



Biotech Daily

Wednesday June 17, 2009

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH DOWN; ANTISENSE UP 14%, BONE DOWN 14%**
- * **CATHRX HUMAN TRIAL OF IRRIGATED ABLATION CATHETER**
- * **VIRAX HALF-WAY IN SOUTH AFRICA HIV TRIAL RECRUITMENT**
- * **FARJOY TAKES 15% OF CLOVER CORP**
- * **IMMURON SHARE PLAN TO RAISE \$900k**
- * **NEURODISCOVERY DIRECTOR DR IAIN CHESSELL RESIGNS**
- * **THORATEC'S HEARTWARE MERGER DOCUMENTS 'PROCEDURAL'**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market fell 1.47 percent on Wednesday June 17, 2009 with the S&P ASX 200 index down 58.4 points to 3,904.1 points.

Nine of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 18 fell, 11 traded unchanged and two were untraded.

Antisense was best, up 0.5 cents or 14.3 percent to four cents with 50,000 shares traded, followed by Polartech up 7.1 percent to 10.5 cents. Benitec was up four percent; Starpharma was up 3.1 percent; Bionomics and Peplin rose more than two percent; Alchemia was up 1.35 percent; with Cellectis and Sirtex up by less than one percent.

Bone led the falls, down 2.5 cents or 14.3 percent to 15 cents with 13,147 shares traded, followed by Tissue Therapies down 11.1 percent to 16 cents and Genetic Technologies down 9.8 percent to 5.5 cents.

Phosphagenics and Viralytics lost more than seven percent; Avexa, Cathrx, Clinuvel and Optiscan fell more than four percent; Nanosonics and Novogen were down more than three percent; Acrux, Biota, Cochlear, Prana, Psivida and Resmed shed more than two percent; with Heartware, Pharmaxis and Universal Biosensors down more than one percent.

CATHRX

Cathrx has begun a human pilot trial of its first therapeutic catheter for use in both atrial flutter and atrial fibrillation procedures.

Cathrx said its irrigated ablation catheter was used in a procedure to treat atrial flutter in a human patient at the Monash Medical Centre in Victoria.

The company's chief executive officer Neil Anderson said the "commencement of this first in man trial demonstrates Cathrx's continued execution of our commercialization plan".

"We are excited by the achievement of our first procedure with a Cathrx therapeutic device and we are looking forward to the completing the trial, collecting the data and eventually releasing our products to the market," Mr Anderson said.

Cathrx said the data collected from the trial would be part of the company's process to obtain Conformité Européenne (CE) Mark approval.

Cathrx said the 15 patient trial was expected to be completed by October 2009.

Cathrx fell two cents or 4.26 percent to 45 cents.

VIRAX

Virax says it is more than half-way in the recruitment of 140 patients for its phase I/II South African trial of its HIV immunotherapeutic vaccine VIR201.

Virax said 74 participants had been recruited through three active trial sites.

The company said the trial was designed to assess the safety, tolerability and immunogenicity of VIR201 in two HIV infected groups: patients who have never received antiretroviral treatment (ART treatment naïve); and participants on a stable antiretroviral treatment regime (ART experienced).

Virax said safety data was being evaluated by an independent data safety monitoring board composed of an expert group of clinical trial and HIV experts.

The company said that to boost the immune response, compared to that observed in prior clinical testing, an increased dose of a more highly purified VIR201 vaccine was being used.

Virax said a comprehensive immune monitoring program was being undertaken to measure and compare in detail the antibody and T-cell immune responses generated in both participant groups.

The company said an analysis of samples from the previous Australian VIR201 trials identified an immune readout that correlates with the ability of VIR201 to control viral load. Virax said the data would be presented by a collaborator at the International AIDS Society Meeting in Cape Town, South Africa in July.

Virax chief executive officer Dr Larry Ward said the progress was "very pleasing".

"There have been no reports of serious adverse events attributable to VIR201 to date," Dr Ward said.

"More insight into the safety profile of the vaccine will be achieved when the [data safety monitoring board] meets to evaluate safety data later in June," Dr Ward said. "This will be a significant milestone for the trial."

He said the company was hoping to complete recruitment by the end of the year.

The trial is funded by a global coalition of multinational and South African companies via donor syndicate contributions to a South African based public benefit organization, the Theravax Foundation.

Virax said Dr Ward attended the quarterly meeting of the Theravax Foundation project review committee in April where the status of the project was assessed favorably.

Virax was up 0.3 cents or 9.7 percent to 3.4 cents.

CLOVER CORPORATION

Farjoy Pty Ltd has become a substantial shareholder in Clover Corp, increasing its holding from 5,200,000 shares to 25,200,000 shares (15.26%).

Farjoy of PO Box A230 Sydney South acquired the 20,000,000 shares for \$4,001,100 or a little more than 20 cents a share on June 16, 2009.

In a separate announcement Nina and Hamish Drummond of Billyard Avenue Wahroonga New South Wales disposed of 10,000,000 shares for \$2,000,000 and 10,048,315 shares for \$2,009,663, respectively.

Farjoy's becoming substantial shareholder notice is signed by Frank Robertson the company's sole director and sole secretary.

Clover Corp climbed one cent or 4.76 percent to 22 cents.

IMMURON

Immuron is offering eligible shareholders up to \$5,000 worth of shares at three cents a share to raise up to \$900,000.

Immuron said that up to 30,000,000 shares would be issued under the plan and each director intended to take up their full entitlement.

Immuron said the share plan offer was being made to provide investors "with the opportunity to acquire shares at a time when the company is due to embark on a new development program with the Hadassah Medical Centre in Israel".

The company said shareholders at the record date of June 19, 2009 would be eligible to participate in the plan.

The offer closes on July 14, 2009.

Immuron fell 0.7 cents or 17.5 percent to 3.3 cents.

NEURODISCOVERY

Neurodiscovery says non-executive director Dr Iain Chessell is standing down from the board but will continue as a consultant to the company.

Neurodiscovery said it was restructuring its board and Dr Tony Evans also resigned following the appointment of Biotech Capital's Harry Karelis as a non-executive director.

Biotech Capital is Neurodiscovery's major shareholder (BD: Jun 9 and 11, 2009).

Neurodiscovery was untraded at four cents.

HEARTWARE

Thoratec has published procedural revised merger documentation relating to its takeover of Heartware.

Heartware's corporate development director Howard Leibman told Biotech Daily the 292 page document related to US financial regulation and the accounts of the proposed merged entity.

Mr Leibman said there was no change to the conditions of Thoratec's original \$429 million offer to acquire Heartware (BD: Feb 16, 2009).

Heartware fell 1.5 cents or 1.75 percent to 84 cents.