

Yvette Zimmerman new CEO Pantarhei Bioscience: "We find safe and effective new treatments using existing human molecules."

Pantarhei Bioscience, the Dutch biopharmaceutical company, is pleased to announce the appointment of Yvette Zimmerman as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), with effect from January 2019. The founder of Pantarhei Herjan Coelingh Bennink speaks proudly about his successor: "Yvette is a very experienced drug developer and driven by what is really important for people and scientifically sound." During the 18 years of its existence, Pantarhei has filed more than 220 patents. Initially Pantarhei developed new medicines for Women's Health. Following the foundation of the subsidiary company Pantarhei Oncology in 2014, the focus has been redirected to new treatment concepts for endocrine cancer, especially breast and prostate cancer.

Yvette Zimmerman holds a Masters in Health Sciences and defended her PhD thesis "Androgen Restored Contraception" at Utrecht University in 2014. Drug research and development has filled her working life since 1995, including extensive experience at Organon International. She started at Pantarhei as program director in 2007 and she has been Chief Operating Officer since 2014.

Lean Management

Pantarhei Bioscience and Pantarhei Oncology are lean companies with only 8-12 employees over the years at its office in Zeist, the Netherlands. They manage an extensive international network required for drug development including drug synthesis, pharmaceutical formulation and production and preclinical and clinical development. It is precisely this compact structure that appeals to Yvette Zimmerman: "At Pantarhei we have the medical and scientific knowledge and creativity to invent medically needed and patentable new applications for already existing human molecules. We prepare the development plan and the further work is done by our international network of professionals, scientific organisations, universities, laboratories and hospitals. This enables us to adjust quickly when necessary and to operate cost-effectively." Yvette Zimmerman continues: "I am especially interested in elegant medical solutions and in scientific quality. After our demonstration of proof of concept and safety in human studies, the new product is licensed out to pharmaceutical partners for final development, marketing and sales."

Pantarhei Concept: pharmaceutical application of human molecules

With the establishment of Pantarhei Bioscience in January 2001, the retiring CEO, Herjan Coelingh Bennink, realised his vision: "The development of new medicines is possible by using the opportunities offered by already existing and known molecules, especially the innovative use of natural hormones and proteins. A huge advantage of this approach is that using compounds already known to the human body implies a higher chance of safety of the new medicine compared to using a chemical substance that is unknown to the body, as is the case in regular drug development." His roots as a gynaecologist and reproductive endocrinologist are still a source of inspiration. Herjan Coelingh Bennink: "We are using molecules, that have a function in the human body; what is more fascinating than discovering that a body's own hormone is effective as treatment for cancer?" Coelingh Bennink refers to estetrol or E4, an estrogen that is present in the human fetus in large quantities during pregnancy. Recently favourable results of the treatment of advanced breast cancer with E4 were announced in a study performed by Pantarhei Oncology in Germany. In the Netherlands the efficacy of E4 in prostate cancer is presently investigated in five leading hospital centres.

Business Development

For the time being Herjan Coelingh Bennink will remain as company President, responsible for strategy, business development and international relations. Recently the management team at Pantarhei has been strengthened by the arrival of Olav Andriess as Legal Counsel and Business Development Officer. Going forward, the plan is for Olav Andriess to increasingly take over activities from Herjan Coelingh Bennink.

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