

Life Sciences and UK's future role: Sir John Bell delivers MHRA annual Lecture

This was the key message from Professor Sir John Bell, Regius Professor of Medicine at the University of Oxford, as he delivered the 14th Annual Lecture of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) at the King's Fund in London, last night.

In a lecture titled 'The future of Life Sciences: Keeping the UK at the forefront of medical and scientific excellence', Sir John gave us his perspective on the Life Sciences industry here in the UK.

Speaking to an audience of over 200 healthcare leaders from the Life Sciences community, Sir John set out how he would like to see the UK establish three new Life Science industries: genomics, digital health and early diagnosis. These new industries will come with their own regulatory challenges but will be critical to the UK continuing to lead in the field of Life Sciences.

In this time of change for the UK, Sir John addressed the crucial role the MHRA will play in shaping the UK's Life Sciences Strategy. He told the audience that the MHRA has a unique opportunity to challenge the status quo in regulation and play a leading role in a Life Science strategy driven by academia, industry, government and the NHS.

Sir John Bell said:

"Innovation in regulation fundamentally underpins the entire sector and is vital for economic growth.

"As the largest and most innovative regulator in Europe, the MHRA is crucial to the UK's strategy."

The agency's interim Chief Executive Dr June Raine, who chaired the event, said:

"This lecture is a landmark in our regulatory evolution with the real potential to help the MHRA shape the UK's ground-breaking Life Sciences Strategy. "With all parts of the life sciences eco-system working together, we can tackle some of the most significant healthcare challenges facing the world today.

"The challenge is to develop an ambitious strategy which builds on the UK's unique assets of basic science, real world evidence and innovative regulation; a strategy which will enable innovative products to reach patients safely and much more quickly."

The lecture was followed by a Q&A session and panel discussion involving Sir John Bell, Dr June Raine, Dr Janet Valentine, CPRD Director, Jonathan

Mogford, Policy Director, John Quinn, Transformation Director and Dr Christian Schneider, NIBSC Director.

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Notes to Editor

1. The MHRA Annual Lecture is the Agency's annual event bringing together more than 200 senior domestic and international leaders from medicine, government, industry, academia, third sector and world health institutions. This year's event took place on 9 October at the King's Fund, in London.
2. Each year the lecture is delivered by internationally renowned experts to bring their perspective on topics of global importance. This year, [Professor Sir John Bell, Regius Professor of Medicine at the University of Oxford](#) delivered a lecture titled "The future of life sciences: Keeping the UK at the forefront of medical and scientific excellence". His lecture follows those by [Sir Harpal Kumar, in 2018](<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/we-need-to-think-differently-on-cancer-to-save-even-more-lives-says-sir-harpal-kumar-at-mhra-annual-lecture>), [Dr Jeremy Farrar, Wellcome Trust, in 2017](#), [Dr Margaret Chan, World Health Organisation, in 2016](#).
3. [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control \(NIBSC\)](#) is a world leader in assuring the quality of biological medicines through product testing, developing standards and reference materials and carrying out applied research. NIBSC is a centre of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which also includes the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD).
4. [CPRD](#) is a Centre of the MHRA and jointly supported by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). CPRD provides access to anonymised UK health data for public health research.