

FAST TO MARKET

Fast-to-market medicines set to boost OTC sector

inFirst+ Healthcare is hoping to shake up the OTC market with a novel approach to product development that should allow it to bring a number of new medicines to market in a short space of time



inFirst+ Healthcare is a new UK-based consumer healthcare company which spun out of the SEEK drug discovery group in 2012. The company was established to launch and commercialise new fast-to-market medicines that bring a novel approach to a sector where there has been little new innovation in several decades.

These medicines utilise the company's intellectual property to improve safe and well-established drugs and the first to be launched are indicated for cough and colds, and pain.

These two indications represent the most prevalent health conditions and are the two largest segments of the global OTC market. The medicines derive from the inFirst+ portfolio of patented technologies.

Known drugs – made better

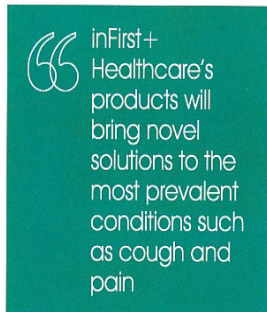
Following initial funding from Invesco in 2013, the company has developed a fast-to-market portfolio of innovative products which it believes address unmet consumer needs. Its strategic focus and mission, 'Known drugs – made better', allows rapid product development, swift pathways to regulatory approval and intellectual property protection. Its broad portfolio is based on adding natural ingredients to well-established drugs. These medicines have a rapid regulatory path to market as their indication, dose, regime and label remain unchanged.

The new company has signed a licence agreement with a key strategic partner in the US, for which it has received a \$5m upfront payment, with further near-term milestones and royalties to be earned from product sales.

Trust, safety and clinical proof

inFirst+ Healthcare's developments "aim to build on the trust and safety of well-established pharmaceutical ingredients and drugs and to develop formulations which result in a genuinely perceived difference in health outcomes".

The company's goal is "improved and highly effective health management, involving patients, the family practitioner and the pharmacist."



inFirst+ Healthcare is run by Manfred Scheske, who previously led GlaxoSmithKline's North American and European Consumer Healthcare businesses for a combined total of 12 years. He says: "We have talked to many healthcare practitioners who have confirmed the need for new, improved options for the treatment of cough and pain that are safe and cost-effective. Feedback from consumer research has also overwhelmingly confirmed the need for new products that have natural ingredients, such as cocoa, that can be combined with existing safe medicines to deliver an enhanced outcome for the patient."

"inFirst+ Healthcare's products will bring novel solutions to the most prevalent conditions such as cough and pain and I am very excited that we are in a position to deliver these products to consumer healthcare markets around the world."



Manfred Scheske: "InFirst is committed to driving innovation and bringing efficacy to the consumer healthcare market"

Clinically-proven medicine

The company's new cough medicine, Unicoough, is "the first new, pharmacy only, clinically-proven cough medicine to be licensed in three decades". It reflects the philosophy of using well-established active ingredients: including diphenhydramine, an antitussive with antihistamine and anticholinergic properties; ammonium chloride, a traditional expectorant; and levomenthol, a decongestant with a mild local anaesthetic and cooling effect. These ingredients are formulated within a 20 per cent natural cocoa demulcent, which forms a soothing film over the mucous membrane in the throat and buccal cavity and brings it into contact with the sensitive nerve endings of the throat lining.

Driving innovation

Mr Scheske says: "InFirst is committed to driving innovation and bringing efficacy to the consumer healthcare market, which has seen very few new products and only marginal innovation for decades. Cough, cold, pain and digestive indications represent the most prevalent symptomatic health conditions at the primary care level as well as in the OTC markets. We have worked very hard to finalise developments of our new products and to obtain marketing authorisations and are convinced that our offerings will fill voids in their respective markets and address important patient needs."