



Biotech Daily

Wednesday March 7, 2012

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH DOWN: USCOM UP 6%, SUNSHINE HEART DOWN 17%**
- * **NOVOGEN, MARSHALL EDWARDS IND FOR ME-344 FOR CANCER**
- * **MICHAEL TAYLOR, PETER TURVEY JOIN FOURSIGHT**
- * **ATCOR WINS US REIMBURSEMENT CPT III CODE**
- * **BIOTRON APPOINTS DR SUSAN POND, ROBERT THOMAS DIRECTORS**
- * **PSIVIDA APPOINTS HEARTWARE CEO DOUG GODSHALL DIRECTOR**
- * **ORBIS REDUCES TO 15.2% OF PHOSPHAGENICS**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market fell 1.45 percent on Wednesday March 7, 2012 with the S&P ASX 200 down 61.0 points to 4143.7 points.

Nine of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 19 fell, seven traded unchanged and five were untraded.

Uscom was the best, up 0.5 cents or 5.6 percent to 9.5 cents with 60,000 shares traded.

Bionomics and Phylogica climbed two percent or more; Biota, Impedimed, Living Cell, Reva and Starpharma were up one percent or more; with Sirtex up 0.2 percent.

Sunshine Heart led the falls, down 0.9 cents or 16.7 percent to 4.5 cents, with 643,518 shares traded.

Allied Health, Neuren and Prima lost eight percent or more; Cellmid and Viralytics fell more than seven percent; Avita was down 5.6 percent; Antisense and Genetic Technologies fell more than four percent; Anteo and Nanosonics were down more than three percent; Patrys and QRX shed more than two percent; Acrux, Alchemia, Cochlear, CSL and Mesoblast were down more than one percent; with Heartware, Pharmaxis and Psivida down by less than one percent.

NOVOGEN

Novogen says that subsidiary Marshall Edwards has submitted an investigational new drug application to the US Food and Drug Administration for clinical trials of ME-344. Novogen said that ME-344 was its 58.1 percent subsidiary Marshall Edwards lead mitochondrial inhibitor.

Marshall Edwards chief executive officer Dr Daniel Gold said he was “extremely proud of our clinical operations and pre-clinical research teams in reaching this important milestone, less than seven months since our IND for ME-143 was approved by the FDA to begin clinical testing”.

“We are prepared to initiate a phase I clinical trial of intravenous ME-344 in patients with solid refractory tumors immediately following approval by the FDA,” Dr Gold said.

Marshall Edwards said it had begun dosing of the fourth cohort in its phase I clinical trial of intravenous ME-143 in patients with solid refractory tumors.

Novogen said that Marshall Edwards expected to collect final safety and pharmacokinetic data from the ME-143 trial by June, 2012.

Marshall Edwards said it owned exclusive worldwide rights to all of its drug candidates, including ME-143 and ME-344, with ME-344 the lead mitochondrial inhibitor and an active metabolite of Novogen’s NV-128, a first generation compound.

The company said that treatment of tumor cells with mitochondrial inhibitor compounds induced a rapid loss of cellular energy and led to the inhibition of both mammalian target of rapamycin (mTOR1 and mTOR2) pathways.

Novogen said that in 2011, Yale University School of Medicine’s Dr Ayesha Alvero presented data to the American Association for Cancer Research from a pre-clinical study of NV-128 showing induced mitochondrial instability, ultimately leading to cell death in otherwise chemotherapy-resistant ovarian cancer stem cells and that in additional pre-clinical studies, ME-344 demonstrated superior anti-tumor activity against a broad range of human cancer cell lines compared to NV-128.

Novogen was up 0.1 cents or 1.1 percent to 9.1 cents.

FOURSIGHT ASSOCIATES

Foursight has appointed Michael Taylor and Peter Turvey as principals joining founders Prof Graham Mitchell, Prof Gus Nossal, Prof David Penington and Prof John Stocker.

Foursight is an advisory service in science, technology and innovation, as well as co-chief scientists for the Government of Victoria.

Foursight said that Mr Turvey recently retired from CSL, where he held the positions of general counsel, company secretary and executive vice-president, licensing for the research and development division over two decades.

Foursight said that Mr Turvey was involved in CSL’s transformation from a government-owned enterprise to a global plasma and biopharmaceutical company with a market cap of \$15 billion.

Foursight said that Mr Taylor had been in public administration for most of his professional life notably as secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Victoria’s Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and the Department of Agriculture.

Foursight said that former chief executive officer Prof Ian Cooke was the newly appointed chief executive officer of the Cooperative Research Centre for Mental Health and would join Monash University’s Deputy Dean and Director of Research in the Faculty of Medicine Prof Ross Coppel as associates.

ATCOR MEDICAL

Atcor expects to receive a category III common procedural terminology (CPT) code for reimbursement of its Sphygmacor central blood pressure test from January 1, 2013.

Atcor chief financial officer Peter Manly told Biotech Daily that the company currently operates under a miscellaneous code which requires doctors to apply for reimbursement the US, the only country providing reimbursement.

In a media release Atcor said that from January 1, 2013 US doctors would be able to file reimbursement claims specific to central aortic blood pressure assessment with insurers.

The company said that American Medical Association meeting minutes confirmed that a category III CPT code would be established "to report non-invasive calculation and analysis of central arterial pressure waveforms with interpretation and report".

Atcor said the decision followed an application by the US Renal Physicians Association which was reviewed by the AMA CPT editorial panel in February 2012.

The company said that the code would provide the opportunity for reimbursement rates "to be negotiated with health plans covering thousands of individuals, replacing the current laborious procedure which requires physicians to file for reimbursement on a case-by-case basis using a non-specific cardiovascular services code".

Atcor chief executive officer Duncan Ross said the establishment of a CPT code would "accelerate adoption of central aortic pressure measurement in clinical practice".

The company said that Sphygmacor was used by 150 clinical practices in the US and 17 major hospitals with a number of private health plans reimbursing individual physicians for the test, as had Medicare in the New York and Michigan regions.

Atcor was up half a cent or seven percent to 7.6 cents.

BIOTRON

Biotron says it has appointed Dr Susan Pond and Robert Thomas as directors.

Biotron said that Dr Pond and Mr Thomas added "significant skills to the board as the company advances the development and commercialization of its antiviral drugs".

Biotron said Dr Pond had a strong scientific and commercial background having held executive positions in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry for twelve years, most recently as chairman and managing director of Johnson & Johnson Research as well as executive director of Johnson & Johnson Pty Ltd and a non-executive director and chairman of Ausbiotech.

The company said that Dr Pond was on the boards of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, Commercialisation Australia, the Centenary Institute and the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering.

Biotron said Dr Pond held a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery degree from the University of Sydney and a Doctor of Medicine degree from the University of New South Wales.

The company said that Dr Pond obtained specialist clinical credentials in internal medicine, clinical pharmacology and clinical toxicology and held academic appointments at the University of California San Francisco and the University of Queensland.

Biotron said Rob Thomas had more than 35 years experience in the securities industry, with Potter Partners, now UBS, County Natwest and Citigroup.

The company said that Mr Thomas was the chairman of TAL (formerly Tower Australia) and a director of Virgin Australia, Heartware and Reva Medical.

Biotron said Mr Thomas chaired the Stockbrokers Association of Australia, Grahger Capital, as well as being a member of the advisory boards of Nomura Australia and Integ.

Biotron said that Mr Thomas held a Bachelor of Economics from Monash University.

Biotron fell 1.5 cents or 10.7 percent to 12.5 cents.

PSIVIDA

Psivida says it has elected Heartware chief executive officer Douglas Godshall as a director.

Psivida said that Mr Godshall had taken Heartware's ventricular assist system to Conformité Européenne (CE) mark approval and Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration approval and was the subject of US clinical trials for US Food and Drug Administration approval for two indications.

Psivida said that Mr Godshall joined Heartware in 2006 from Boston Scientific Corp where he worked for 16 years, holding executive and leadership positions, including president of the vascular surgery division and had previously served as vice-president of business development where he oversaw more than 70 transactions including several strategic investments in ophthalmology.

Psivida fell 1.5 cents or 0.75 percent to \$1.985.

PHOSPHAGENICS

Orbis Investment Management has again reduced its substantial holding in Phosphagenics from 167,786,403 shares (16.49%) to 154,891,863 shares (15.22%).

Orbis said it sold 12,894,540 shares between February 16 and March 2, 2012 for \$2,639,592 or an average price of 20.5 cents each.

Orbis previously reduced its Phosphagenics holding by one percent in February (BD: Feb 20, 2012).

Phosphagenics was unchanged at 21.5 cents with three million shares traded.