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PHARMA IN FOCUS

By Christine Spiteri 21 December 2021

Job Boom Hits Growing Pharma

Specialised Therapeutics is experiencing a mini-jobs boom, with the company's growing portfolio and expansion across South East Asia requiring a boost to its workforce.

The company currently has a staff of about 40 but is actively looking to fill five new positions with more roles opening up in the next 24 months.

"We're going through quite an expansion at the moment – our portfolio is continuing to grow and we have several more partnerships we're close to announcing for branded specialised therapies," CEO Carlo Montagner said.

"What we've projected over the next two to three years is probably an increase of another 50 to 60 per cent of staff."

Jobs currently up for grabs include Head of Quality Assurance; Scientific Medical Advisor – Oncology/Haematology and Pharmacovigilance Manager South East Asia.

Although the company is headquartered in Melbourne, its Singapore office is about to move to bigger premises as the company expands its footprint in Asia.

In addition to licenses to supply approved products to Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia, Specialised Therapeutics also has regulatory applications under evaluation in Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

"Our goal is always to partner with two new companies a year or two new products per year – that's our minimum threshold, so we have very active

business development discussions continuously," Montagner said.

"We have new products for the portfolio but we are also starting to ramp up our south-east Asia operations."

Tough jobs market

Montagner said seeking regulatory approval and offering access programs in multiple countries had created logistical challenges and demand for more staff.

"These are all below the commercial line functions – so not a lot of visibility to the general public – but these are key functions to operate efficiently as a

pharmaceutical company," he said.

The jobs market is hot, according to Montagner who said medical roles, particularly, can be a challenge to fill. But he said Specialised Therapeutics, a company he started with his business partner and wife in 2008 has the edge on traditional Big Pharma when it comes to landing top talent.

"What we offer is variety," he said. "The benefit of our company is that we choose who we partner with and the products that we take on board.

"So, with pharmaceutical companies that have a pipeline of drugs, you really just accept whatever comes down that pipe and you're beholden to the quality of that pipeline and the therapeutic areas that the company wants to strategically invest in.

"We have an amazing pipeline of drugs, companies would kill for the pipeline that we have already.

"And we know what we're doing. We have the expertise, the infrastructure, the resources and the planning in place to ensure we optimise the commercialisation of these products.

"We partner with multiple companies – European based, US-based and we're hopefully close to doing our first China deal.

"We have this breadth of partnerships over multiple geographies, multiple product therapeutic areas, we're dealing with lots of different people. We're launching in multiple countries with new products.

"It's a really exciting time to be in our company."