

TO OUR READERS

Editor's Message: A Fresh Start and Shared Values



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Editor

Fellow of DIA

Welcome to 2018 and our January issue on this brand new online platform! *Global Forum* content is now easier to find, navigate and enjoy on computers, tablets and smartphones. I am deeply grateful to the staff of DIA for making this possible, and I wish you, our readers, an ever more impactful learning and information-sharing experience.

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As we usher in a new year, this issue features a number of original articles and new Regional Reports but also offers you an overview of significant developments in 2017. These are reflected in several summaries based on the main content streams we covered in *Global Forum* last year (Translational Science, Regulatory Science, Patient Engagement, Value & Access), on the 55 podcasts we produced in 2017, as well as on additional resources. A great deal of information has been distilled here for you.

Looking back at the important developments of 2017, it strikes me that the healthcare product development ecosystem is now more “convergent” than ever before and characterized by a number of globally-shared values. For example, ethics, integrity, and transparency (including data sharing) have become well-accepted and fairly well-applied principles across the world; concerns about ethnic diversity in responses to medicines remain but they have opened the door to creative ways to enrich how we develop and test new medicines (for example, the ICH E7 Guideline on MRCTs has reached Step 4); there is now widespread openness to rapid technological change (organs-on-chips; artificial intelligence and machine learning; 3D printing of medical products; wearable devices to generate clinical data; cloud computing and clinical trials); multinational regulatory agency collaboration for the benefit of patients is increasing (ICMRA is an example); healthcare is more widely regarded as a fundamental human right, not a privilege for those who can pay; all economies are focused on finding ways to make medicines more affordable (enormous difficulties remain but the intent is there); diversity and inclusion of all genders, ethnicities, and perspectives are increasingly viewed as engines of innovation and progress. These shared values are now global and they drive the same conversations and debates on nearly every Continent – specifically at DIA Conferences in China, Europe, Japan, the US, and many other places. This convergence is evident, inescapable, and remarkable.

We are approaching a “tipping point,” a time of fundamental change in medicines and medical devices development and commercialization which must be managed well or we will fail in our efforts to deliver innovation and better health to the patients of the world. It is up to us to make this work.

2018 is set to be another year of innovation, wonder, and even surprise.

Let us enjoy the journey.

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