

18 Apr 2024 | News

Who's Hired? Hikma Recruits New US Generics President

Viatis Extends Recruitment Spree With New New Chief Commercial Officer

by Adam Zamecnik

A flurry of top level recruitments made headlines in the past weeks, with the likes of Hikma, Lupin, and Viatis announcing new hires while focusing on their targets for the year.

Hikma Pharmaceuticals has appointed a new president for its US generics business, naming with immediate effect the former Teva and Alvotech exec Hafrun Fridriksdottir. Fridriksdottir has worked in the pharmaceutical industry for the past 25 years, previously serving at senior executive positions at the likes of Allergan, Alvotech and Teva Pharmaceuticals. The division's past president Brian Hoffmann is set to leave Hikma on 1 May this year.

"Hafrun's vast experience in leading high performing research and development teams brings new capabilities needed for driving Hikma's Generics business in its next phase of growth," said Hikma chief executive officer Riad Mishlawi in the announcement.

"She will be especially helpful in further expanding Hikma's product portfolio and its position as a market-leading domestic US manufacturer and supplier of generic medicines."

In February, Hikma presented its financial results for 2023, reporting a 14% growth in group revenue across all three of its businesses, which focus on branded, generic, and injectable products, respectively.

Revenue was up by 39% in the generics division alone, with a core operating margin of 20.5%. According to Hikma, its authorized generic sodium oxybate has contributed to these results strongly.

Earlier this month, Hikma was scrutinized by a panel of judges from the US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit who challenged the company's public disclosures as part of Amarin's appeal for its induced infringement claim over Hikma's 'skinny label' generic version of Amarin's Vascepa (icosapent ethyl). (Also see "[‘That’s A Much Broader Statement’: Hikma Grilled In Amarin Vascepa Skinny-Label Appeal](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 10 Apr, 2024.)

Viartis Ramps Up Talent Shake-Up

Hikma was not the only company that announced a high-level shake up in its leadership. Also on 15 April, Viartis unveiled its hiring of Corinne Le Goff as the company's chief commercial officer, who also became a member of the generics manufacturer's executive leadership team.

Most recently, Le Goff served as the president and chief executive officer of the biotech Imunon, which went through a rebrand. Prior to this, Le Goff spent some of her 25 years in the industry as chief commercial officer Moderna at time of the Covid-19 pandemic. She also served in several roles at Amgen, including as the president of the US business.

This is not the only significant switch-up in leadership at Viartis where the company's long-serving president Rajiv Malik retired after 17 years at the start of the month. (Also see "[What’s Next? Five Things To Look Out For In April](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 1 Apr, 2024.)

The company hired the former Celgene exec Philippe Martin as its chief R&D officer in December 2023. (Also see "[Viartis Picks Brand-Recognized R&D Head To Fuel Novel Ambitions](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 18 Dec, 2023.)

Such changes were carried out to move the company through the value chain. While the company is not abandoning the production of generic drugs, it is shifting its focus to complex products and specialty therapeutics. Additionally, the company also sold of its biosimilars division to Biocon for \$3.3bn in 2022. (Also see "[Biocon Pays \\$3.3bn For Viartis Biosimilars Business](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 28 Feb, 2022.)

Euroapi Streamlines Leadership Amid Wider Pruning Efforts

Following the hiring of a new chief executive officer and larger restructuring plans announced earlier this year, Euroapi revealed further steps taken to streamline its executive committee. (Also see "[Who’s Hired? Sandoz Hires New CFO In A Landmark Year](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 8 Mar, 2024.)

The firm's current chief commercial officer Laurent Alexandre is set to be replaced by Guillaume Rosso, as part of the company's efforts to improve the efficiency of its operations.

While Euroapi previously targeted EUR1bn revenues after its split from Sanofi in 2022, the following years proved challenging for the newly independent active pharmaceutical ingredient

manufacturer. (Also see "[Newly Independent Euroapi Targets €1bn Revenues In 2022](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 13 Sep, 2022.)

Notably, the company's shares plummeted following a strong down shift in its financial expectations for 2023, which also coincided with a pause on longer-term goals. (Also see "[Euroapi Shares Nosedive As It Takes Axe To 2023 Guidance Late In The Year](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 19 Oct, 2023.)

In March 2024, Euroapi also had to shut down production at its manufacturing site in Brindisi, Italy, on grounds of "potential local misconduct". (Also see "['Potential Misconduct' Shuts EuroAPI Plant In Italy As 2024 Guidance Suspended](#)" - Generics Bulletin, 19 Mar, 2024.)

Further Moves Reported Across Industry

The Indian pharma firm Lupin also made waves earlier this April with the appointment of Ranjana Pathak as its chief quality officer who succeeds the incumbent Johnny Mikell. Pathak previously served as the president and global head of quality, medical affairs, and pharmacovigilance at Cipla.

Also in April, the early phase contract research organization CRS Clinical Research Services selected Catherine Canales as its new chief commercial officer amid larger strategic development efforts set to fuel international growth.