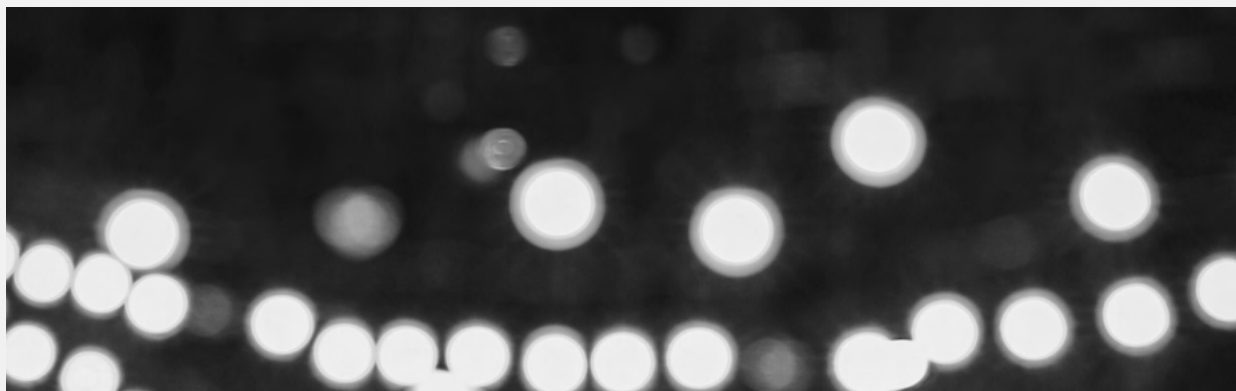


15th Annual National Pharmaceutical Congress
Fifteen Big Ideas to Carry the Life Sciences Forward



Meeting Summary

OCTOBER 20 & 27, 2021
10:00AM-12:15PM ET

This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of registrants to the 15th Annual National Pharmaceutical Congress.

It provides brief summaries of the presentations given during this year's Congress.





15th Annual Congress

This year's meeting was held virtually over two days and included six panel discussions.

On October 20 & 27, 2021, preeminent leaders in Pharma gathered to present and discuss the latest developments in the industry. This year's theme was "Fifteen Big Ideas to Carry the Life Sciences Forward."

The National Pharmaceutical Congress is Canada's largest stage for pharmaceutical and life sciences industry leaders. It is an opportunity to learn, reflect, and network.

Topics of this year's panels included:

- Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion
- Access to Medicines in Canada
- External Deployment Initiatives
- The Industry Post-Covid
- Technology Update
- Career Development & Talent Mgmt

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Panel One: Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

The industry's Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives have grown dramatically over the past year, following the widespread public demonstrations during the summer of 2020. The pharmaceutical industry has seen increased awareness of DEI issues and more in-company projects than ever.

Increasing evidence of the positive impact of company diversity on financial performance, and of workplace inclusion on job performance, provides evidence that DEI is a sound investment and a good business decision.

Using terminology and metrics to lead by example

“As an industry, we have a huge opportunity to lead the way with diversity, equity, and inclusion and set examples for other industries,” said **Carol Stiff**, head of Santen Canada. “There are more eyes on healthcare and Pharma now than ever, so the opportunity is right for Pharma to step up and lead the way.”

Stiff set the stage for discussing DEI in the workplace. “It’s important for a company to clearly define DEI terms that are used within the organization so that everyone has the same understanding,” she said. “This is very similar to how we clearly define our mission, vision, and values.”

“Diversity is the differences that make individuals unique,” she said. “Inherent diversity is the characteristics you are born with, like your age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. And acquired diversity is your mindset, your education, languages, and cultural fluency.”

Equity is about ensuring processes and practices are fair and that everyone has access to the same opportunities—the act of paying attention to different individual needs, she explained.

And inclusion is the extent to which each person in the organization feels welcomed, respected, valued, and fairly treated as a team member.

“Inclusion outcomes are only realized when the workplace is inviting to all parts of its diverse group,” Stiff said.

“As with any business initiative, it is important to know how we’re doing and succeeding with DEI,” said Stiff. “Ultimately, if we don’t keep track of progress with DEI, it sends the message to employees that the initiative doesn’t matter.”

“I think in Pharma, we know better than any industry that the story is as important as the data.” She explained that metrics for DEI milestones can be quantitative (transactional) or qualitative (transformational).

“While diversity is typically reported as a number or a snapshot, we need that transformational or qualitative measure to show inclusion,” she said.

Stiff said these measures could be as simple as surveying employees and asking what makes them feel included or excluded and how the company contributes in either direction. And equally important is listening to those responses.

“The final note on metrics is accountability from the top down in the organization,” said Stiff. “We need involvement and commitment from all levels of the organization and metrics for management on diversity in recruitment and development.”



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Rethinking Pharma's approach to DEI

"As employers, we may need to rethink the benefits we offer employees, to ensure we are addressing the unique needs and challenges of our diverse employee population," according to **Frank Stramaglia**, general manager for Astellas Pharma Canada, who spoke about fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace.

Despite all the business pressures presented by the pandemic, DEI has remained a top priority for many senior executives, said Stramaglia. However, most of these executives found it difficult to execute DEI strategies during this time.

"Specifically, working parents are still struggling with challenges posed by the pandemic," he explained. "Mothers with young children have reduced their work hours at a rate four to five times higher than fathers, to take on child care, home schooling, and household responsibilities. One in four women in corporate jobs have considered downshifting their career or leaving the workforce."

"Working parents in pharmaceuticals are shifting the way the industry plans to work after emerging from the pandemic," said Stramaglia.

"Many Pharma organizations are deciding how to move forward, be it a fully remote environment, a hybrid mix of working at home and office, or a traditional office-based approach."

Some pros of fully remote or hybrid working are the potential for better work-life balance, along with the opportunity to increase the talent pool and its diversity, as businesses will not be restricting career development based on proximity to the office or willingness to relocate, explained Stramaglia.

On the other hand, not everyone thrives in a remote working environment. "Another con [related to] hybrid [or remote] work is that women may end up working at home more than their male counterparts, creating inequality in career progression," added Stramaglia.

"With both remote and hybrid ways of working, we need to explore the options and ensure DEI can be advanced in these settings," he said.

"We don't want to let the challenges impede our progress. We need to dig deep, understand what the barriers are to DEI, in order to come up with solutions that can help us improve in these meaningful areas."

Using employee resource groups to foster inclusion

Many pharmaceutical companies have been engaging in diversity and inclusion projects that have contributed to a better working environment and enhanced recruitment and retention, according to **Brian Heath**, vice-president and general manager of Amgen Canada. One example he described was Amgen's affinity groups, which are known internally as Employee Resource Groups, or ERGs.

"More than 9,500 of our staff globally—about 40 per cent of our employees around the world—belong to one of the company's 11 ERGs," said Heath. "These ERGs help Amgen employees navigate shared personal and professional challenges and provide opportunities to contribute to the company's business and community."

"Here in Canada, we have local chapters for six of the global ERGs," Heath continued. "And in addition to the Amgen Black Employee Network (ABEN), we have the Amgen Asian Association, Amgen Pride, and most recently, the Indigenous People's ERG, which is unique to Canada."

Heath said each ERG has an executive sponsor, a chair, and an executive committee with consistent position types. The ERGs focus on internal engagement and external impact, to increase the pipeline of diverse future talent.

These ERGs also provide benefits to the community outside of the parent company, Heath noted.

In 2020, the ABEN worked with the Amgen Foundation to determine the best way to distribute \$7.5 million in social justice-directed grants.

Another external benefit was the recent establishment of a summer internship in Canada for Black and Indigenous medical and pharmacy students, Heath said.

This year, the inaugural interns completed a study of biologic treatment hesitancy among Black and Indigenous populations in Canada. The manuscript has been submitted to the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities.

"Much of our focus with ERGs up until this point has largely been internal," she said. "But I think this [publication] is an example of external impact coming from our ERGs."

"There will be tremendous power, and the impact that comes from applying the talent of our ERGs toward the company's mission to serve patients. Our ERGs are comprised of staff across all departments of the company, and they're in a prime position to help Amgen identify and address systemic disparities in health."



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Panel Two: Access to Medicines in Canada

Delivering medicines to patients is at the core of Pharma's role in the healthcare system. Patient access in Canada depends on reimbursement and regulation—crucial factors affecting the cost of medicine. Recently, patient groups have criticized Canada's complex regulatory environment for drug pricing for introducing confusion and putting supply at risk.

Canadian regulations have faced criticism for introducing barriers to establishing commercial operations in Canada; companies often incur significant losses while seeking drug approvals and reimbursement. Currently, there are murmurs of a federal plan to again consider implementing a national pharmacare program, which may further muddy the waters for reimbursement.

The challenge of attracting and balancing Pharma investment in Canada

The Covid-19 pandemic has provided evidence that the Canadian government can mobilize to gain access to innovation, according to **Christine Lennon**, general manager of Incyte Biosciences Canada. She noted that the federal government has demonstrated it can remove layers of bureaucracy without compromising patient safety.

Lennon described the delicate art and science of attracting and balancing investment in Canada. These actions include job creation, clinical trials activity, and securing expedient and sustainable access to new and innovative medicines for Canadian patients in an increasingly constrained market.

“In Canada, we’re competing with our colleagues around the world for internal investments into clinical trials,” Lennon said. “There is also a looming threat of Patented Medicine Prices Review Board reform in Canada, which is the prequel to health technology assessments, negotiated reimbursement, and listing agreements.”

All of this creates pressure on ultimately improving patient care. Biotech specialty Pharma, larger Pharma, and healthcare each face their own challenges, she said.

The challenge is to raise money, attract talent, and advance the pipeline at the early biotech stage, usually at significant monetary investment and losses before gaining regulatory approval, she explained.

“In larger Pharma, the challenge is to continue to deliver innovations and returns in an increasingly restrictive environment where time to recuperate investment is eroded,” she added. “Publicly traded companies like Incyte often need to invest at significant losses for at least a few years before possibly gaining regulatory approvals and reimbursement in Canada.”

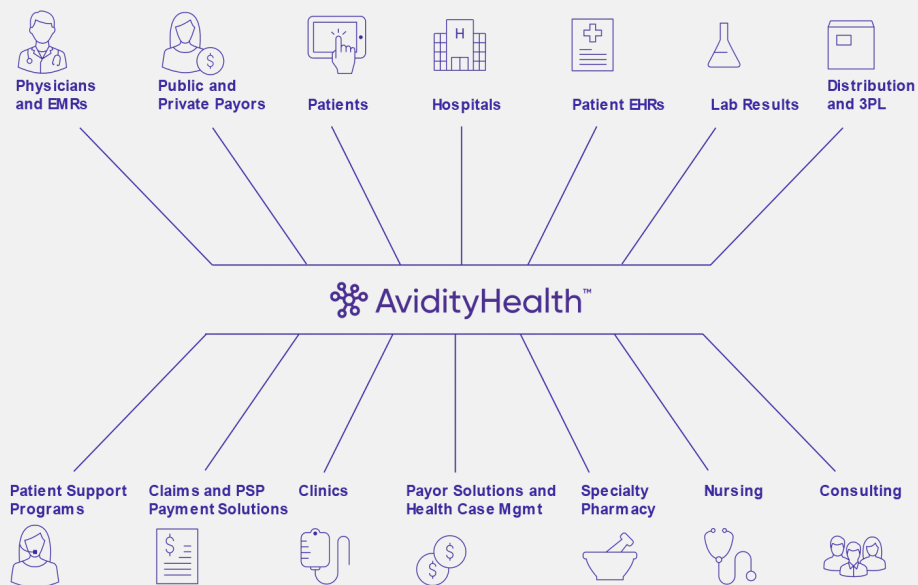
Some pharmaceutical companies look at Canada and decide to invest their money elsewhere, resulting in this country falling behind on launches, said Lennon.

“[Incyte] needs to be strategic, and we are trying to attract and balance investment in Canada with the potential of approvals and sales so we can become a true healthcare partner for Canadians,” continued Lennon.

“We need to find efficiencies to provide Canadian patients access to trials and ultimately improved innovations. This means removing layers of bureaucracy in our system, which would be progressive, innovative, and adaptive.”

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“Canada often comes up short on patient access to drugs,” said **Ross Glover**, general manager of Taiho Pharma. “But it’s not a disaster. We can fix this. If government and Pharma work together, we can bridge the gaps.”

He discussed how Pharma can more accurately address patient needs and values when developing access to medications in Canada. “It’s a hot topic because the industry is always working hard to make access to medications easier.”

Pharma companies have different ways of listening to and garnering feedback from patients, Glover said. Some Pharma companies go one step further and directly provide patients with access to a therapy—in some instances, patients can gain early access to a new drug during the review process.

However, “it’s often unclear what kind of alignment to patient values [Health Canada] undertakes in their reviews,” said Glover. “How they weight patient values versus the clinical and economic considerations of the drug is often lost in the review. They need to put more weight toward patient values in the reviews themselves.”

“Of course, data needs to be clinically meaningful for an approval,” Glover said. “But that clinical meaningfulness is [currently] defined by physicians and not by patients. Perhaps in the future, patients can have more of a say in the clinical meaningfulness of a drug when it’s going for a review. There also needs to be consideration for how a subset of patients might benefit and be approved uniquely for the drug.”

He noted there is currently no weight put toward dosing changes to reduce potential side effects. “The price seems to outweigh everything. Price is often commented on early in the process, and the weight of those comments tend to outweigh clinical meaningfulness or patient values,” Glover said.

So how can Pharma do better as an industry?

“We should always be meeting patients’ unmet needs first and foremost with our submissions and bringing our innovative drugs forward for Canada,” he said.

“We can look at improving how data is presented [in submissions] and beef up the alignment to patient values [to highlight] the daily struggle our patients face. Perhaps then we would have a better system that we could call patient-centric.”

Why national pharmacare won't solve lack of access

"Pharmacare is not the issue," said **Peter Brenders**, general manager of BeiGene Canada, "but it keeps coming up [as a federal talking point]. It's interesting how we assume it's needed."

He said we need to start asking better questions about the "ever-simmering national pharmacare file," starting with "What is pharmacare?"

Simply put, national pharmacare is an insurance plan that covers your drugs.

"To the average consumer out there," he said, "pharmacare already exists. But maybe not for everyone." He explained that while every province has a 'pharmacare' program, at the crux of ongoing discussions are the drugs and patients not covered—which remain the issue under any model.

"How provinces set who and what is covered seems to be the issue. And if there are gaps," he said, "it's a provincial decision. So why are the Feds involved?"

Brenders cast doubt on whether the federal government would be equipped to manage better and implement healthcare than provinces currently do.

He pointed to Canada's disastrously slow Covid-19 vaccine rollout as a "recent example of federal prowess in the management of a national health program and its ability to work with provinces."

"If provinces really want to provide comprehensive healthcare coverage," Brenders said, "they don't need a national program."

He argued that a centralized program wouldn't improve the availability of new medicines in Canada and suggested that pharmacare would be unlikely to expand patient access in any meaningful way.

He suggests that federal-level discussions on pharmacare distract from the real barriers to access for Canadian patients, such as drug pricing reform.

"When this comes back—and it will come back—and politicians want to raise the primacy of a national pharmacare program," Brenders said, there's an "easy test" of their conviction that a national drug plan is genuinely for the better. "If a national pharmacare program is put in place, will it become de facto the sole drug benefit plan for elected members and their staff? For all public servants?"

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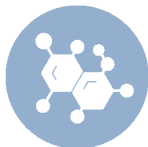
Senior Director, Business Development
stephanie.babbitt@mckesson.ca

Connie Casola

Director, Business Development, Quebec
connie.casola@mckesson.ca

Shannon Scott

Senior Business Developer
shannon.scott@mckesson.ca





Panel Three: External Deployment Initiatives

Determining the future of external deployment has been an ongoing challenge throughout the pandemic—the only certainty is that much has changed. New models for delivery of patient care and new ways of connecting have changed healthcare providers' expectations for interactions with the pharmaceutical industry.

More than ever, virtual sales channels and new innovations will be crucial to maintaining customer relationships. Going forward, HCPs will likely have less time to entertain sales that don't offer added value—through education or otherwise.

Reimagining Pharma's role in supporting HCPs

Pharma, as an industry, has the goal of helping patients—but there is value in considering how Pharma may contribute to supporting physicians as well, said **Paul Petrelli**, general manager of Jazz Pharmaceuticals Canada.

“As an industry, we want to help support patient care, but what does that look like, and how do we create win-win solutions?” asked Petrelli. “Where the opportunity exists, we need to reimagine our role in helping support healthcare professionals.”

He reminded Congress delegates that, a year ago, at NPC 2020, research was done in conjunction with Pangaea Consultants to understand what the new standard would look like.

“We interviewed healthcare professionals, nurses, pharmacists, physicians, not just because of post-Covid, but also just to recognize how the dynamics in the Pharma industry are changing,” he said.

“We also looked within, conducted external benchmarking, and examined the gaps in our industry.”

The feedback received came down to two themes: one was a lack of time to spend

with patients, and the second was effectiveness in technology.

“There are two areas where the Pharma industry can contribute,” Petrelli explained.

“One is to help healthcare professionals stay current in the volume of information and tools. The second is partnering with them to help minimize inconsistencies in access to care for patients.”

“Healthcare professionals are looking for the industry to emerge as a true partner in terms of patient care,” Petrelli said.

“They want help with managing and minimizing time and delays for patient care. And the big ask is helping improve healthcare systems.”

“We need to reconsider how we invest in brand awareness and growth and look at the systems care models, and research we can contribute to that will help improve patient support,” continued Petrelli.

“We need to educate healthcare professionals on what we do in the Pharma narrative and change that dynamic from a push to a pull.”



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Redefining value in a post-Covid world

As the Covid situation is driving Pharma companies to explore new ways of conducting business, this is an ideal time to reframe the industry from one of sales to an industry of providing value, said **Kevin Leshuk**, president & CEO of Forus Therapeutics.

Leshuk spoke about the constraints of selling and new considerations in a post-Covid world.

Leshuk explained that his company, Forus Therapeutics, is a new Canadian-based specialty Pharma company. "Forus has not yet had to address the challenges of working actively in the market with existing products, as we are launching both the company and a new therapeutic," he said. "Our foray into the Covid world is coming at the tail end, and my first thought is on that word 'selling'."

"If our industry continues to think of itself as selling, we are going to continue to miss the mark," said Leshuk.

"We have to move away from 'selling' to 'value', and re-establish the value proposition. Value means different things to different people, and revenue is still a significant piece of what we do, but my operating framework is to focus on those actions that bring the most value."

Leshuk noted that new ways of conducting business are being explored now, without flying across the country, without sitting in meetings that are of limited value, without investing non-value time that is not going to advance a stakeholder's interests.

"And [at Forus] we are really focusing on increasing the value for our customers."

"The Pharma industry likes to talk about bringing value, but I'm not sure we ask the questions," added Leshuk.

"I'm not sure we listen with understanding as the backdrop. When we listen to understand, we need to internalize it and have conversations that will challenge the old paradigms, to give ourselves the opportunity to innovate and adapt."

There is an outstanding need to listen to customers and develop means to provide value in ways that are different yet compliant, Leshuk said in summary.

"Or perhaps we need to challenge that compliance convention. In the new Covid reality, this may be an opportunity to redefine what things look like. I'm looking forward to the conversation."

Engaging with primary care: What have we learned?

Even as virtual engagement has greatly expanded in the Covid era, face-to-face contact with physicians remains the most impactful approach, according to **Leandra Wells**, VP Respiratory at GSK.

Yet virtual engagement remains a strong tool, so selecting reps who possess skills in both of these areas will be important, she said.

“As we emerge through the end of this pandemic, we know it’s not going to be the same as pre-Covid,” said Wells. “We are entering a new normal, and clinicians will probably be more selective in how they choose to engage and see sales reps. So we need to be thoughtful around how we communicate with HCPs.”

“One of the areas we have learned so much about is engaging and communicating with clinicians over non-traditional channels and using virtual tools,” said Wells. “This has been in the cards for a long time, [especially in marketing]; it was just a matter of time before we really integrated it in sales.”

The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of virtual channels in sales deployment strategies, added Wells.

She noted that the reps at GSK have learned how to communicate and engage effectively using digital technologies and campaigns in sustained communications.

“However, one of our key learnings is that face-to-face is still the most impactful method of engaging and communicating with our clinicians,” said Wells. “It is the most effective way to educate, inform, and build awareness and we have to keep that top of mind; these other channels are great in complementing our messaging.”

Physicians, too, have put resources into adopting virtual communication channels, for patient and industry communication, she said.

“This cascades down into how we coach, recruit, and hire sales reps,” said Wells.

“The competencies we are looking for now are different than two years ago. Now we have to evaluate tech savviness in a prospective representative, and how that rep communicates and engages in a virtual setting. We need to ensure these competencies are addressed and upskilled in our sales force going into the future.”

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Panel Four: The Industry Post-Covid

A worldwide catalyst for change, the pandemic has particularly highlighted the relationships between the pharmaceutical industry and government. The international race to develop Covid vaccines and therapies pushed the federal government toward a partnership with Pharma not seen for decades, but the long-term relationships will require commitment from both sides.

Future healthcare system resilience will depend in part on developing a robust national Life Sciences strategy and helping decision-makers understand Pharma's role.

Regulation, especially in the context of the Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB), has been a key issue in recent years. As we learn to live with the pandemic, the problem of developing an attractive business environment in Canada is the subject of renewed focus.

The Canadian biotech ecosystem post-Covid

Throughout the Covid pandemic, the Pharma industry and government bodies have strengthened their relationships. This represents an opportunity to open further discussions between stakeholders and for Pharma to demonstrate its strategic value, said **Andrew Casey**, president and CEO of BIOTECanada.

"We're not entirely out of Covid yet, but we can start to envision what a post-Covid world looks like," said Casey.

"Today, we have four effective vaccines. Clearly the industry delivered. We are getting back to normalcy and things are optimistic. So it makes sense to take stock and see where we are going."

"The Canadian biotech ecosystem has continued to flourish and grow," Casey pointed out.

"We've seen record IPOs and financings, and fantastic developments in the industry. Government has a greater appreciation for the advantage it can gain by investing heavily in the biotech space. They want to develop in-house or domestic biomanufacturing capacity."

During the pandemic there has been significant investment in Pharma

companies, particularly Sanofi Pasteur and Moderna, he said. As well, Canada's National Research Council's facility in Montreal has been expanded to accommodate vaccine manufacture locally.

"A greater appreciation for the sector and what it can deliver can play a role in the economic rebuild," said Casey.

"Government needs to look at the ecosystem, building on existing strengths, expertise, and investments they've already made in the sector, and work to leverage those existing strengths to build something bigger going forward," said Casey.

Further efforts from government bodies to rebuild partnerships with multinational Pharma companies are needed, he said. Casey noted that the global pharmaceutical industry has a role in developing the Pharma sector in Canada.

"We have an opportunity coming out of this," Casey said. "Industry is in a better position than it's ever been in terms of government appreciating its strategic value. The key is to rebuild that partnership, leverage the existing investments, and get to a stronger place."

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Reflections and hopes for the Pharma industry

Pamela Fralick, president of Innovative Medicines Canada, would like to see a Pharma industry where “we have measurably advanced our reputation of integrity and value, are respected as a partner, and valued for our contributions to society.”

At the virtual 15th National Pharma Congress, Fralick provided some reflections and hopes for the coming year.

First and foremost, the pharmaceutical industry needs to address the time involved with Patented Medicine Prices Review Board (PMPRB) submissions, and secondly, it needs to build on collaborations made during the pandemic to find a better way forward with PMPRB, says Fralick.

Fralick’s third reflection is regarding the Pan Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance and their progress so far. Fourth is creating more medications for rare diseases and fifth is antimicrobial resistance, an ongoing threat. Sixth is developing a life sciences strategy.

Going forward, Fralick said her hopes are that Pharma will have a strong and reliable scanning process, that we will be adept and increasingly accurate in identifying broader environmental issues that will

affect our industry, and that we will have effective relationships and partnerships with federal and provincial governments.

In addition, Fralick said she hopes Pharma will have better government dialogues so there will not be a need to decipher competing government policy objectives.

She reflected on the need for an “improved and streamlined market access process for all Pharma products, and especially for medications for rare diseases and antimicrobial resistance.” Fralick also said there is a need for an end-to-end life sciences system, where Pharma will not have to advocate for a strategy.

Fralick added: “we need to define a role for ourselves where we are an active partner in supporting the growth of resilient health systems. It’s within our grasp but we have not fully identified how we are going to do it.”

And finally, Fralick reflected on the importance of data and talent in the Pharma industry.

“These are the major issues for the next few years,” Fralick said. “They’re on our doorstep now and I believe we will achieve greater successes over the next two years.”

Supporting and sustaining the relationship between government and industry

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought government bodies and the pharmaceutical industry into closer collaboration that has been of benefit to both. Going forward, this relationship needs to be maintained and strengthened and should not be allowed to wane, said **Ronnie Miller**, president and CEO of Roche Canada.

“The industry is willing to invest in multiple avenues in Canada, including manufacturing, clinical trials, and innovations such as precision medicine and artificial intelligence, and to build those into the healthcare system,” said Miller. “To do this, we need cooperative interaction with government to create an ecosystem that is prepared to update those innovations.”

“Prior to the pandemic, the industry had an arm’s length relationship with government,” said Miller. “There has historically been a lack of dialogue between industry and government over many years. Much of this shifted during the pandemic, and there was a realization of the importance of a strong partnership between industry and government.”

Miller pointed out that the life sciences industry took a leadership role in providing

diagnostics, therapies, and vaccines, and government became more open to engaging with industry and having constructive dialogue. Industry and government saw a shift from a transactional to a more collaborative relationship and began having discussions on broader health system societal implications.

“We hope to sustain and support long lasting partnerships beyond Covid-19,” Miller said. “The industry can provide unique expertise and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, precision medicine, digital health, and health data. We are open to collaborating with government and forming long-term partnerships to drive the future of health in Canada.”

Miller added that pharmaceutical businesses need to encourage government to broaden their focus to other disease areas, including cancer and neurological disease, to support innovation in clinical practice and build Canada’s capabilities.

“These steps will collectively ensure health system resilience for the future and enhance Canada’s international competitiveness,” he explained. “We hope this renewed partnership between industry and government continues to prosper in order to attract investment in life sciences and bring innovations of the future closer to Canadians.”



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Panel Five: Technology

New technologies and approaches developed over the past year have already radically changed the way we work. The pandemic spurred an unprecedented wave of adoption of virtual tools and offered opportunities for innovation in how we communicate, operate, and manage data.

Telehealth and telemedicine give healthcare providers new ways to treat patients while improving access to care. Newly implemented digital patient management tools can be integrated with AI to securely collect and analyze patient data. Such technology could improve patient experiences while helping to identify rare disease and disease predictors.

The use of Real World Evidence to compliment clinical data is another growing trend in data management and analysis that offers a meaningful perspective of patient experiences.

Harnessing real world evidence to shape our future

Four emerging technologies—machine learning, genomics, accessible data sources and blockchain—may be valuable tools for the pharmaceutical industry to harness real-world data and evidence said **Pat Forsythe**, general manager of Eisai.

“Real world evidence is derived from the analysis of real world data,” said Forsythe.

“There have been advances in digital and analytics, and an explosion of data. Regulators are much more open than they ever have been, and Covid and vaccine development have put real world evidence in the public eye.”

Machine learning and AI are coming to Pharma, Forsythe said. He noted that some pharmaceutical start-up companies are launching that operate using an artificial intelligence (AI) drug development platform. As well, he said that Merck & Co. Inc recently demonstrated an automated system that could identify patients with peripheral artery disease from EMR records at a much more effective and efficient rate.

“Also, because of our large data sets, there is a place for genomic [research],” Forsythe added. “Flatiron Health and Foundation Medicine have together

created an 82,000 oncology patient database. They know the patients’ genomic profiles and drug outcomes.”

In addition, Forsythe pointed out that researchers can look at patient level clinical data and examine how this can improve patient care.

“[There is also] the ability to share healthcare outcomes and adverse events on social media,” he said. “Add to that cloud computing and pooled data—it is a rich source of data we have not seen before.”

“Finally, there is blockchain, which is great for creating consistent data sets in a confidential manner,” Forsythe added. “If we took all the data we have today, and could use blockchain to facilitate access to records, data reporting, clinical trials, privacy and consent management, the efficiencies alone would be worth it.”

“We are going to see increased partnerships in generating and using data,” concluded Forsythe. “We are going to have a better understanding of subgroups, which is great for rare diseases. The costs of gathering information could be done more effectively and efficiently. And with our analytics capabilities we will have more insights into which products will deliver the most value.”

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Emerging AI: From bench to bedside... to Big Data

The growing field of artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to aid in connecting therapies with patients who need them, said **Danielle Portnik**, regional business manager, international at Ambry Genetics.

“Currently, many of our patients, especially those with rare diseases, are left without answers. More than 40% of patients with rare diseases are misdiagnosed at least once in their diagnostic odyssey,” she said.

One opportunity for AI pertains to how pharmaceutical suppliers are able to reach out to the patient, she said. Portnik said there are currently AI systems or ‘bots’ capable of delivering assessments to patients where they are and scheduling follow ups remotely based on criteria established for certain conditions.

“Next is what we then do [with the aggregate] data,” said Portnik. “There are incredible advances in machine learning right now that can examine a plethora of patient data in a given population. That allows us to pull up certain symptoms or phenotypes together to recognize patterns, and hopefully shorten the diagnostic odyssey.”

“If we [improve AI diagnostic tools] in concert with improving access to screening through AI bots, we can leverage both technologies to identify novel pathways for therapeutic development,” Portnik explained.

“At the same time, we need to leverage AI on the Pharma/biotech side to know what trials are out there, align patients with the best therapies, and reuse current [therapeutics] for novel indications.”

Questions remain, Portnik noted, including what is the best path to reaching this sort of AI integration and which therapies would best benefit from automated patient connection.

“If we’re already connected through AI, can we use this to inform patients of what has come of their data, of what we’ve discovered, and increase their access with reduced time to diagnosis? Finally, how do we optimize those outcomes?”

“This sounds far off in the future,” Portnik acknowledged. “But it is happening now. The future of personal precision medicine is here.”

Innovation in communication with stakeholders

Even when all stakeholders share a goal, limitations in communication between groups can lead to duplication of effort and other inefficiencies, said **David Renwick**, vice-president and general manager of Emergent Biosolutions. He said that Pharma businesses can improve patient outcomes by innovating communication strategies.

“Innovation can come from very different places,” said Renwick. “It arises from addressing the complexity of our situation and market and empowering a team and their efforts.”

Emergent produces the Narcan naloxone nasal spray, which can reverse the effects of opioid overdose. Renwick noted this places Emergent in a unique marketplace with complex communication needs.

“We found in our research that many stakeholders, while acting in the best interest of the cause, were not communicating with each other,” Renwick explained. “This led to duplication of efforts and many inefficiencies to deliver the life-saving naloxone.”

“We realized if we were to have a meaningful impact on the market, we needed to bring all these stakeholders—pharmacy, mental health, social workers,

addiction treatment, public health, harm reduction agencies, governments, advocates—together,” Renwick added.

“We put together a team of regionally-based, skilled individuals, who would seek to uncover opportunities to bring interested parties together, to understand what their needs were and how we could fulfill them,” said Renwick. “I think that’s pretty innovative.”

To date this team has succeeded in developing outreach into several naloxone-ready communities, distributing Narcan as widely as possible, he said.

Additionally, “through the Youth Haven drop-in centre, a backpack program was developed to put at-risk youth in touch with Narcan nasal spray. This was supported, distributed, and administered by OPP.”

“These initiatives and others will impact getting Narcan to the end user,” added Renwick.

He said a key takeaway is that as part of patient-centred thinking, Pharma businesses should identify factors affecting patients’ ability to access the company’s products or services.

“Learn and act quickly, be flexible, and give teams an environment where they can succeed.”



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Panel Six: Career Development & Talent Management

While some employees have enjoyed the convenience of remote work, the reality for many is that a lack of in-person access to colleagues and the office environment has seemed detrimental to career advancement.

The debate over whether “the great resignation” will really happen has been making headlines this year, but ultimately the question is whether employees feel adequately supported navigating new models of work.

Experienced leaders caution young professionals not to expect corporations to manage their careers for them, but to take responsibility for their own growth.

Owning your career: stepping out of your comfort zone

Taking opportunities and pursuing skills outside of the scope of one's current position is vital for career advancement, said **Sandra Heller**, general manager of Seagen Canada. In her talk, Heller illustrated her argument with experiences from her own career.

"I've realized, throughout my career, the importance of following opportunities and taking myself out of my comfort zone," said Heller. "I'm a firm believer that you must own your career."

"In high school, I was a cashier at a local pharmacy," she said. "They asked if I wanted to learn about being a technician. I was interested and found myself reading the big blue CPS books to understand what the products were used for. This took me down my career path in pharmaceuticals."

Heller said she had her first career opportunity working for a consulting company that ran patient support programs (PSPs), which were just starting up. Later, she was approached with an opportunity to set up and run a PSP from inside a Pharma company. She learned about Interactive Voice Response Systems (IVRS), telephony systems, and hiring and training staff, which she had no previous experience with.

"I have also done more traditional roles: product manager, sales manager," Heller said. "But I would continue to try to learn about areas I wasn't familiar with. For example, when working in oncology, I wanted to understand more about market access, and I took courses for deeper knowledge."

All these experiences set Heller up for the opportunity to be the Canadian lead at Seagen, she said. She described learning about quality systems, SOPs, Dell applications, distribution models, aligned reviews, and how to negotiate effectively with the pan-Canadian Pharmaceutical Alliance.

Heller has a few words of advice. "First, the importance of rolling up your sleeves and getting the work done."

"Second, don't be defined by your job description," added Heller. "When there are opportunities to learn more, take them. These experiences might lead you in a different direction that perhaps you were not anticipating. Third, be curious and learn from others."

Heller concluded by saying: "If you want something you have never had, then you have to do something you have never done."

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Finding the balance between remote and in-person work

The rapid adoption of remote work during the pandemic has led to many positive changes in Pharma regarding how individuals work, lead, and thrive while maintaining high productivity, said **Janine Pajot**, VP of human resources at Bayer.

As a result of these changes, managers should expect that employees will want continued flexibility around working arrangements that will help them meet personal commitments, said Pajot.

“Our employees demonstrated the greatest flexibility when our business models needed it most, managing on a personal level without the usual support systems in place due to restrictions.”

While remote work is valuable, the strengths of in-person collaboration should not be discarded, Pajot added, suggesting that a balance needs to be found between these options. “As organizations return to gathering, their measurement of success should be based on outcomes, not where someone hangs their coat.”

“We also have the opportunity to create a more diverse workforce, and translating

that into fresh and innovative ideas that will propel our organizations to higher performance,” Pajot said.

“Bringing in new talent is one aspect, but what about the talent we already have? Make sure talent management becomes part of your DNA as a leader. Have regular check-ins with employees and get to know them.”

Managers should continue to have robust career conversations with employees to bring out strengths and identify skill gaps, so that the company can support to build employee skills,” explained Pajot. At the same time, there is a need to monitor for individuals working excessive hours and to recognize the signs of burnout, she said.

“It’s important to keep the wellness and mental health of our employees top of mind.”

“One thing we know for sure is that our employment landscape is ever-changing,” she said.

“The strongest ways as a leader to navigate into the future are to nurture connection with your talent, help them broaden their skill set, and lead with compassion and authenticity.”

Career development through a learning mindset

Learning and development are goals that should be pursued every day, not side projects to be engaged in when one has time to take a course or seminar, said **Fiona McCloskey**, country manager for Labtician Théa.

“When I think of career development, two things come to mind,” McCloskey said. “The first is having a learning mindset each and every day. The second is being unafraid to get outside your comfort zone.”

Many people tend to think of career development as something done on the side, separate from their jobs, said McCloskey.

“We might set up our individual development plan at the beginning of the year, identify a couple of courses to help us build new skills, and identify a mentor to meet with regularly,” McCloskey explained. “But we don’t really think of career development as a day-to-day initiative.”

“However, I really think significant learning and development can happen every day,” she said.

“We work in an industry with many talented and bright individuals. Take advantage of those interactions. Be curious. Ask questions. You can proactively learn from the people around you.”

In her own career in marketing, McCloskey said she would participate in brand planning and strategy sessions outside of her division.

“When I was a director, I used to bring in brand managers from other divisions into our brand planning sessions. You can learn so much from people with a different breadth of experience than you.”

Individuals looking to improve their leadership skills can look to the leaders around them and ask what inspires or motivates them, what questions they are asking and why, McCloskey added.

“If you do these things consistently, day-by-day, you will find those incremental learnings add up,” concluded McCloskey. “You will have significant growth and development in your career trajectory.”



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CAROL STIFF

Head of Canada, Santen Canada Inc., responsible for building and executing Canadian entry plans for prescription, surgical device and OTC products in ophthalmology



CHRISTINE LENNON

General Manager of Incyte Biosciences Canada, responsible for its medical, regulatory, and commercial strategy in Canada; judge and mentor at McGill Dobson Centre for Entrepreneurship and Desautels MBA School



DANIELLE PORTNIK

Regional Business Director, International at Ambry Genetics and Co-Founder and President of the Greater Toronto Area chapter of the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association



DAVID RENWICK

Vice President and General Manager at Emergent BioSolutions and 2019 inductee to the Canadian Healthcare Marketing Hall of Fame; Trustee for the BGC Canada (formerly The Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada) Foundation Board



FIONA McCLOSKEY

General Manager for Labtician Théa; a seasoned marketer and business director with deep experience in the Canadian eye care community



FRANK STRAMAGLIA

General Manager of Astellas Pharma Canada, leading business operations in the country, and a member of the Board of Directors of Innovative Medicines Canada (IMC)



JANINE PAJOT

Vice President, Human Resources for Bayer in Canada, focusing on all aspects of human resource management; a member of Bayer's Country Leadership Team and a member of the Board of Directors of the Ontario Caregivers Organization



KEVIN LESHUK

Founder, CEO & President of FORUS Therapeutics Inc, with broad experience building and leading executive teams across diverse disease areas; a champion of Canadian LifeSci industry



LEANDRA WELLS

Respiratory Business Unit Head at GSK, responsible for the performance, strategic direction and growth of the business unit in Canada; sits on several boards at Mount Sinai Hospital



PAMELA FRALICK

President of Innovative Medicines Canada and one of Canada's leading compassionate voices in the health sector, dedicated to improving Canadian health and well-being



PAT FORSYTHE

General Manager at Eisai Inc., a specialty pharma company focused on neurology and oncology, with experience in biologics, specialty and primary care



PAUL PETRELLI

General Manager of Jazz Pharmaceuticals Canada, with extensive experience as a business leader in biotechnology and rare disease in Canada and the United States



PETER BRENDERS

General Manager of BeiGene Canada, leading the Canadian affiliate operations; 2016 inductee to the Canadian Healthcare Marketing Hall of Fame and founding host of the NPC Podcast leading 40 episodes across its five seasons



RONNIE MILLER

President and CEO of Roche Canada, responsible for the growth and success of the Canadian Pharmaceuticals Division, delivering innovative healthcare solutions



ROSS GLOVER

General Manager of Taiho Pharma Canada and overseeing expansion into the Mexican market, with over 30 years' experience in the pharma industry



SANDRA HELLER

General Manager of Seagen Canada Inc, a small oncology-focused biotech company, with more than 20 years of commercial strategy and marketing experience focused mainly in hematology and oncology

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Wednesday, October 20

**All times noted are in EDT*

10:00am Welcome & Opening Remarks

Panel One: Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

10:05am	Panel One: Introduction & Poll Questions	Tiana DiMichele
10:15am	Terminology and metrics for understanding DEI	Carol Stiff
10:20am	Employee Resource Groups, training, and recruiting for diversity	Brian Heath
10:25am	The impact of Covid on inclusion and accessibility	Frank Stramaglia
10:30am	Panel One: Diversity, Equality, & Inclusion	

Panel Two: Access to Medicines in Canada

10:50am	Panel Two: Introduction & Poll Questions	James Cran
11:00am	Balancing investment and access	Christine Lennon
11:05am	Improving patient-centricity of access	Ross Glover
11:10am	National Pharmacare in Canada	Peter Brenders
11:15am	Panel Two: Access to Medicines in Canada	

Panel Three: External Deployment Initiatives

11:35am	Panel Three: Introduction & Poll Questions	Victoria Vertessi
11:45am	How selling evolves from here (the big picture)	Paul Petrelli
11:50am	Constraints of selling and new considerations in a post-Covid world	Kevin Leshuk
11:55am	Engaging with primary care	Leandra Wells
12:00pm	Panel Three: External Deployment Initiatives	

Wednesday, October 27

**All times noted are in EDT*

10:00am Welcome & Opening Remarks

Panel Four: The Industry Post-Covid

10:05am	Panel Four: Introduction & Poll Questions	Dave Cann
10:15am	Building and regulating an attractive business environment in Canada	Pamela Fralick
10:20am	Understanding the Canadian ecosystem	Andrew Casey
10:25am	The state of dialogue between Canadian industry and government	Ronnie Miller
10:30am	Panel Four: The Industry Post-Covid	

Panel Five: Technology Update

10:50am	Panel Five: Introduction & Poll Questions	Sean McBride
11:00am	Emerging AI: From Bench to Bedside... to Big Data	Danielle Portnik
11:05am	The importance of real world evidence	Pat Forsythe
11:10am	New tools for marketing & promotion	David Renwick
11:15am	Panel Five: Technology Update	

Panel Six: Career Development & Talent Management

11:35am	Panel Three: Introduction & Poll Questions	Chris Dalseg
11:45am	Growth opportunities outside your comfort zone	Sandra Heller
11:50am	Helping employees navigate new models of work	Janine Pajot
11:55am	Applying a learning mindset	Fiona McCloskey
12:00pm	Panel Three: Career Development & Talent Mgmt	

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Phone: +1 (416) 916-2476
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