

Alliance Healthcare In The News



May 2021

Read the thoughts of Selim Taşo, General Manager and Board Member of Alliance Healthcare in Turkey as he talked with digital platform [WINalley.com](https://www.winally.com)

(credit: WINalley.com)

<https://www.winally.com/2022/05/saglikli-bir-gelecek-yaratmak-icin-calisiyoruz/>

W- We are joined by Selim Taşo, General Manager and Board Member of Alliance Healthcare in Turkey. Mr Selim please tell us a bit about yourself.

S.T.- I was born in Elazığ and graduated from Boğaziçi University, Department of Business Administration in 1987. Arthur Young & Co, after working in Istanbul for 1 year, went to Boston, USA where I received CPA and CFA titles here, also made MBA studies. I worked at Ernst & Young in Boston for 18 years as a senior manager in various fields (Audit, Tax Consulting, Operational Consulting and M&A). I returned to Turkey in 2006 to work on Tekfen Holding's public offering. After Tekfen's successful IPO, I served simultaneously as Chief Operating Officer and CFO at IBM for 5 years. I also served as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of POS A.Ş. Selim Taşo joined Alliance Healthcare as Group CFO in 2013 and he has been working as the CEO of Alliance Healthcare Turkey since 2017.



W- Can we get information about your structure, volume and affiliates to understand Alliance Healthcare Turkey?

S.T.- Alliance Healthcare is a leading provider of pharmaceutical wholesaling, logistics, clinical trial support, and other innovative healthcare solutions to independent pharmacists and global pharmaceutical manufacturers. It is operating in 9 countries in Europe (UK, France, Spain, Netherlands, Norway, Turkey, Romania, Lithuania, Czechia) and 2 countries in Africa (Egypt and Algeria).

Alliance Healthcare Turkey has been operating in Turkey for 35 years, offering versatile wholesale services. Our company serves approximately 19,000 customers from 80 distribution points throughout the country. We are dedicated to the development of the health sector by working with the principle of partnership with pharmacies and suppliers. In addition to our high-level services offered to pharmacies across Turkey, we also provide our stakeholders other value added commercial and professional support services like Alphega and Skills in Healthcare.

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W- What are your goals after AmerisourceBergen's acquisition of Alliance Healthcare companies?

S.T.- We are united in the responsibility of creating a healthier futures.

As of June 2021, our company has joined the US based company AmerisourceBergen. AmerisourceBergen works for the health of individuals and communities around the world by advancing the development and supply of pharmaceuticals and healthcare products. As a leading global healthcare company with foundations in pharmaceuticals distribution and solutions for pharmaceutical companies, pharmacies and healthcare providers, we provide extensive reach, efficiency and reliability for human and animal health. Among the company's 41,000 employees worldwide, we work with the joint responsibility of creating healthier futures.

W- What is the scope of your non-pharmaceutical health products brand Alvita? Do you plan to launch in the prescription or non-prescription drug groups?

S.T.- Alvita is the own brand of Alliance Healthcare, which provides services in patient care and personal care products. It actively serves in 7 countries with over 700 product types and 9 categories. As Alvita Turkey, we provide services in 35 products and 5 different categories in our country. Having our own brand has many advantages; with our high quality products, we can provide advantageous conditions to pharmacies as well as competitive prices and high profit margin for our pharmacists. There are other OTC product groups in different countries within the body of Alliance Healthcare, but currently, we only have our Alvita brand in Turkey.

W- How did you evaluate the pandemic, did you experience different working and business models?

S.T.- During the Covid19 pandemic, we've seen that a small but mighty virus can change our lives in ways we couldn't even imagine before. During this period, a large part of the working population had to change their way of doing business. We have seen that many jobs that we said cannot be done remotely or from home can actually be done remotely. Digitalization has taken its place in the business world and our daily lives at a speed that we could not predict before.

Although some of the working population had the opportunity to work from home, a very important part had to work physically in their workplaces. For example, almost all of the employees working in the healthcare sector; hospitals, doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacies, drug stores, logistics companies, personal care providers, home care. Since we are at the key point of the pharmaceuticals supply chain, most of our field team has continued to work in their physical environments during this period. However we switched to the hybrid model for our office workers and implemented remote working opportunities.

In the coming period, the mentality of employers and workers has to change. Employees should prepare themselves for the new period and start to train themselves in many areas. There will be a reduction in less skilled work areas; because many jobs and professions are reaching a state of extinction. Thanks to automation, most of the daily work will be transferred to machines or robots. However, in countries where labor cost is cheaper, this automation will progress more slowly.

W- What are the scenarios for your industry and the pharmaceutical industry after the pandemic? Do you think the industry is ready for these situations?

S.T.- It is very important to anticipate the medium and long-term effects of the pandemic. The effects of the pandemic on the immune system, changing physical environment, eye disorders, psychological effects, etc. Apart from this, it has been determined that the pandemic, unfortunately, creates problems in pharmaceutical raw materials and could increase costs. Many countries will make investments and preparations to be self-sufficient to be prepared for a similar situation in the future. But unfortunately very few countries in the world are ready for this issue.



W- What kind of different support services do you provide to pharmacies?

S.T.- In addition to our high-level services offered to pharmacies across Turkey, we also provide value-added commercial and professional support services to our stakeholders such as Alphega and Skills in Healthcare. Alphega Pharmacy is a leading European network of independent pharmacists, whose aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of communities by delivering a future vision for independent community pharmacy. Since its initial launch in 2001, Alphega Pharmacy has grown to support more than 10,000 independent pharmacy members across ten countries: the Czech Republic, France, Spain, the Netherlands, the UK, Turkey, Romania plus Italy, Germany and Portugal as associated businesses.

Alphega started its activities in Turkey in 2014 and today serves more than 600 pharmacies in 23 provinces of our country.

W- How should we understand the importance of financial management in pharmaceutical warehouses?

S.T.- Financial management is a very important element not only for pharmaceutical distribution companies, but also for all other companies. However, financial management pays much more attention to pharmaceutical distribution companies. Because pharmaceutical distribution companies are operating with very low profits and require very high working capital. It is very important to provide financing for the products you need to keep in the warehouses, because collections can only be made after a long time after the sale.

W- Being the key player of the supply chain, what can pharmaceutical distribution companies do about the problems of accessing some drugs?

S.T.- Unfortunately, the only thing that pharmaceutical warehouses can do in this regard is to distribute the products they have in hand. The main cause of this issue is the costs of pharmaceuticals and this can only be solved by discussing the drug pricing system.

W- Can you tell us about the projects you have for the 14th of May Pharmacy Day?

S.T.- We started our tree planting activities four years ago, on the occasion of May 14th Pharmacists' Day in 2018. We organize these activities together with the Local Pharmacy Chambers to identify the deforested areas that need attention and plant our saplings in the areas deemed appropriate by the Ministry of Forestry. To date, we carried out the planting activities in 15 regions and by the end of this year, we will have approximately 30,000 trees planted throughout Turkey. Our goal is to cover whole of the country with new regions added every year. We would like to make our contribution to create healthier futures and leave a better world for our children.

W- Can we get your opinions on May 14 Pharmacy Day?

S.T.- I sincerely congratulate this most important sectoral days of our pharmacists, our closest health consultants, with whom we share the responsibility of creating healthier futures. On behalf of the entire Alliance Healthcare family, I would like to thank and recognise our pharmacists who work day and night for the health of communities. I hope that together, a healthier future and better days await us for our country and our world.

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