



Biotech Daily

Monday March 12, 2018

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH UP: IMMUTEP UP 17%; PRANA DOWN 7%**
- * **IMMUTEP RAISES \$7m, SHARE PLAN FOR \$10m; MERCK PARTNERSHIP**
- * **RACE 'OVERSUBSCRIBED' PLACEMENT RAISES \$3.2m FOR BISANTRENE**
- * **ADMEDUS 3-D AORTIC VALVE MEETS ISO DURABILITY STANDARD**
- * **FACTOR REQUESTS 'CAPITAL RAISING' TRADING HALT**
- * **IMMURON REQUESTS 'US PLACEMENT' TRADING HALT**
- * **NANOSONICS CHAIRMAN MAURIE STANG SELLS 5m SHARES TO 7%**
- * **BERNARD STANG REDUCES TO 6% OF NANOSONICS**
- * **BRAIN APPOINTS PATRICK MANZO, CHRISTOPHER DOLAN ADVISERS**
- * **ACTINOGEN ALZHEIMER'S TRIAL ROADSHOW**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.55 percent on Monday March 12, 2018, with the ASX200 up 32.9 points to 5,996.1 points. Fourteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 10 fell, 15 traded unchanged and one was untraded. All three Big Caps rose.

Immutep was the best, up 0.4 cents or 16.7 percent to 2.8 cents with 47.3 million shares traded.

Benitec climbed 8.1 percent; Admedus was up 7.4 percent; Actinogen rose six percent; Cyclopharm and Pharmaxis improved five percent or more; Opthea and Optiscan were up more than three percent; Airxpanders, CSL, Medical Developments, Orthocell and Pro Medicus were up one percent or more; with Cochlear, Mesoblast, Resmed and Sirtex up by less than one percent.

Prana led the falls, down 0.4 cents or seven percent to 5.3 cents with 40,000 shares traded.

Ellex, Neuren and Psivida lost three percent or more; Impedimed and Volpara shed more than two percent; with Avita, Nanosonics, Telix and Universal Biosensors down one percent or more.

IMMUTEP

Immutep says it has raised \$6,850,040 in a placement at 2.1 cents a share, hopes to raise a further \$10 million in a share plan and has a collaboration with Merck Inc.

Immutep said the placement was at a nine percent discount to the 15-day volume weighted average price to March 9, 2018 and was made to Sydney-based institutional investors Platinum Asset Management and Australian Ethical Investment, the New York-based Ridgeback Capital Investments and former Immutep (then Prima Biomed) chair Lucy Turnbull.

The company said the funds would be used “to drive immuno-oncology development programs” its pre-clinical program in autoimmune disease and for general working capital purposes.

Immutep said that a share purchase plan would be offered for shareholders on the record date of March 9, 2018 to raise up to a further \$10 million.

Immutep chief executive officer Marc Voigt said the capital raising would support the new combinatory immuno-oncology with immuno-oncology clinical trial in collaboration with the Kenilworth, New Jersey-based Merck, known as Merck Sharp and Dohme outside North America.

In a separate announcement, Immutep said that the collaboration would evaluate the combination of its immunotherapy candidate efitlagimod alpha, or IMP321, with Merck’s anti-programmed cell death-1 (PD-1) therapy pembrolizumab, marketed as Keytruda. The company said that the two active immunotherapies phase II trial, called Tacti-002, would evaluate the safety and efficacy of the combination in patients with non-small cell lung cancer, head and neck cancer, or ovarian cancer.

Immutep said the trial would be an up to 120-patient, two-stage, non-comparative, open-label, single-arm, multicentre clinical study in Europe and the US, expected to begin by the end of 2018.

“We are extremely pleased to be collaborating with [Merck], one of the world’s leading immuno-oncology companies,” Mr Voigt said.

“This clinical trial will evaluate a novel combination of two complementary immuno-oncology treatments in three cancer indications simultaneously, which could lead to more rapid drug development subject to successful outcomes,” Mr Voigt said.

“The data generated thus far from our ongoing Tacti-mel clinical trial has supported our hypothesis that there is a compelling therapeutic synergy in administering [IMP321] in combination with another immuno-oncology treatment,” Mr Voigt said.

“This new phase II clinical trial significantly builds on the momentum we are delivering in the evaluation of [IMP321] in cancer, with two phase I clinical trials and now two phase II clinical trials in our program for 2018,” Mr Voigt said.

In 2015, Viralytics began a collaboration with Merck and last year presented “promising” early data from the 90-patient, phase II trial of its Cavatak with Merck’s Keytruda for non-small cell lung cancer or metastatic bladder cancer (BD: Nov 6, 2015; Nov 14, 2017).

Viralytics said at that time that of 19 evaluable patients, there was an apparent response, not confirmed in all patients, in three of six non-small cell lung cancer patients and five of 13 metastatic bladder cancer patients.

In both trials, Merck is providing courses of Keytruda, which according to the Australian Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, retails for a maximum price of \$11,429 per course or up to \$194,000 for a 12-month course, per patient.

In February, Viralytics said that Merck would buy the company for its Cavatak oncolytic immunotherapy for \$502 million (BD: Feb 22, 2018).

Immutep was up 0.4 cents or 16.7 percent to 2.8 cents with 47.3 million shares traded.

RACE ONCOLOGY

Race says it has raised \$3,159,060 through a “heavily oversubscribed” placement to professional and sophisticated investors at 32 cents a share.

Race said that the 32 cent a share price was a 13.5 percent discount to the last closing price on March 7, 2018 and the funds would be used for operations and to manufacture Bisantrene for the US registration clinical trial and the expansion of the Bisantrene named patient program for acute myeloid leukaemia.

Race was unchanged at 37 cents.

ADMEDUS

Admedus says its transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR) has passed the 200 million cycle tests International Standards Organisation durability benchmark.

Admedus said that meeting ISO 5840-2:2015 for cardiovascular implants was “a key developmental milestone”.

The company said that last year it submitted two US patent applications for the development and manufacture of an Adapt process three-dimensional replacement heart valve requiring minimal suturing and “a hydro-packaging system” to change the way TAVR products were assembled and distributed (BD: Oct 24, 2017).

Admedus chief executive officer Wayne Paterson said his company was developing “a clinically-superior product that offers the substantial health benefits of our Adapt technology and an alternative treatment option for patients who aren’t suitable candidates for traditional surgical heart valve replacement or repair”.

“Passing the 200 million valve cycle test is a critical step in this pre-clinical stage of development as it confirms the valve meets the required standard of durability, fundamental to the overall viability and progression of the project,” Mr Paterson said. “If successful, the Admedus TAVR will reinvent the way these devices are used and manufactured,” Mr Paterson said.

“By leveraging the latest advances in our Adapt tissue technology to create a three-dimensional, single-piece moulded valve which securely attaches to a stent with minimal sutures, we anticipate a substantial reduction in the cost of manufacturing a TAVR device,” Mr Paterson said.

Admedus Adapt inventor and head of cardiovascular technologies Prof Leon Neethling said the benefits of the Adapt technology and products had been confirmed “with more than nine years of data to demonstrate their remodelling and anti-calcification properties”. Admedus was up two cents or 7.4 percent to 29 cents.

FACTOR THERAPEUTICS

Factor Therapeutics has requested a trading halt “pending an announcement regarding a proposed capital raising”.

Trading will resume on March 14, 2018 or on an earlier announcement.

Factor Therapeutics last traded at 4.7 cents.

IMMURON

Immuron has requested a trading halt pending an announcement on “a private placement capital raising with a large US investment fund”.

Trading will resume on March 14, 2018 or on an earlier announcement.

Immuron last traded at 39 cents.

[NANOSONICS](#)

Nanosonics non-executive chairman Maurie Stang says he has sold 4,845,000 shares reducing his holding from 25,099,701 shares (8.9%) to 20,254,701 shares (6.8%) In 2016, the Vaucluse, Sydney-based Mr Stang said he sold 2,500,000 shares on market for \$4,750,000 or \$1.90 a share (BD: Feb 29, 2016).

Today, Mr Stang said that on February 22, 2016 and March 5, 2018, he sold the 4,845,000 shares for \$11,198,750 or an average price of \$2.31 a share. Nanosonics fell three cents or 1.1 percent to \$2.66 with 955,060 shares traded.

[NANOSONICS](#)

Bernard Stang says he has reduced his substantial holding in Nanosonics from 20,684,056 shares (7.30%) to 17,771,556 shares (5.94%).

The Rose Bay, Sydney-based Mr Stang, and brother of chairman Maurice Stang, said he bought and sold shares between March 7, 2016 and March 8, 2018, with the single largest purchase 50,000 shares for \$133,500 or \$2.67 a share and the single largest sale 1,200,000 shares for \$3,240,000 or \$2.70 a share.

In 2016, Mr Stand said that he sold 5,000,000 shares; and in 2014 sold 3,000,000 shares for \$1.08 a share. (BD: Sep 15, 2014; Jan 25, 2016).

[BRAIN RESOURCE](#)

Brain says it has appointed Patrick Manzo and Christopher Dolan as advisers. Brain said that Mr Manzo and Mr Dolan would advise on operational strategy, planning, execution, data security and privacy, as well as technical platform development. The company said Mr Manzo was an executive and lawyer with 17 years' experience including data privacy and security and was most recently an executive at Monster Worldwide and was currently an advisor to several Boston-area start-ups. Brain said Mr Dolan had 20-year' experience in "software as a service" and "big data platform architecture".

Brain was unchanged at five cents with 1.03 million shares traded.

[ACTINOGEN MEDICAL](#)

Actinogen says it will conduct investor briefings in four cities "to provide an overview of the business and an update on its phase II Xanadu trial for Alzheimer's disease".

Actinogen chief executive officer Dr Bill Ketelbey told Biotech Daily the four cities in four days roadshow would cover the progress the company was making with the Xanamem for Alzheimer's disease trial, "as we approach the half-way point for patient enrolment into the trial and the output from the previously announced interim analysis".

"The study continues on-track to enrol the last patient by the end of this year, with top-line results by July next year," Dr Ketelbey said.

Actinogen said the briefings would be held in Perth on March 19, Adelaide March 20, Melbourne March 21 and in Sydney on March 22 and would be followed by a drinks service and the opportunity to talk with management.

For registration contact Therese Russell at: therese.russell@actinogen.com.au.

Actinogen was up 0.3 cents or six percent to 5.3 cents with 4.1 million shares traded.

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