



Biotech Daily

Tuesday December 19, 2017

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH UP: PRANA UP 9%; ONCOSIL DOWN 6%**
- * **OPTHEA STARTS PHASE IIb OPT-302, LUCENTIS TRIAL FOR WET AMD**
- * **ANTISENSE EXTENDS PAEDIATRIC ATL1102 FOR DMD TRIAL**
- * **RESAPP: 'MASS GENERAL APPROVES SMARTCOUGH-C-2 TRIAL'**
- * **USCOM RAISES \$3m**
- * **PROBIOTEC EXPECTS H1 NPBT UP; OPTIONS, BUY-BACK EGM**
- * **MAURICE BLACKBURN SERVES SIRTEX 2nd SHARE PRICE CLASS ACTION**
- * **IMUGENE RIGHTS RAISE \$460k, \$1.6m UNDERWRITTEN; TOTAL \$8.7m**
- * **MEMPHASYS RIGHTS RAISE \$432k; TOTAL \$700k**
- * **MMJ'S HARVEST ONE PAYS \$962k FOR 161ha TO GROW MARIJUANA**
- * **BAKER BROS INCREASES, DILUTED TO 8% OF OPTHEA**
- * **NICHOLAS MCDONALD BELOW 5% IN BTC HEALTH (BIOTECH CAPITAL)**
- * **ANTEO JUMPS 43% ON HIRING POLARIS FOR LITHIUM BATTERIES**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.5 percent on Tuesday December 19, 2017 with the ASX200 up 32.9 points to 6,071.8 points. Sixteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 13 fell, eight traded unchanged and three were untraded.

Prana was the best, up 0.6 cents or 8.6 percent to 7.6 cents with 410,375 shares traded. Mesoblast and Uscom climbed more than six percent; both Dimerix and Immutep (Prima) improved 4.2 percent; Bionomics, ITL, LBT, Nanosonics and Polynovo rose more than two percent; Compumedics, Starpharma, Viralytics and Volpara were up more than one percent; with Airxpanders, Cochlear, CSL and Reva up by less than one percent.

Oncosil led the falls, down one cent or 6.25 percent to 15 cents with 543,688 shares traded. Both Opthea and Optiscan fell 5.6 percent; Admedus, Genetic Signatures, Osprey and Telix were down more than three percent; Benitec shed 2.4 percent; with Clinuvel, Neuren and Pro Medicus down more than one percent.

OPTHEA

Opthea says it has dosed the first of 351 patients in its phase IIb trial of OPT-302 in combination with ranibizumab for wet age-related macular degeneration.

Opthea chief executive officer Dr Megan Baldwin said dosing the first patient was “an important milestone for OPT-302’s development”.

Dr Baldwin said OPT-302 was a vascular endothelial growth factor C and D (VEGF-CD) compound and could “offer patients improved outcomes when administered in combination with existing anti-VEGF-A agents” such as ranibizumab, marketed as Lucentis.

Opthea said patients at sites in the US, Europe and Israel would be randomized into three treatment groups and administered either 0.5mg ranibizumab alone or in combination with 0.5mg or 2.0mg of OPT-302.

The company said treatments would be administered on a monthly basis for six months through intravitreal, or ocular, injection.

Opthea said the primary endpoint was the mean change in best corrected visual acuity from baseline to week-24.

The company said that secondary endpoints included investigation of OPT-302 on anatomical parameters of the wet age-related macular degeneration lesion using imaging techniques such as optical coherence tomography and fluorescein angiography.

Opthea said primary data from the study was expected in 2020.

Opthea fell four cents or 5.6 percent to 68 cents.

ANTISENSE THERAPEUTICS

Antisense says it will dose patients in its ATL1102 for Duchenne muscular dystrophy trial at Melbourne’s Royal Children’s Hospital for six months rather than eight weeks.

Antisense said the extended trial might allow ATL1102 to show improvements in clinical endpoints, such as upper limb function, that were observable only in longer term studies.

The company said patients, wheelchair-bound boys weighing between 30kg and 60kg, would receive a single 25mg dose of ATL1102 each week.

Antisense said the new trial protocol would be reviewed by the Hospital’s ethics committee on February 5, 2018.

The company said a single dose administered over six months would have no material impact on the cost or timeline estimates compared to the eight week escalating dose trial.

In October, the US Food and Drug Administration lifted a clinical hold on a phase IIb ATL1102 multiple sclerosis trial, restricting the dose to 25mg a week (BD: Oct 2, 2017).

Antisense managing-director Mark Diamond previously told Biotech Daily that the company expected future trials of ATL1102 to be at 200mg or lower a week

In 2008, Antisense and then partner Teva reported safety and efficacy of ATL1102 for multiple sclerosis at a dose of 400mg a week, with the only concern a reduction in blood platelets, which reversed after treatment interruption (BD: Jun 30, 2008).

Antisense was untraded at 2.4 cents.

USCOM

Uscom says it has raised \$3,000,000 at 13.5 cents a share.

Yesterday, Uscom said that former China Government departmental head and now pharmaceutical executive and investor Steven Meng had invested \$1,755,000 in the capital raising, taking 10 percent of the company (BD: Dec 18, 2017).

Uscom was up one cent or 6.7 percent to 16 cents.

PROBIOTEC

Probiotec says it expects profit to rise up to 100 percent for the six months to December 31, 2017 and will hold a vote on executive options and a share buy-back.

Probiotec said it expected net profit before tax to be in the range of \$1.0 million to \$1.4 million for the period, an increase of 40 percent to 100 percent compared to the \$700,000 in the prior corresponding period.

The company said it would ask shareholders to approve an executive option plan and the issue of 3,600,000 options to chief executive officer Wesley Stringer exercisable at \$1.20 within two years of issue.

Probiotec said that the meeting would vote on a proposal to buy-back 15,207,339 shares. The meeting will be held at 83 Cherry Lane, Laverton North, Victoria on January 23, 2018 at 10am (AEDT).

Probiotec was up 9.5 cents or 13.6 percent to 79.5 cents.

RESAPP HEALTH

Resapp says Boston's Massachusetts General Hospital has given institutional review board approval for the Smartcough-C-2 study.

Last week, Resapp said the Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital had given approval for the study (BD: Dec 13, 2017).

The first Smartcough-C trial was conducted at the Texas Children's, Massachusetts General and the Cleveland Clinic and Resapp chief executive officer Dr Tony Keating told Biotech Daily the same hospitals would conduct the Smartcough-C-2 study.

Resapp fell 1.1 cents or 12.1 percent to eight cents with 14.5 million shares traded.

SIRTEX MEDICAL

Sirtex says Melbourne-based law firm Maurice Blackburn has served an additional class action which has been filed in the Federal Court of Australia.

Sirtex said the claim concerned "all persons who or which acquired an interest in SRX securities during the period from August 24, 2016 to December 16, 2016".

The company said the claim included "allegations of contraventions of the Corporations Act ... in relation to misleading and deceptive conduct and breach of continuous disclosure obligations".

Sirtex said that as with the existing representative proceeding announced in January it would "vigorously defend this new action" (BD: Feb 1, 2017).

In February, Sirtex said it had received a draft statement of claim from Melbourne's Portfolio Law on behalf of Todd Hayward who acquired 340 Sirtex shares for \$9,449 on December 1, 2016 and held them at the time that the company share price fell following a profit warning on December 9, 2016.

In July, law firms William Roberts and Maurice Blackburn said they intended to take legal action against Sirtex relating to its share price and a forecast of double-digit dose sales growth (BD: Jul 31, 2017).

William Roberts Lawyers said the proposed class action was funded by Litigation Lending Services and it expected to take the matter to the Federal Court "subject to sufficient interest" (BD: Feb 1, 13, May 29, 2017).

IMF Bentham told the ASX in July that it proposed "to fund on a conditional basis claims of certain current and former shareholders of Sirtex ... against Sirtex" and the proceedings would be conducted by Maurice Blackburn.

Sirtex fell seven cents or 0.4 percent to \$15.95 with 308,102 shares traded.

IMUGENE

Imugene says its one-for-21 rights issue at 1.8 cents a share raised \$460,351 with the \$1.6 million shortfall to be allocated by the underwriter.

In November, Imugene said it had commitments to raise \$6.7 million in a placement and a \$2.03 million entitlement offer underwritten by Bell Potter Securities (BD: Nov 23, 2017). Imugene fell 0.1 cents or 6.25 percent to 1.5 cents with 4.2 million shares traded.

MEMPHASYS

Memphasys says its one-for-one rights offer at 0.1 cents a share raised \$431,624 of \$699,821 with the offer fully underwritten and managed by Patersons Securities. Memphasys was untraded at 0.2 cents.

MMJ PHYTOTECH

MMJ says that 59 percent subsidiary Harvest One in Canada has paid \$C949,000 (\$A962,367) for 398 acres (161.1ha) of land in British Columbia to grow marijuana. MMJ said the purchase was through Harvest One's United Greeneries subsidiary. MMJ was up 0.5 cents or 1.3 percent to 40 cents.

OPTHEA (CIRCADIAN TECHNOLOGIES)

Baker Brothers says it has increased its holding in Opthea from 13,537,768 shares to 16,385,959 shares and been diluted from 9.14 percent to 8.13 percent.

The New York-based Baker Brothers said it acquired 2,510,538 shares in an April entitlement offer at 93 cents share.

In April, Opthea raised \$45 million (BD: Apr 3, 2017).

BTC HEALTH (FORMERLY BIOTECH CAPITAL)

Nicholas McDonald says he has reduced his holding in Biotech Capital (now BTC Health) from 6,685,453 shares (5.26%) to below the five percent substantial level.

The substantial shareholder notice said the shares were held by the Sydney-based Mr McDonald directly and as a director of Pritdown Pty Ltd and said that between May 1 and December 15, 2017 he sold 1,916,533 shares for prices ranging from 13 to 20 cents.

BTC Health was up one cent or five percent to 21 cents.

ANTEO DIAGNOSTICS

Anteo says it has hired Polaris Battery Labs LLC to start a development project on its Anteocoat nano-coating technology for use in lithium-ion batteries.

Anteo said the project's objective was to leverage its existing proof of concept results and to generate third party data from the Portland, Oregon-based based Polaris that showed the effect of Anteocoat on the performance of lithium-ion battery cells (BD: Oct 18, 2017).

Anteo was up 0.6 cents or 42.9 percent to two cents with 70.0 million shares traded.