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Tokyo: Astellas Pharma EMEA, the regional headquarters of Japan's Astellas Pharma Inc. for Europe, the Middle East and Africa, has appointed Eugene Van Rensburg to the position of Chief Financial Officer from his previous role as Senior Finance Director. Eugene succeeds Niek Stander, who will now head up the company's German operations as Managing Director of Astellas Pharma GmbH.

Commenting on the appointment, Ken Jones, President and CEO Astellas Pharma EMEA, said, "In the ten years since Astellas was formed the company has grown strongly and developed ground-breaking medicines that are changing patients' lives. Eugene will play a major role as we work to sustain this success by maximising the value of our portfolio, prioritizing research and development, and achieving operational excellence."

As Chief Financial Officer, Eugene will oversee the Finance function across 40 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, with responsibility for all financial planning and operations, as well as tax, treasury, procurement and information systems. As the company moves forward his main priority will be to focus on strategic planning and budgeting, cost and process optimization, profitability analysis and innovative ways to maximize value of existing brands and assets.

With over 15 years of diverse and international industry experience, tackling the financial challenges of high-growth organizations, Eugene has the expertise to enhance Astellas' operational efficiency and effectiveness as it undertakes strategic management of its expansion.

Eugene Van Rensburg, the new Chief Financial Officer at Astellas Pharma EMEA, commented, "It is an exciting time to be a trusted advisor and part of the leadership team at Astellas. Our company is building on existing areas of excellence, such as our franchises in urology, oncology and transplantation, by proactively seeking novel technologies and new opportunities in different therapeutic areas. We've recently launched three new classes of treatment in the EMEA region, and with eight therapies in late stage development, Astellas has a unique platform for continued growth."

Astellas was founded in 2005 through the merger of Yamanouchi and Fujisawa to create an international pharmaceutical company. Astellas is now the second-largest pharmaceutical company in Japan and among the top 20 globally.

The EMEA region is an important territory for Astellas, contributing around one quarter of the company's global sales. Despite continued austerity in Europe, FY2014 saw Astellas' sales in the EMEA region increase for the fourth consecutive year, by 14.8% to €2,258 million.