



Biotech Daily

Wednesday September 13, 2017

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH DOWN: NEUREN UP 8%, DIMERIX DOWN 11%**
- * **WEHI SHOWS HOW VIRUSES TRIGGER IMMUNE SYSTEM**
- * **AMGEN, SYDNEY UNI LAUNCH \$11m HIGH SCHOOL 'BIOTECH EXPERIENCE'**
- * **BIOTECH CAPITAL, BIOIMPACT LICENCE RLS DENTAL PRODUCTS**
- * **DIMERIX 20-TO-1 CONSOLIDATION; 11m DIRECTORS OPTIONS AGM**
- * **VISIONEERING RELEASES 53m SHARES, CDIS**
- * **ANATARA EXTENDS PORK CRC OPTIONS 12 MONTHS**
- * **SIRTEX APPOINTS HELEN KURINCIC DIRECTOR**
- * **CERTARA APPOINTS DR ANDREAS WALLNÖFER ADVISOR**
- * **ZELDA APPOINTS DR KUESTER, DR SASSO, MS VERGARA FOR TRIALS**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market slipped 0.04 percent on Wednesday September 13, 2017 with the ASX200 down 2.1 points to 5,744.3 points. Thirteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 16 fell, 10 traded unchanged and one was untraded.

Neuren was the best, up 0.5 cents or 8.2 percent to 6.6 cents with 1.95 million shares traded.

Airxanders and Compumedics climbed more than seven percent; Cellmid was up 4.2 percent; LBT and Prana were up more than three percent; Genetic Signatures rose 2.6 percent; Admedus, Orthocell, Osprey, Polynovo, Pro Medicus and Starpharma were up one percent or more; with Cochlear up by 0.1 percent.

Dimerix led the falls for the second day in a row, down 0.1 cents or 11.1 percent to 0.8 cents with 18.4 million shares traded.

Actinogen lost 10.3 percent; Atcor retreated 6.9 percent; ITL was down 5.9 percent; Avita fell 4.7 percent; Cyclopharm, Psivida and Reva lost more than three percent; Nanosonics shed 2.2 percent; Bionomics, Ellex, Medical Developments, Mesoblast and Pharmaxis were down more than one percent; with CSL, Resmed, Sirtex and Viralytics down by less than one percent.

[THE WALTER AND ELIZA HALL INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL RESEARCH](#)

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute says its researchers have “solved a longstanding mystery of how viruses trigger protective immunity within our body”.

The Institute said that the research team demonstrated that the SIDT2 protein was crucial for cells to detect viral components in their environment and initiate an immune response to reduce the virus’ spread.

WEHI said that as well as being an important part of the intricate arms race between viruses and our immune system, the finding could inform better approaches to delivering a new class of therapeutics.

The study, entitled ‘SIDT2 Transports Extracellular dsRNA into the Cytoplasm for Innate Immune Recognition’ was published in the journal *Immunity* and an abstract is available at: [http://www.cell.com/immunity/abstract/S1074-7613\(17\)30365-5](http://www.cell.com/immunity/abstract/S1074-7613(17)30365-5).

WEHI said that the study was led by Dr Tan Nguyen, Dr Ken Pang, Prof Seth Masters and Prof Ian Wicks at the Institute, with Dr Michelle Tate at the Monash University-affiliated Hudson Institute of Medical Research and Prof Craig Hunter at the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Harvard University.

The Institute said that during a viral infection, RNA was released into the environment around the infected cells and the team showed that SIDT2 allowed viral RNA to be shuttled between compartments within cells, allowing it to reach the proteins that triggered anti-viral immunity.

“This RNA is in a double-stranded form, called dsRNA, that is not normally found in our body,” Dr Nguyen said.

“Human cells have evolved ways to detect dsRNA as a warning sign of an active viral infection and, in this way, dsRNA acts as an important trigger for cells to mount an anti-viral immune response,” Dr Nguyen said.

“Cells constantly survey their environment by swallowing small samples of their environment into compartments called endosomes,” Dr Nguyen said.

“The enigma was that no one knew how the dsRNA escaped the endosome to reach the cytoplasm, where it can be detected by the cell,” Dr Nguyen said.

WEHI said that the team showed that SIDT2 was the crucial missing link needed to transport dsRNA out of endosomes and enable an immune response to be launched.

Dr Pang said that viruses had “many strategies to prevent an infected cell from alerting the immune system to their presence”.

“We showed that SIDT2 is critical for uninfected bystander cells to detect viral RNA in their environment,” Dr Pang said.

“This means bystanders can trigger protective immunity before they even encounter the virus itself,” Dr Pang said.

WEHI said that the research might have implications for a new class of therapeutics based on dsRNA.

“For more than a decade there have been attempts to use modified dsRNA to switch off genes that cause disease, an approach called RNA interference,” Dr Pang said.

“While there have been many clinical trials utilising RNA interference, delivering RNA into cells has been a huge challenge and the lack of effective delivery has meant that these trials have all ultimately failed,” Dr Pang said.

“Now that we know SIDT2 is important in trafficking double-stranded RNA into cells, future RNA-based therapeutics can hopefully be designed to maximise their transport by SIDT2,” Dr Pang said.

WEHI said that Dr Nguyen undertook the research as one of its doctoral students and currently worked at the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute.

AMGEN FOUNDATION, THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

The Amgen Foundation says that with the University of Sydney it will launch the Amgen Biotech Experience as part of a \$10.5 million investment in science education.

In a media release, the Thousand Oaks, California-based Amgen said the project would engage an expected 5,000 secondary students and 60 teachers in New South Wales over the next three years.

The Foundation said that the three-week, in-class initiative would provide “intensive professional development for teachers as well as teaching materials and research-grade equipment to classrooms to help educate students about the concepts and techniques scientists use to discover and develop medicines”.

The University of Sydney’s senior lecturer in molecular biology and its Amgen Biotech Experience site director Dr Hannah Nicholas said the expansion of the Biotech Experience into Australia through the University as year 12 students in New South Wales prepared for their biology examination “offered invaluable hands-on learning”.

“Previously biotechnology was an optional element of [Higher School Certificate] biology but now that it is a core component, we are excited to support schools in this aspect of the curriculum,” Dr Nicholas said.

“Through the [Biotech Experience] students will gain an understanding of medical applications of biotechnology, with a focus on insulin,” Dr Nicholas said.

The Amgen media release said that 75 percent of the fastest growing occupations required science technology engineering and mathematics, or STEM, skills and knowledge, but Australian student results in mathematics and science had “failed to keep pace, stagnating over the past 20 years”.

Amgen said that according to accountancy firm Price Waterhouse Coopers “shifting just one percent of the workforce into STEM roles would add \$57.4 billion to Australia’s [gross domestic product]”.

Dr Nicholas said the Amgen program supported the goals described in the Council of Australian Governments Education Council’s 2015 National STEM School Education Strategy, which is available at: <http://bit.ly/239n3LR>.

Amgen said that the launch of the Biotech Experience in Australia followed “nearly 30 years of the program supporting high school science teachers in the US and Europe”.

BIOTECH CAPITAL

Biotech Capital says subsidiary Bioimpact Pty Ltd has extended its licence and supply agreement with RLS Global AB to include two additional products.

Biotech Capital said that the Gothenburg, Sweden-based RLS Global had granted Bioimpact the rights to distribute the novel dental products Perisolv and Carisolv in Australia, New Zealand and select countries across the Asia Pacific region.

The company said that Perisolv was a patented, biochemically active gel that optimized the treatment of periodontitis, mucositis and peri-implantitis.

Biotech Capital said the gel was Conformité Européenne (CE) mark approved and when applied directly to the periodontal pocket exerted a bacteriostatic effect and aided in dissolving degenerated tissue making the debridement easier for both dental professionals and patients.

The company said that Carisolv was a patented gel that assisted in the removal and treatment of dental caries.

Biotech Capital said that subject to inclusion on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods it was expected that both products would be available in Australia by July 2018.

Biotech Capital was up two cents or 11.1 percent to 20 cents.

DIMERIX

Dimerix will vote on a 20-to-one stock consolidation and the issue of 11,000,010 pre-consolidation options to four directors.

Dimerix said that the options for chairman Dr James Williams and directors Sonia Poli David Franklyn and Hugh Alsop, exercisable at a pre-consolidation price of two cents and post-consolidation price of 40 cents by April 20, 2021 were “to compensate them for modest directors’ fees and to incentivize them”.

The Dimerix annual report said that chairman Dr James Williams received \$109,500 for the year to June 30, 2017, with Ms Poli receiving \$50,000, David Franklyn receiving \$45,000 and Mr Alsop received \$7,500 for the two months since his appointment.

Dimerix said shareholders would vote on the ratification of the prior issue of shares, the 10 percent placement capacity and to re-elect directors Dr Williams and Mr Alsop.

The meeting will be held at Stantons, Level 2, 1 Walker Avenue, West Perth on October 19, 2017 at 10am (AWST).

Dimerix fell 0.1 cents or 11.1 percent to 0.8 cents with 18.4 million shares traded.

VISIONEERING TECHNOLOGIES

Visioneering says that 36,975,027 US shares and 16,359,293 Chess depository instruments (CDIs) will be released from voluntary escrow on September 27, 2017.

Visioneering said that of the 16,359,293 CDIs being released from voluntary escrow, 21,125 CDIs would remain subject to voluntary escrow.

The company said that US shares were equivalent in number to CDIs.

Visioneering was untraded at 42 cents.

ANATARA LIFESCIENCES

Anatara said it has extended by 12 months the expiry of 250,000 options issued to the Pork Cooperative Research Centre in 2015.

Anatara said the options were exercisable at 50 cents each, originally by September 18, 2017, extended to September 18, 2018.

Anatara executive chairman Dr Mel Bridges said the Pork CRC was “an important and strategic relationship for Anatara”.

Anatara fell four cents or 2.9 percent to \$1.36.

SIRTEX MEDICAL

Sirtex says it has appointed Helen Kurincic as an independent non-executive director, effective from today September 13, 2017.

Sirtex said that Ms Kurincic had a “track record of delivering solid growth to those companies where she has acted at an executive or board level”.

The company said that Ms Kurincic was currently the chairman of Integral Diagnostics, a director of Estia Health and HBF Health.

Sirtex said that from 2007 until 2014 Ms Kurincic was Genesis Care’s chief operating officer and a director of Australia’s largest national provider of radiation oncology cancer treatment centres and cardiology services across more than 115 sites.

The company said that previously Ms Kurincic was Benetas’ executive director.

Sirtex said that Ms Kurincic held a Master of Business Administration from Victoria University.

Sirtex fell 14 cents or 0.9 percent to \$15.77 with 180,751 shares traded.

CERTARA

Certara says it has appointed Dr Andreas Wallnöfer as a senior executive advisor.

The Princeton, New Jersey-based Certara said that Dr Wallnöfer would provide strategic drug development, research and development organizational effectiveness, and asset evaluation/due diligence consulting.

Certara's Melbourne-based head of the D3 division Dr Craig Rayner said that Dr Wallnöfer was part of the D3 division and "a key partner in driving greater engagement in [the Asia Pacific]".

"Since 2016 he has been chair of the Singapore A-STAR external advisory panel for early development and senior advisor to Singapore NHMRC and Ministry for Health," Dr Rayner said.

Dr Rayner said that Dr Wallnöfer would be based in Switzerland and described him as "an industry champion of model-informed drug development and what technology can bring to revolutionize the drug development process and patient care".

Certara said that Dr Wallnöfer worked for more than 25 years at Roche, including 10 years as a member of the Roche research and development leadership and portfolio management team.

The company said that following Roche's exit from cardiovascular and metabolism disease in 2015, Dr Wallnöfer left Roche and became a partner at European venture capital firm Biomed Partners.

ZELDA THERAPEUTICS

Zelda says it has appointed Dr Gisela Kuester, Dr Jaime Sasso and Karina Vergara to help manage its clinical trials in Chile.

Zelda said that the Santiago-based clinicians and scientists would work with the company's Perth-based clinical trials manager Dr Patrizia Washer on the Chilean research program focused on autism, eczema and insomnia.

The company said that Dr Kuester was a professor of neurology at the University of Chile's faculty of medicine and the Daya Foundation's clinical research director.

Zelda said that Dr Kuester held a medical degree from Santiago's Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, or Catholic University of Chile and held a fellowship in epilepsy and electroencephalography from the University of Melbourne.

The company said that Dr Sasso was a professor of applied biopharmaceutics and pharmacokinetics at the University San Sebastian and University of Santiago and held a Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Chile.

Zelda said that Ms Vergara had worked at universities and scientific institutions on eco-social problems linked to natural resources management and she was currently the Daya Foundation's research co-ordinator.

The company said that Ms Vergara held a Bachelor of Science from the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile and a Master of Science from the University of Barcelona, Spain.

Zelda fell 0.1 cents or 1.25 percent to 7.9 cents with 4.5 million shares traded.