

## **Women Achiever's Spl: Spreading the breadth of opportunities: DR YOONI KIM Executive Director, Asia Operations, Novotech**

20 December 2017 | Influencers

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Dr Yooni Kim, Executive Director, Asia operations, Novotech is responsible for overseeing Novotech's operations and project delivery within the Asia region. Dr Kim is very experienced in Asia's drug development industry, having managed operations for South Korea, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, India and Japan.

Dr Yooni has worked at various positions in clinical development, medical affairs, and pharmacovigilance at GSK and operational management role for North Asia in a leading global CRO. In her vast career spanning over 20 years, she has

been instrumental in making the international clinical trial industry recognise the value and breadth of opportunity available and build a bigger sized team in Asia.

Speaking about the challenges faced in her career, Dr Yooni says, “A majority of the gender/job related challenges and pressures I faced during my career came more from perceptions of senior management position in the industry, mostly in Asian society itself; rather than from within the workplace or in similar environments in United States or Europe. There many occasions when clients from Asia expected to meet a male executive and were surprised to discover I was female. This was challenging when having to build close relationships based on social consensus with clients. There are now, however, more females in senior positions – and this is why it is so important that we, as an industry and workplace, strive to continue changing these societally-biased opinions.”

Dr Yooni has spoken widely regarding the current landscape of clinical development in Asia, and she is a Key Opinion Leader in communicating to the world the potential and talent of Asian companies and the benefits of skilled labour available in Asia.

Dr Yooni says one of her key achievements is to see her team grow into executive positions in the industry worldwide. “One of my most important career achievements is developing the talent of my staff. A number of my team started with me as fresh graduates and have gone on to more important roles such as leading clinical trials of excellence in Asia.”

“Being able to grow my staff into more senior executive positions within Novotech has greatly helped the company’s expansion throughout Asia. More than half our Country Heads in Asia are women. This is quite unique within Asia; and I feel played strong part in growing this next generation.”

Dr Yooni has pharmacist background and received doctorate degree of medicine from Seoul National University, specializing in Preventive Medicine and Epidemiology. Under her leadership, Novotech is expanding its presence and footprint in Asia, with nine country offices throughout the region. Novotech has also launched a new SMO (Site Management Organisation) business in response to unmet industry need in South Korea and Taiwan.

Dr Yooni opines that women need to give equal priority to professional life as personal life. “Women are cursed with always trying to be superwomen. They try to be everything to everyone at all times. This pressure is especially true in Asia due to country-specific cultural and social pressures. It is important for women to realise that you cannot make everyone happy.”