

PharmaBoardroom releases new Philippines pharmaceutical report

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, March 14, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The inclusion of healthcare as a priority on the Philippine presidential agenda has led to knock-on consequences that are being felt across the healthcare value chain. Universal healthcare coverage (UHC) has been cemented, leading many players to a strategic repositioning. The most successful players have been those that focused on a strategy that was inclusive of all stakeholders and aligned with the presidential agenda of affordable and accessible healthcare.

“When the new administration took over in 2010, our mantra was to include the previously overlooked poorest segment of the population [within PhilHealth],” says Enrique Ona, Secretary of Health of the Philippines. “Through our Department of Social Welfare, we had identified 5.2 million households -which could include four to five family members- as part of the poor layer of society. In terms of people, that number comes down to roughly 25 million, or a quarter of the country’s population.” Now, the challenge of the Department of Health is to address the next layer of

society, the so-called ‘near poor’ that are not yet enrolled in the PhilHealth scheme. “The projected number of families from this layer is 14.7 million, essentially 58.8 million Filipinos, that should be enrolled by the end of 2014,” Ona explains.

Even before implementing UHC, the government was taking steps to increase access to medicine. In 2008, the government implemented the Universally Accessible Cheaper and Quality Medicines Act, which included the Maximum Drug Retail Price (MDRP) scheme. The MDRP called for a 50 percent price reduction on 21 molecules, and introduced some systematization to drug pricing in the country. It led many multinational corporations (MNCs) into a period of negative growth, but those with the right portfolios continued to grow.

Survival for most MNCs in the post-MDRP period meant a refocusing on a few therapeutic areas of the highest unmet medical need. “This means knowing and understanding where your strengths as an organization lie, and what limitations exist due to the local healthcare system at a specific point of time,” says Thomas Weigold, president and managing director of Novartis Healthcare Philippines, the third largest MNC in the Philippines today.

The policy shifts in favor of generic medicines were coupled with the proliferation of retail chains that heavily advertised the availability of lower priced generic alternatives. Indeed, the biggest success



stories as a result of these policy shifts are the retail chains Generika and The Generics Pharmacy: with around 450 and 1,500 outlets mushrooming across the Philippine territory respectively, access to affordable generics has changed dramatically. Their rising power changed the interface between healthcare suppliers, patients and modern retail, especially as the healthcare industry is not necessarily used to modern retail practices, such as the strong focus on above-the-line marketing activities.

Although countries such as India established themselves early in the business process outsourcing (BPO) market, in recent years, there has been a shift towards more diverse locations in recent years, including South America, Eastern Europe and Asia Pacific. The Philippines has been a huge recipient of this geographical shift, and according to the Business Process Association of the Philippines (BPAP), one of the biggest areas of growth has been in BPO for the healthcare sector: healthcare information management (HIM) services grew by 172 percent in 2011. HIM encompasses electronic medical records, medical claims recovery, patient education, clinical data management, insurance processing, and other services.

Written after [exclusive interviews](#) with the country's leading decision makers, from local and multinational companies, manufacturers, distributors, experts, legislators, this is a unique resource for those looking beyond [figures](#).

Featuring:

Dr. Enrique T. Ona, Secretary Of Health, Department Of Health

Alexander A. Padilla, President & Ceo, Philhealth

Dr. Kenneth Y Hartigan-Go, General Director, FDA

Teodoro B. Padilla & Reiner W. Gloor, Executive Director & Advisor, PHAP

Thelma Tobias-Go And Ed Ocampo, President Of PCPI & VP Of Scheele Laboratories

Thomas Weigold, Country President And Managing Director, Novartis Philippines

A.A. Santillana, Group Chairman & Ceo, SV More

Lloyd D. Balajadia, MD Executive Director, Lloyd Laboratories

Raymund Azurin, Chief Executive, Zuellig Pharma Philippines

Teodoro Ferrer and Julien Bello, Co-founders, Generika

Gregorio Navarro, Managing Partner & Ceo, Deloitte Philippines

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