



Showcasing Ontario's High Potential Companies: Niagara Health Science Emerging Company Forum, Part 1

By: Jordan Cork

In part one of a blog that will continue next week, Jordan Cork, OBIO Finance & Marketing Associate, will review our Niagara Health Science Emerging Company Forum event, held in Niagara-on-the-Lake, February 1-2, 2018.

Last week, OBIO - in partnership with Accel-Rx - hosted the Niagara Health Science Emerging Company Forum, which brought together CEOs and senior executives from high potential Canadian health science companies with senior leadership from American investors and strategics in beautiful Niagara-on-the-Lake for two days of panel presentations, executive roundtables, networking dinners, and the opportunity to enjoy some of Canada's finest wines.

This week, I will describe and breakdown the panel sessions which took place on Thursday, Feb 1, and next week, I will take a closer look at the networking events and roundtable sessions.

Companies attending the Forum had the opportunity to present to carefully constructed panels of US VCs, strategics, and successful CEOs for invaluable advice and critical constructive feedback. The interactive panel sessions allowed for honest and open two-way discussions between established industry leaders (both American and Canadian), and the leaders developing some of Canada's most promising medical technologies.

The Forum's panels were divided into three streams – Therapeutics, Medical Devices & Diagnostics, and Digital Health – with each panellist being selected based on their expertise in that space.

Therapeutics companies – including Biotagenics, AmacaThera, ImmunoBiochem, Pacylex, Bright Angel, KisoJi Biotechnology, SpecificiT Pharma, KalGene Pharmaceuticals, Zucara Therapeutics, and Iversago Pharma – presented to a panel that included GeneNews and TKC Alliance, and senior US executives from J&J Innovation, SR One, and Pfizer.

Companies in the Medical Devices & Diagnostics stream – including iBIONICS, KA Imaging, RNA Diagnostics, SensOR Medical, Conavi Medical, MDDT, Induce Biologics, Flosomics Medical, Perimeter Medical, and MYOVUE – had the opportunity to receive feedback from GreyBird Ventures and Siemens Healthineers, as well as Quandt Berndt & Co, Spinal Stabilization Technologies, and NexGen Medical Systems.

For the Digital Health panel – with Pathcore, MediSeen, QoC Health, Self Care Catalysts, and Tracery Ophthalmics presenting – the panel consisted of representatives from GE Ventures, Flare Capital, PointClickCare, and Carrot Rewards.

Due to how the Forum was curated – with panelists of high calibre, and companies of remarkable quality – dozens of meaningful connections were made that will facilitate the growth of these most promising Canadian companies. In contrast to a typical investor conference composed primarily of brief one-on-ones, the Forum was designed in a way to see how the panelists could help the companies, including both advice and introductions to their network. The event truly provided a unique opportunity for Canadians to meet US firms interested in supporting emerging technologies north of the border.

We received strong feedback from participants, including the following:

“I thought the quality of the program overall was very high. I was particularly impressed with the quality of the panel members and the quality of the presentations in my session. Both the participating companies/presenters and the panelists were very high calibre overall. I was glad I participated in the event.”

Although the purpose of the event was to provide promising companies with feedback and advice that will assist them in fine tuning their strategy, the US investors were genuinely impressed with the quality of the Canadian innovations being discussed, and several one-on-one meetings were swiftly arranged following the panels, including one deal hashed out on the car ride to dinner!