of co-Chair of the LAWG (Local Area Working Group) were also new and interesting experiences for me. The affiliate went through an important year as well. First, major transformation initiatives were implemented within the subsidiary in order to revisit the way it operates and be much more effective. Secondly, there was a common decision to orientate business at Lilly Poland with a strong customer centric approach for the years to come. Lastly, Lilly Poland showed a strong involvement and effort in creating and sustaining the organization as a great place to work.

Indeed, your company has been ranked fifth in the Great Place to Work® in Poland List prepared by Great Place to Work® Institute Poland, at a time when your predecessor was in charge. What are your main initiatives since you have been heading the company in Poland and what is on your agenda to keep that ranking or improve it?

During my tenure as Managing Director, the affiliate's employees have participated in 3 different surveys. Lilly Poland management team has leveraged the surveys' specific results, in order to make Lilly Poland an even better place to work. All the information and results gathered out of the 3 various surveys conducted recently were put together for a thorough analysis and follow-up by cross-functional focus groups. Subsequently specific areas for improvement and practical actions for implementation in 2010 and 2011 were defined.

In addition to being a 40 million population market, with double digit growth, Mr. Kuczynski of Pierre Fabre was telling us that the main opportunity of the Polish market are the many unmet medical needs in Poland. How is this case for Lilly Poland and which are the therapeutic areas currently driving the growth of the company?

I definitely agree with this statement, as Poland has not fully expressed its full potential from a pharmaceutical market standpoint. Even though Poland is already one of the biggest markets in

Europe, the country is considered a pharmemerging market by IMS. Lilly is, on the one hand, committed to the efforts aimed at discovering breakthrough medicines that will provide answers to the currently unsolved medical problems. On the other hand, however, Lilly has presently got a number of solutions available that could already be the answers to the specific unmet medical needs of some groups of Polish patients. These solutions are still not accessible to Polish patients, due to a lack of reimbursement, however we are committed to a dialogue with the Polish decision makers in order to facilitate access for Polish patients to our innovative therapeutic solutions.

Since the beginning of the affiliate's operations in Poland, more or less thirty years ago, Lilly has focused on different very specific therapeutic areas, such as diabetes, neuroscience, critical care, and oncology, just to mention some among others. These areas in which we deliver improved patients outcomes in Poland through providing innovative solutions and services to healthcare practitioners and patients.

In terms of future perspectives, the company strives to further expand its current portfolio of innovative therapeutic solutions and products offered to Polish patients, by strengthening its focus on diabetes and neuroscience, as well as on other areas such as cardiology and osteoporosis. The fastest growing disease areas in Poland today, the so-called civilization diseases, are orienting the healthcare system worldwide.

In the last decade Lilly has introduced into the Polish market a number of breakthrough drugs used, among others, in the treatment of: diabetes, cancer, mental diseases, osteoporosis, sepsis, cardio-vascular diseases or erectile dysfunction. How have these products performed since then and what were your best selling products in 2010?

The products which currently constitute the strongest pillar of Lilly's business in Poland are human and analogue insulins. Since the beginning of the operations, the company performed major breakthroughs in Poland for type 1 and type 2 diabetes. The market for insulin represents today over 60% of Lilly's sales in Poland thanks to its major brands, which makes insulin the main driver of the affiliate's growth.

Other important areas of our operations in Poland are: critical care (products used in the treatment of sepsis and cardiovascular diseases) neuroscience as well as oncology. As far as erectile dysfunction is concerned, in comparison with the other European markets, the ED market in Poland is characterized by a high penetration of a generic ED drug. Bearing that in mind, the performance of our ED drug is even more remarkable. In fact HCPs and patients in Poland recognize the fact that the Lilly ED drug enables patients to enjoy a greater spontaneity in their sexual lives.

In fact, Lilly is proud to have in its portfolio breakthrough molecules in all the therapeutic areas where it is present. This situation is a result of Lilly's strategy of being an innovation driven company. In comparison with many global pharmaceutical companies, Eli Lilly did not take part in major mergers and acquisitions, so as to concentrate all its attention on innovation. Therefore Lilly invests a lot in R&D – 20% of the company's total sales, which is more than in the past. Eli Lilly & Co. has got one of the richest pipelines in the market and aims to bring constantly new molecules to the market in the years to come.

Let us be fair, Poland is not known for its level of innovation but more for its degree of generic penetration. Some may say that the government is more favorable towards generics, and that the country may have an historical and traditional preference, as well as training for generic manufacturing. What is, in your opinion, Poland's potential to become a host country for research?

There are already significant investments in Poland in research and development of new drugs. When we mention the level of research, not only the quality of research facilities should be taken into consideration, but also the whole context offered in Poland for clinical trials. According to the PWC report on clinical trials in Poland (published in November 2010), Poland is the largest clinical trials market in CEE/CIS. As the report authors indicate, both patient participation and site penetration rates indicate a potential for growth. It is a highly valuable aspect that, I believe, is going to increase the value of innovation in Poland and the degree to which innovation and R&D are recognized in this country as an essential parameter for the patients and the community in general.

One of the biggest challenges faced by innovators today is the expiration of patents for blockbusters, a historically poor pipeline to replace them combined with rising costs for the development of new drugs. How have Loss of Exclusivity (LOE) issues affected sales at Lilly Poland?

With particular regard to Lilly Poland, the loss of exclusivity for some of the company's key products impacted Lilly's sales of its portfolio. Poland joined the European Union (EU) in 2004, and, one may admit, that since then certain progress has been made in terms of patent protection. Nonetheless there is still room for further improvements in terms of adoption of EU directives. LOE has affected Lilly's portfolio as it has affected that of all innovative-based pharmaceutical companies in Poland. Although Lilly is going through the patent expiration of its brands globally, the group is confident that thanks to major investments in R&D, the company will be able to ensure sustainability in the long run and fulfill the gaps in the company's pipeline. Today Lilly has got seventy molecules in clinical development, which is a historical record for the company.

Mr Paweł Sztwiertnia of INFARMA argued that some innovative companies would think of the non-reimbursed segment considering the new bill which is to enter; this would overall have a negative impact on patients. How is Eli Lilly going to cope with this new bill?

Lilly Poland is aligned with the position of INFARMA – the union of innovative pharmaceutical companies in Poland – with regard to the draft reimbursement bill. In the justification of the draft bill the Health Ministry pointed out that the objective of the bill in question is to further improve the access to innovation and to decrease the gap between Poland and other OECD countries in terms of market access. However a number of pharma market experts indicate that some of the measures included in the bill could actually further increase the gap with additional burden for the patient. Within this context, a better dialogue is needed between various stakeholders of the healthcare sector, including local authorities and the pharmaceutical industry in order to reach a common goal – better health outcomes for Polish patients. According to the recent OECD indicators, Poland is still lagging behind, in terms of access to innovation compared to most European countries, and this, as many healthcare market experts indicate, could be fixed by improving the aforementioned dialogue and reshaping the healthcare reforms.

Many of your counterparts in big pharmaceutical companies in Poland are Polish. How challenging is it to be a foreigner as the head of Lilly Poland? Why are you the right person to be Managing Director at Eli Lilly Polska?

It is difficult for me to say whether I am the right person or not! I am happy with the results of the organization so far, not only from a business perspective, but also with regard to all internal achievements. We are highly satisfied with the 2010 achievements and I look towards the year 2011 with great ambitions and expectations. On a more personal level, I have enjoyed every day of this experience since I started as a Marketing Director at Lilly Poland, and even more since I have headed the affiliate. I found my introduction in this organization and environment easier than I expected. The best surprise for me was to be fully accepted and integrated as a non-Polish

employee. The major barrier I have been facing, to be honest, is the language. I truly regret I cannot easily overcome my difficulties with the Polish language, as much as I would have liked to.

How do you evaluate the level of professionalism in Poland?

The workforce in Poland is highly qualified and I have the chance to work with very professional employees. 100% of employees are university graduates, a number of employees across all departments are medical doctors or pharmacists by profession. There is also a high number of employees holding an MBA degree, on top of one or 2 other university degrees obtained by them. English is widely spoken across the whole organization. Overall the level of professionalism of Lilly Poland employees impresses me very much.

Where would you want to take the affiliate for the coming five years?

Without going into many details I would like to mention a few highlights of the mission I have given myself. Firstly, I will continue to express the company's values in terms of ethics and compliance with a full commitment and hope this will help to further influence and shape the environment. Secondly, I do hope that Polish patients will have access to innovative therapeutic solutions at the level already enjoyed by patients in other European countries. Also, I wish to continue to transform the way the organization operates, having an even more customer-centric approach to business, in order to tailor our answers to the needs of HCPs and patients. Last but not least, Lilly Poland will continue to be a great place to work.

People are a key for innovative companies; how do you manage to attract and retain this highly-skilled workforce you were describing before?

In terms of attracting new talent, Eli Lilly frequently runs company/ employer branding programs: the company is present in different platforms such as MBA schools, universities and medical schools, in order to present the company's missions and values, as well as strengthen Lilly's credibility and visibility among prospective employees. As the management team, we recognize the fundamental importance of people at Eli Lilly for the organization to be competitive. We attach in this context a great importance to those surveys conducted among employees on a regular basis, and we are committed to listen to employees' feedback very seriously and to take actions to constantly improve the work environment at Eli Lilly Poland.

What is your final message for the Pharmaceutical Executive readers?

The pharmaceutical industry is changing. It is undergoing a gigantic, global transformation. Some companies, such as Lilly, consistently see their future in the discovery, development and delivery of new and valuable medicines that help meet unmet medical needs, that provide value for healthcare professionals and for payers, as well as for patients. It is important for all the healthcare system players that in order to meet unmet therapeutic needs, to treat diseases, which people still die of, there must be a market environment conducive to access to innovation. Let me conclude then by reiterating that, as the Managing Director of Lilly Poland, I am a staunch advocate of a dialogue among all the parties in the system for the creation of an environment which rewards innovation for the sake of improving the outcomes of Polish patients.

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