

Cipla to ramp up front-end in US, Europe

Pharma company looking to hire senior-level talent, sees 15% revenue growth this fiscal

By [Sudhakar Gokul](#)

Mumbai: Drug maker Cipla on Wednesday said it will focus on strengthening front-end presence in its key markets, and is looking at hiring more senior-level talent.

"We have decided that we must do front-ending in priority areas in the US, Europe and Africa. We will look at more markets. Our sales outside India at present are around 55%, which may go up to 65% over the next few years. So we will look outside India both in terms of sales and new geographies," Y K Hamied, chairman, Cipla, said at the company's 78th annual general meeting on Wednesday.

He said the company will hire senior-level talent and

senior professionals to set up front-end activity in both the US and Europe.

Also, the company sees 15% growth in revenues this fiscal.

"Currently, we expect mid-teens topline growth, which is around 15% for the current financial year. We also expect to maintain margins similar to last year. Our focus would be on two key areas, that is to drive future growth through our product pipeline and hiring the right talent."

Shubhanu Saxena, managing director and global CEO, Cipla, said the company is looking at geographically balanced portfolio.

"Strategy outside India is to enter more market and not through intermediaries. We will be selective as where we



think opportunities are right. We are looking at selectively building front-end presence in markets such as North America through our pipeline and other markets in Asia, Middle East, Central Europe and Lat-

in America."

The focus will be on priority markets where the company has strong relationship with its partners, he said.

"We will combine the local strength of our partners

along with Cipla's pipeline through joint ventures. There will be continued front-ending every year whenever we are ready and the timing is right," Saxena said.

The company has presented a three-year road before the board of directors and plans course-correct every six-nine months.

On hiring senior talent, Saxena said, "Initial hiring to build capability has already been done. We are also promoting talents from within. Our focus for the next two years is to create a strong bench within the company. We have moved talents from India to South Africa and we are also moving some of our top talents to other markets."

The company recently launched an anti-asthma in-

haler in Germany and Sweden which is a generic version of GlaxoSmithKline's Fluticasonide.

Hamied said the market size for inhalers in Europe is 2.5 billion euros with around 90 million patients under the age of 45 years suffering from asthma.

The company is planning a series of launches in Europe over the next 12-18 months.

Cipla would also spend around Rs 600 crore on research & development during this year to implement research oriented projects.

"This year we will spend around Rs 600 crore in R&D and efforts are directed towards accountable and implementable research-oriented projects," Hamied said in his AGM speech.

Company