Romuald Gaudefroy â?? Managing Director, CAF-DCF, Belgium

It is important for Belgium to implement a strong and long term partnership with the pharmaceutical industry in a context where the supply for life saving products is crucial

17.04.2020

Tags:

Belgium, CAF-DCF, LFB, Plasma, Manufacturing

Romuald Gaudefroy, managing director of CAF-DCF, the Belgian subsidiary of the LFB Group, introduces the company which was integrated into LFB in 2016. Gaudefroy goes on to offer insights on how a national tender in 2018 has impacted the companyâ??s historic positioning as a manufacturer and also delivers a message to authorities about the importance of long-term partnership with the pharmaceutical industry.

Please begin by introducing CAF-DCF, its positioning within the LFB Group, and the scope and scale of the subsidiaryâ??s operations in Belgium.

CAF-DCF is a subsidiary of the French LFB Group and specializes in the commercialization of plasma-derived medicinal products prescribed in hospitals in Belgium for patients suffering from serious and rare diseases.

CAF-DCF has a longstanding history in Belgium. Created in 1975 as an operational unit of the Belgian Red Cross, it was integrated into the LFB Group in 2016. CAF-DCF is able to draw on LFBâ??s know-how in the plasma field.

In Belgium, CAF-DCF offers healthcare professionals therapeutic solutions in the areas of Immunology to manage disorders of the immune system, primary and secondary

immunodeficiencies or certain autoimmune diseases; Haemostasis to treat rare bleeding disorders such as haemophilia A or von Willebrand disease; and in Intensive Care, where the therapeutic solutions offered make it possible to treat patients in critical situations including severe bleeding

We are committed to patient safety, in collaboration with partners who carry out specific quality controls throughout the production of plasma derivatives, within a strict pharmaceutical framework. We actively contribute to the provision of plasma-derived medicines in Belgium. CAF-DCF is serving the Belgian patients, the Belgian medical community and health authorities.

In 2018, as part of the LFB Groupâ??s new strategy, a particular focus was put on a small number of international markets; one of which is Belgium.

What were the implications of the national tender for the Belgian market and CAF-DCF?

The implementation of the new national tender was a complete game-changer for CAF-DCF and the plasma-derived products market.

We have had to reorganize the company from our traditional Belgian plasma fractionator role to distributing finished plasma derived medicinal products manufactured by LFB and our partner Sanquin in the Netherlands. Coming to CAF-DCF in 2018 as managing director, my mission has been to adapt the company to these new challenges and to build a new business model.

How have you changed CAF-CDFâ??s strategy in order to adapt to this new method of operation?

It was of course necessary to reduce the fixed costs in order to adapt the company to its new volume of operations. As a distributor in the small fraction of the open market which remains after the tender, we must have a more defined strategy to differentiate our products. Therefore, it is critical to be more effective in marketing CAF-DCFâ??s competitiveness, in addition to enhancing our market access and reimbursement activities.

How would you assess the current dynamics of the plasma-derived product market in Belgium?

Pharmaceutical companies marketing plasma-derived products are not so numerous; those that were not awarded the national tender are still essential long-term partners for the healthcare system in Belgium.

Although the national tender covers half of **I**ntra **V**enous **I**mmuno**g**lobulins (IVIg) and all albumin needs, there are other product groups like coagulation factors, for example, and the rest of the IVIg market which is in constant growth and has to answer patient needs.

In your view, what â??adviceâ?? can you offer to the Belgian authorities in order to improve the conditions of the market?

It is important for Belgium to implement a strong and long term partnership with the pharmaceutical industry in a context where the supply for life saving products is crucial. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us how health systems must be rethought to secure supplies, particularly for medicines of major therapeutic interest like plasma derived medicinal products.

Patients expect us and the health authorities to guarantee their supply. This can only be done when we are part of a lasting relationship of mutual trust.

How are you aiming to position CAF-DCF as not just a provider of drugs, but a partner of health for the Belgian authorities?

CAF-DCF wants to create a longstanding partnership with the local health stakeholders in Belgium.

CAF-DCF, as a Belgian company distributing products manufactured in a neighbouring European Country that can guarantee product availability and well balanced prices in a long term view, might be an important partner of health for the Belgian authorities.

We will continue at our level to engage in dialogue with the government and health authorities to explore how ensuring the best possible access to care to Belgian patients might be achieved in a sustainable way.

What objectives are on your agenda as the managing director of CAF-DCF?

In terms of therapeutic innovation, in the near future we are aiming to launch three other new products.

In the short term we will launch FIBCLOTÂ® and NANOGAM 10 percentÂ®. FIBCLOTÂ® is a human fibrinogen used in fibrinogen congenital deficiencies and massive bleedings. NANOGAM 10 percentÂ® is a new IVIg.

Regarding the third product we are aiming to launch, we are very pleased with the FDA approval in April 2020 of our recombinant product SEVENFACTÂ®, which provides a new treatment option for haemophilia patients with inhibitors. We will now work towards SEVENFACTÂ® registration in Europe, and especially in Belgium, in order to offer this therapeutic option to patients.

We also might position ourselves in the next national tender but this will completely depend upon the tender scope.

See more interviews