

Excellence in our profession

BOB CLAY, TOPRA PRESIDENT

This month I would like to reflect on TOPRA's vision statement which appears at the base of this page and includes the words "excellence" and "profession"

There are two upcoming events organised by TOPRA that I would like to highlight in the context of this vision statement. These include the Regulatory Careers *Live* event in March and the opening of nominations for the Awards for Regulatory Excellence (see page 3). Before I explain why I selected these events in particular from the many important activities supported by TOPRA, I would first like to reflect on the themes highlighted in our vision statement.

Excellence is an aspiration and something for which we all strive for throughout our lives and careers; it suggests outstanding quality and performance. The profession of regulatory affairs is a young one and perhaps still in the process of establishing itself, with TOPRA's predecessor BIRA having been formed around 30 years ago, and modern medicine regulation dating only from the 1960s. In considering the professional aspects of regulatory affairs, I would propose that service and standards both feature as key elements. Whatever aspect of the profession we are engaged in, there cannot be any doubt that our primary concerns involve the

promotion and protection of the health of people and animals.

Over the past few years, both members and TOPRA staff alike have put a great deal of effort into developing and encouraging continuing professional development/lifelong learning. This includes providing all members with the ability to record CPD activities in 'My TOPRA' – your personal membership record. In addition, a quarterly CPD supplement has been scheduled for *Regulatory Rapporteur*, the first of which was sent out with the January issue of the journal.

An important aspect of our profession is the diverse entry pathways. Some with a background in pharmacy like me; others who may be engineers, physicians or information technologists. In view of this diversity, it is important that we provide future potential regulatory professionals with the opportunity to discover us and the work that we do – this may be through activities in schools and universities, as well as business and government agencies.

This is why TOPRA's annual careers fair – Regulatory Careers *Live* – is so important in raising awareness and helping to



promote our profession. Due to be held on 15 March, this event will provide an opportunity for individuals considering or hoping to forge a career in regulatory affairs to meet and receive advice from experienced professionals.

Another special event I would like to highlight is the Awards for Regulatory Excellence. This annual celebration organised by TOPRA is a great opportunity to recognise individuals and teams that have contributed to the profession, be it early on in their careers and showing great promise as recognised by the Horizon Award, or at the opposite end of the career spectrum recognising Lifetime Achievement.

I look forward to meeting many of you at one or more of these upcoming events and welcome input from members on your views on the future development of the profession.