



Biotech Daily

Thursday March 14, 2019

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH UP: AVITA UP 16%; PRESCIENT DOWN 3%**
- * **NHMRC AWARDS 23 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE AWARDS**
- * **HEMIDEINA WINS FEDERAL \$800k FOR HERA WIRELESS IMPLANT**
- * **MEDLAB: 'MARIJUANA NANABIS REDUCES PAIN IN 5 PATIENTS'**
- * **IMUGENE DOSES 1st HER-VAXX GASTRIC CANCER PATIENT**
- * **US PATENT FOR RECCE ANTIBIOTICS, RECCE-327**
- * **PHARMAUST MONEPANTEL 'DOG TUMOR SUPPRESSION, REGRESSION'**
- * **PHYLOGICA, TEL AVIV UNI COLLAB FOR SIRNA THERAPIES**
- * **MEDIBIO OUTSOURCES ILUMEN TO EX-STAFF-OWNED ALTA**
- * **FIL TAKES 5% OF ACTINOGEN**
- * **INVESTORS MUTUAL TAKES 7% OF MAYNE PHARMA**
- * **TOTAL BRAIN REQUESTS CAPITAL RAISING TRADING HALT**
- * **ALASTAIR BEARD REPLACES RESPIRI CO SEC JULIAN ROCKETT**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.3 percent on Thursday March 14, 2019, with the ASX200 up 18.4 points to 6,179.6 points. Seventeen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, nine fell, 11 traded unchanged and three were untraded.

Avita was the best, up 2.5 cents or 16.1 percent to 18 cents, with 13.4 million shares traded. Immutep climbed 6.25 percent; LBT and Osprey improved more than four percent; Paradigm, Proteomics and Volpara were up more than three percent; Airxpanders, Optiscan, Prana and Telix rose more than two percent; Actinogen, Clinuvel and Ellex were up more than one percent; with Cochlear, Mesoblast, Nanosonics and Pro Medicus up by less than one percent.

Prescient led the falls, down 0.2 cents or 3.3 percent to 5.9 cents with 87,979 shares traded. Compumedics and Genetic Signatures shed more than two percent; Dimerix, Medical Developments, Pharmaxis and Starpharma were down more than one percent; with CSL, Neuren, Opthea and Resmed down by less than one percent.

[NATIONAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL](#)

The National Health and Medical Research Council says it has presented awards to 23 Australian researchers at its annual Research Excellence Awards.

The Council said that among awardees were the University of Melbourne's Prof Patrick McGorry, the Burnet Institute's Prof David Anderson, the University of Queensland's Prof Mark Walker and the Murdoch Children's Research Institute's Dr Graham Gee.

The NHMRC said the awards included its Biennial Awards.

NHMRC chief executive officer Prof Anne Kelso said the Biennial Awards "acknowledge outstanding contributions to NHMRC, leadership in research ethics, and the aesthetic beauty of science through the Science to Art Award".

The NHMRC said the Australian National University's Centre for Mental Health Research Dr Michelle Banfield was awarded the inaugural Consumer Engagement Award for commitment to representing consumer and community needs in medical research.

The Council said it gave 20 Research Excellence Awards to researchers whose grant applications were ranked highest by their peers.

The NHMRC said the University of Sydney senior lecturer Dr Steven Wise was awarded the Marshall and Warren Award for "the most innovative research project that could change the way an illness or disease is diagnosed, treated or prevented".

The Council said the full list of awardees was available at:

<https://nhmrc.gov.au/2018-research-excellence-awards>

[HEMIDEINA](#)

Hemideina says it has been awarded an \$800,000 grant from the Federal Government to accelerate the commercialization of its Hera wireless implant.

Hemideina said the grant, under the Federal Government Entrepreneurs' Program Accelerating Commercialisation, would allow it to strengthen its intellectual property portfolio, plan market access and trial the Hera wireless implant for safety and efficacy.

Hemideina chief executive officer Dr Elizabeth Williams said the grant was "a significant milestone for Hemideina and further validates our design capabilities and capacity to disrupt the established hearing implant market with a second-generation alternative".

Hemideina chairman Andrew Maxwell said that "Accelerating Commercialisation, coupled with the R&D Tax Incentive are vital for Australia to build companies that will create a sustainable industry and jobs-based innovation in human healthcare".

Hemideina is a private company.

[MEDLAB CLINICAL](#)

Medlab says five case studies show a reduction in pain when administered the marijuana-based Nanabis.

Medlab said four patient pain scores fell from nine and 10 out of 10 to two and four out of 10; and a fifth patient with chronic pain reported "better quality of sleep".

Medlab said that three patients were taking five or more drugs, with two patients ceasing all medications other than Nanabis after four days and one month, respectively, with the third reporting a "significant reduction in other medications after two weeks".

The company provided a chart showing that all five patients had benefit from Nanabis.

Medlab fell 1.5 cents or 3.75 percent to 38.5 cents.

IMUGENE

Imugene says it has dosed the first of 68 patients in its open-label, randomized, multi-centre phase II trial of HER-Vaxx, or IMU-131, for HER-2-positive gastric cancer.

Imugene said the first patient was dosed at the Chisinau, Moldova-based Oncological Institute, with other patients to be dosed at sites in Asia and Eastern Europe.

Imugene chief executive officer Leslie Chong said 11 of 14 patients in its phase Ib study of the vaccine with chemotherapy “showed clinically meaningful responses” with the trial showing safety and increased antibody response at all dose levels (BD: Dec 17, 2018).

Imugene said its phase II trial of HER-Vaxx would measure efficacy, safety and immune response comparing the vaccination plus chemotherapy to chemotherapy alone.

Imugene was unchanged at 1.9 cents, with 9.3 million shares traded.

RECCE PHARMACEUTICALS

Recce says the US Patent and Trademark Office has granted a patent covering 23 claims for its synthetic antibiotics, including lead candidate Recce-327.

Recce said the patent, titled ‘Copolymer and Method for Treatment of Bacterial Infection’ protected its intellectual property until November 2035.

Recce was up three cents or 20 percent to 18 cents with 1.6 million shares traded.

PHARMAUST

Pharmaust says its nine-dog, phase I trial of Monepantel for dog cancer has shown that a single tablet is able to suppress tumor markers and tumor regression.

Pharmaust said that following a single dose, blood and serum concentrations exceeded those in the phase I human clinical trial and anti-cancer activity in mice.

The company said the concentrations were dependent on the dietary setting with the tablet preferably taken during or after a meal.

Pharmaust chief scientific officer Dr Richard Mollard said the data provided “early evidence that a single dose of ... monepantel tablets can provide sufficient drug levels in serum to achieve anti-cancer activity” which meant dosing of dogs by their owners would be less challenging and the next steps would be to investigate dose escalation and repeat dose administration.

Pharmaust was up 0.3 cents or 9.4 percent to 3.5 cents with 2.2 million shares traded

PHYLOGICA

Phylogica says it will collaborate with the Israel-based Tel Aviv University’s Ramot to develop small interference RNA (siRNA) therapeutics.

Phylogica said it would work with Tel Aviv University’s Prof Dan Peer to evaluate the use of its cell penetrating peptides (formerly known as Phylomers) platforms with a lipid nanoparticle coating to deliver siRNA to tissues outside the liver.

The company said the method was proposed to overcome “weak intrinsic cell penetrating ability and problematic electrostatic interactions with positively charged delivery vehicles”.

Phylogica said it would insulate negatively-charged siRNA cargoes from positively charged peptides by using a lipid nanoparticle coating.

The company said the majority of the collaboration would be conducted at Prof Peer’s Tel Aviv laboratory.

Phylogica fell 0.1 cents or 4.2 percent to 2.3 cents.

MEDIBIO

Medibio says it will outsource its Ilumen corporate mental health platform to former employees who have formed the Perth-based Alta Corporate Psychology.

Medibio said the former employees led by Melanie Fisher would operate Alta in a services agreement to support Ilumen customers and reduce costs.

Last year, Medibio said it continued to own the Perth-based psychology group Vital Conversations it acquired last year, but had “downsized its premises in Perth” and would sublet or reassign the lease on the property. (BD: Apr 12, 2018).

Medibio executive chairman David Kaysen said the “re-organisation addresses our need to further reduce costs and streamline our organization while having access to this talented group of psychologists, who know Ilumen very well”.

“Medibio can utilise their expertise on an as needed basis to support current and future Ilumen customers,” Mr Kaysen said.

Medibio fell 0.4 cents or 20 percent to 1.6 cents.

ACTINOGEN MEDICAL

FIL Limited says it has become a substantial shareholder in Actinogen with 56,375,471 shares or 5.04 percent of the company.

The Hong Kong-based FIL said it bought the shares between November 29, 2018 and March 11, 2019, with a single largest purchase of 9,533,650 shares for \$517,677 or 5.43 cents a share.

Actinogen was up 0.1 cents or 1.85 percent to 5.5 cents with 3.8 million shares traded

MAYNE PHARMA GROUP

Investors Mutual says it has increased its holding in Mayne Pharma from 95,169,714 shares (6.05%) to 112,057,726 shares (7.08%).

The Sydney-based Investors Mutual said that between October 9, 2018 and March 12, 2019 it bought and sold the shares, with a single largest purchase of 770,000 shares for \$563,101 or 73.13 cents a share.

Mayne was up one cent or 1.4 percent to 70.5 cents with 4.3 million shares traded

TOTAL BRAIN

Total Brain has requested a trading halt “pending an announcement in relation to a capital raising”.

Trading will resume on March 18, 2019 or on an earlier announcement.

Total Brain last traded at three cents.

RESPIRI

Respiri says it has appointed Alastair Beard as company secretary, replacing Julian Rockett effective from March 13, 2019.

Respiri was unchanged at 8.2 cents.