



# PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES WORLD CONGRESS

3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress of the Board  
of Pharmaceutical Sciences of FIP  
(PSWC2007)

## PSWC 2007 – An In-Depth Look at the Premiere Event in the Pharmaceutical Sciences

*Recently, some of the organisers of the up and coming Pharmaceutical Sciences World Congress 2007 (PSWC2007 Amsterdam) met in San Antonio, Texas, at the annual meeting of the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists. Hans H. Linden, Executive Director of EUFEPS and a member of the PSWC2007 Organising Committee, posed questions to the group to illuminate the key issues to be explored at the event, and to explain why no pharmaceutical scientist should miss this meeting – the most important and comprehensive conference of its kind.*

**Daan Crommelin (DC), PSWC Chair**

**Kamal Midha (KM), FIP President**

**Geoff Tucker (GT), PSWC Programme Chair**

**Hans Linden (HL), EUFEPS General Secretary**

**Vinod Shah (VS), FIP Scientific Secretary**

**Yuichi Sugiyama (YS), Immediate Past Chair, FIP BPS**

**HL:** Let me begin by asking, what is this meeting all about? WHY is the PSWC important?

**DC:** To quote the theme of the conference, the PSWC is about 'Optimising Drug Therapy as an Imperative for World Health'. Endless new discoveries and innovations are emerging from the application of the pharmaceutical sciences, which offer tremendous opportunities for the creation of new drugs and the improved use of existing ones.

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**GT:** Yes, and it is important to emphasise the breadth of the pharmaceutical sciences in these endeavours – from drug discovery through drug development to drug utilisation.

**YS:** Also, to recognise that the PSWC is a world congress, that seeks to address global needs by bringing together scientists at the cutting edge from many different countries and regions. The PSWC is the only GLOBAL conference for pharmaceutical scientists, it is important to appreciate the diversity of representation from different regions.

**HL:** How could this meeting help pharmaceutical scientists achieve their goals?

**DC:** The goals will only be achieved if there is concerted action from academia, industry and regulatory authorities. These are the three pillars of the meeting, which is designed specifically to promote effective understanding and networking between them in order to facilitate the rapid development of safer and more effective medicines

**HL:** Prof Shah – as FIP Scientific Secretary and a leader in the regulation of medicines, do you agree that the PSWC and meetings like it will lead to better medicines?

**VS:** Yes, this will provide a wonderful opportunity and arena for all to discuss issues on a neutral platform, helping everybody to move forward.

**HL:** As an example, will it lead say to more effective cancer therapy in 5 years?

**VS:** In PSWC2007, there is much on the emerging concept of ‘personalised medicines’, and cancer chemotherapy is an area where the application of genetic

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knowledge continues to be particularly fruitful in improving treatment for the individual patient. It is also important to emphasise the need to expand translational, patient-oriented research to make the best use of all the progress in the laboratory at the level of genomics and proteomics.

**GT:** Important also is to stress that “Personalised Medicines” is not just the application of genetic profiling of the patient. The PSWC will have sessions on understanding and managing the impact of ageing (from birth to old age), poor compliance and prescriber/patient education on individual response to drugs.

**HL:** So Dr Midha, why a world meeting, and why by FIP? Couldn't this be done by national associations at a national or regional level?

**KM:** You have to understand that while drug discovery may be largely confined to certain regions of the world, the process of drug development is a GLOBAL activity, and the pharmaceutical sciences have been able to mount an international platform and forum, under the umbrella of FIP, in order to explore the issues. This is the basis for having a pharmaceutical sciences world congress to promote the idea of using international networks to foster and facilitate effective drug development.

The clinical assessment of medicines is undertaken in many different countries with diverse health care settings. Accordingly, one of the remits of the pharmaceutical sciences should be to influence where and how such drug development and assessment takes place.

**HL:** So this is not replacing any meeting, but rather it is creating something new as an outcome of global developments?

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**KM:** The intent is to get the primarily scientific member organisations of FIP away from a local focus to more of a global focus – we want Europe, Asia, the Americas, and hopefully one day Africa – together, discussing both breakthroughs and challenges.

**HL:** How many people are involved in creating the programme?

**GT:** The responsibility for organising the scientific programme has been divided between myself, as European Programme Chair, and Tomohiko Ohwada and Wolfgang Sadee, as Asia–Australasia and North American Programme Chairs, respectively. At the outset we set up regional advisory committees of about 20 individuals each that submitted initial suggestions for topics and speakers. These were eventually honed into a programme comprising 36 symposia with 108 invited speakers, a group of Keynote Speakers and a series of Round Table Discussions.

In devising the programme we have attempted to provide a smorgasbord of the pharmaceutical sciences, with sessions on target discovery, pharmacokinetics/pharmacodynamics, drug delivery and pharmaceutical technology, drug analysis, clinical pharmacology and biomarkers, pharmacogenetics/genomics, pharmacoepidemiology and pharmacovigilance. Hopefully, something for everybody.

You will notice that all of the symposium titles are formulated as questions. This was done deliberately, to stimulate discussion and debate rather than just providing a vehicle for new information.

**HL:** What will the delegates be able to take back home after attending?

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**DC:** Networking opportunities and outcomes. An understanding of the state-of-the-science and its application, and (particularly for the younger people) an opportunity to build their networks for the future

**KM:** Yes, we want to spark and stimulate the graduate students and postdocs so that they can interact with the platform that we have created. If afterwards they are able to recognise which channels they want to become more involved in and focus their energy on, then we have done our job.

**YS:** We would also like the younger scientists to have a better awareness of common issues and cultural differences. For example, both the US and EU increasingly emphasise the importance of integrating different scientific aspects in the drug development process, whereas in Japan the focus is more on very basic, discrete areas of organic chemistry, medicinal chemistry, etc. The younger scientists should be encouraged to see beyond the immediate scope of their work and appreciate how it fits into the work of other disciplines.

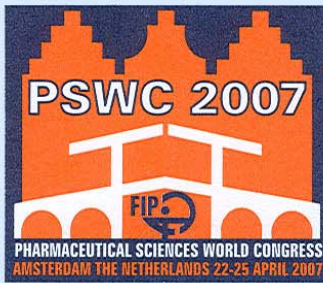
**KM:** In the developed world there may be a tendency to focus on diseases that affect the developed world. We have tried in PSWC to broaden this scope by also addressing diseases and issues prevalent in developing countries, as well as so-called 'orphan diseases'

**DC:** For example, the conference will feature a keynote lecture by Dr. Richard Laing from the World Health Organization, who will speak on "Priority Medicines for Europe and the World".

**HL:** Going back to the young scientist, you also expect them to BRING something- how much room do you have for posters and how many posters do you expect? How many posters can you accommodate exactly?

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**DC:** We expect over a 1000, with plenty of space.

**HL:** I see there is a special meeting for students and post docs before the conference. Why?

**DC:** They are our hope for the future, and this is their chance to meet together and steer the direction of both their careers and their discipline.

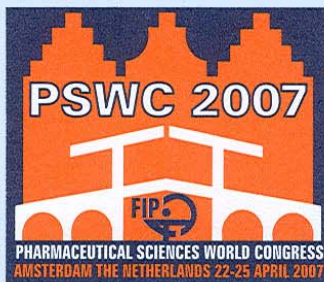
**HL:** Dr Sugiyama you have been noted as saying that the “systems’ approach” is key to success in the pharmaceutical sciences. So do you see ‘systems approaches’ sufficiently represented in the PSWC2007 programme?

**YS:** Yes, apart from a specific session on systems biology, several of the symposia take an integrated view of the assessment of drug fate and response. For example, there are sessions on prediction of whole body kinetics from in silico and in vitro data, the use of simulation and modeling in drug development, biomarkers and the integration of the data generated by omics approaches in drug development. The genomic revolution has tended to encourage a reductionist view in drug discovery and development. This is now changing and the need to integrate our understanding of what happens in the whole body is undergoing resurgence. This will be a key message from the meeting.

**HL:** Apart from the pharmaceutical scientists, FIP also has practitioners as members. Should they also attend?

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**KM:** Personally I think it's most useful to them, as many of the symposia are geared towards the application of basic sciences. As a result of their participation, practitioners will be able to facilitate the transition of information from the laboratory to the patient. Practitioners also are invaluable to the scientists in defining the pharmaceutical and medical need.

**GT:** In organising the programme we felt that it was particularly important to open it up to 'practitioners'. There should be no barrier between research and application, and both should learn from each other. The PSWC is one of the few scientific meetings to do this.

**HL:** We hear that in academia there is less and less money for research and travel. How do we get academic teachers and their students to come?

**DC:** There are several possibilities in place to help fund young academics and students to attend the meeting. Details can be found on the website.

**HL:** Would academics learn how to improve their teaching as well?

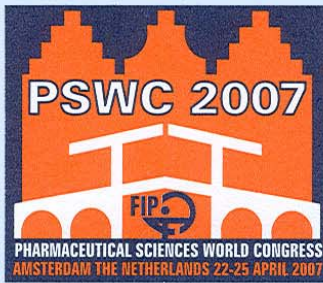
**DC:** We have a session before the start of the main meeting on strategic horizons and new developments in pharmacy and pharmaceutical sciences education. We hope they attend to discuss these issues

**HL:** There is also a post-meeting satellite session on Monoclonal Antibodies (MAbs). Why here, why now?

**DC:** This particular session is not run by FIP, but by EUFEPS and EAPB. There are several reasons for having this symposium. Firstly, MAbs represent the fastest growing therapeutic development. They offer a new approach to treating

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diseases; there are already a number of them in the therapeutic arsenal with many more to come; they are expensive, so who is going to pay? And there has been a major disaster recently with an agonist MAb. These are all issues we feel were worthy of extended discussion.

**HL:** What is the future of PSWC?

**KM:** There will be another PSWC 2010, in the United States where it all started. Every 3–4 years it has rotated around the different regions of the world, and it will continue to do so with hopefully even more participants, the best speakers in their fields, and a growing impact on the pharmaceuticals sciences and global health.

*It is clearly evident from the discussion that those involved in the PSWC are excited and extremely optimistic about the opportunities this meeting will bring to students, scientists and practitioners. With the goal of integrating the three communities that have most impact on the development and use of innovative medicines and their world-wide accessibility – that is, academia, industry, and regulatory bodies – the PSWC will open the door further for fruitful communication between pharmaceutical scientists, with great opportunities to enhance their personal growth and that of the science that fuels their work.*

*As the only global meeting of its kind, PSWC is truly the premiere event for pharmaceutical scientists, and we invite all to join us in what promises to be a memorable experience.*

*For more information please visit [www.fip.org/pswc](http://www.fip.org/pswc)*

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