

# introduction

**W**elcome to the second issue of *Drug Discovery World*. From the very encouraging worldwide response we've received, it appears that a truly global journal that discusses the business issues relating to drug discovery and development has been long-awaited. May I take this opportunity of thanking many of our readers for their kind remarks and messages of support.

In this issue we continue, and expand on, some of issues discussed previously where we pointed out that the pharmaceutical industry is still in the throes of reorganisation. At the same time there is an insatiable appetite for new products coupled with pricing pressures, often from governments anxious to reduce the spiralling costs of providing healthcare to aging populations.

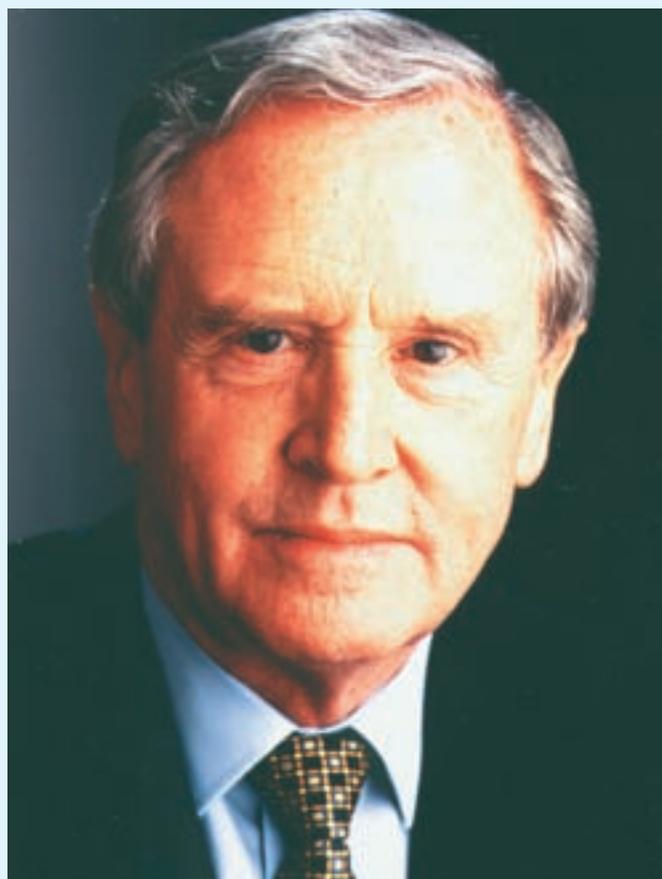
This difficult environment is further complicated by the fact that we are in an era of remarkable technological advances, some, but not all, emanating from the elucidation of the human genome. These new technologies will, in due course, lead to new medicines but only if appropriate adjunctive methodologies are developed and constructive thought is given to developing new paradigms for R&D and probably marketing.

So, in this issue there are several articles approaching, from different points of view, ways in which human genomic information can be exploited to deliver new medicinal and diagnostic products. The transition from pharmacogenetics to pharmacogenomics is discussed as is the role of proteomics in drug discovery. Anything which will give early and reliable warning of toxicity will reduce development time and costs as well as improving safety and, in this context, we include an article dealing with the relatively new field of toxicogenomics.

Enormous amounts of data are generated by the human genome project as well as by such techniques as combinatorial chemistry and high throughput screening. All this information has to be processed and organised in a usable format and we include articles on both cheminformatics and bioinformatics.

We also review in the first of two parts the still somewhat controversial field of gene therapy. While critics have claimed that, so far, there has been very little to show for the amount of work done in terms of successful drug candidates, it seems to be only a matter of time until successful medicines emerge.

Finally, as mentioned in the editorial introduction to the first issue of *DDW*, we welcome correspondence on published articles and on topics which are felt to be worthy of discussion in



our pages. Our aim is to make this publication of interest to all in the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries. As well as discussing some of the larger business issues facing the industry we aim to review new technology through articles that give some indication as to the impact of the technology on the pharmaceutical business as a whole.

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