

Press release

MSD Switzerland appoints Ans Heirman as new Managing Director

Lucerne, September 1, 2020 – MSD (Merck Sharp & Dohme AG) Switzerland appoints Ans Heirman, Ph.D. as the new Managing Director of MSD Switzerland, effective September 1st, 2020.

She will succeed Rebecca Poehnelt, Ph.D., who served as interim Managing Director (MD) since the departure of former MD Dr. Thomas Lang in May. Rebecca Poehnelt will assume the global role of AVP Oncology Portfolio Marketing based in Kenilworth, New Jersey, effective September 1st, 2020.

Commenting on the new appointment, Cyril Schiever, President Mid-Europe Region said, “Ans brings a strong track record of always being focused on patients, engaging employees and stakeholders to challenge the status quo and make our innovative medicines and vaccines accessible for all patients who need them. I know her dynamic approach will be an asset in achieving our strategic ambitions in Switzerland. Our on-going investments in Lucerne and Zurich are critical to our global aspiration to become the world’s leading research-intensive biopharmaceutical company.

Also I would like thank Rebecca for her successful tenure and strong leadership and wish her all the best for her professional and personal future.”



Ans Heirman, Ph.D.
Managing Director
MSD Switzerland

Ans Heirman says: “I am honored to lead the Swiss organization and to follow Dr. Thomas Lang in this role. Under his leadership, MSD Switzerland has made game-changing new drugs available to patients and has been recognized as a ‘Top Employer’ for eight years in succession.

These are unprecedented times. COVID-19 shows us, more than ever, the importance of a highly responsive pharma industry and research-intensive companies like MSD capable of developing new vaccines and medicines.

I’m particularly excited to come to Switzerland, with its world class life science sector and strong focus on

innovation. MSD Switzerland has a strategic role within MSD and I'm looking forward to joining the team to further strengthen our presence in Switzerland, working with stakeholders to ensure fast and broad patient access to medicines and vaccines that save and improve lives."

Ans Heirman joined MSD in 2005, starting her career in marketing and subsequently holding positions with increasing responsibility within Human Health, both in Belgium/Luxembourg and the US. She was appointed Managing Director of Norway in July 2017. Under her leadership, MSD Norway transformed into a more agile and digitally enabled organization focused on patient access. In three years, MSD Norway strengthened its market position and established a solid growth in a number of therapeutic areas including oncology, vaccines, HIV and diabetes.

Ans Heirman graduated in Bioengineering and holds a PhD in Applied Economics and Business Administration, both from Ghent University, Belgium. During her PhD studies, she was a Visiting Research Fellow at the Sloan School of Management, MIT, Boston.

The Leadership Team thanks Rebecca Poehnelt for her commitment and wishes her and Ans all the best for their future endeavors within MSD.

About MSD in Switzerland

1.000 employees are working in local and regional functions across four different sites in the Canton of Lucerne, Switzerland. The Human Medicine division is active in the areas of prescription drugs and biopharmaceuticals for therapies including oncology, with focus on immune- and targeted therapies, vaccines for children, young people, and adults, infectious diseases (including fungal infections, antibiotic resistance, HIV/Aids, and hepatitis C), diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, immunology and women's health.

MSD has one of the largest clinical research programs worldwide. In Schachen, drugs for worldwide clinical trials are manufactured and runs a forensic laboratory. MSD plays an active role in its community, supporting the health congress "Trendtage Gesundheit Luzern" and the popular "Swiss City Marathon Lucerne". In 2020, the company renewed its certification as a "Top Employer Switzerland" for the eighth year in a row.

About MSD

For more than 125 years, MSD has been inventing for life, bringing forward medicines and vaccines for many of the world's most challenging diseases in pursuit of our mission to save and improve lives. MSD is a trade name of Merck & Co., Inc., with headquarters in Kenilworth, N.J., U.S.A. We demonstrate our commitment to patients and population health by increasing access to health care through far-reaching policies, programs and partnerships. Today, MSD continues to be at the forefront of research to prevent and treat diseases that threaten people and animals - including cancer, infectious diseases such as HIV and Ebola, and emerging animal diseases - as we aspire to be the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company in the world.

For more information: www.msd.ch. Follow-us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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