Biotech Daily

Thursday October 24, 2019

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

*** ASX UP, BIOTECH DOWN: IMPEDIMED UP 6%; ACTINOGEN DOWN 9%**

*** BLUECHIIP PLACEMENT RAISES $4.6m; SHARE PLAN FOR MORE**

*** PHARMAXIS: LOX INHIBITOR FOR CANCER 'DOSE RESPONSE, SAFE'**

*** ACTINOGEN RECEIVES $4.6m FEDERAL R&D TAX INCENTIVE**

*** ACRUX RECEIVES 'FIRST' $502k FEDERAL R&D TAX INCENTIVE**

*** MEDICAL DEVELOPMENTS: 'PENTHROX 1st LINE EU PAIN TREATMENT'**

*** NOVITA TALI DETECT US REIMBURSEMENT CODE; UP 145%**

*** GENETIC SIGNATURES REQUESTS CAPITAL RAISING TRADING HALT**

*** KAZIA REQUESTS CAPITAL RAISING TRADING HALT**

*** MEDIBIO: PWC AUSTRALIA TO USE ILUMEN FOR MENTAL HEALTH**

*** ADALTA 5m CEO DR TIM OLDHAM OPTIONS AGM**

*** CREDIT SUISSE TAKES 5% OF OPTHEA**

*** JAMES SCHWARZ, JAMBER TAKE 5% OF ESENSE**

*** NUHEARA APPOINTS DAVID BUCKINGHAM DIRECTOR**

*** INVION CEO CRAIG NEWTON STARTS ON $280k**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.31 percent on Thursday October 24, 2019, with the ASX200 up 20.5 points to 6,693.6 points. Nine of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 20 fell, seven traded unchanged and four were untraded. All three Big Caps were up.

Impedimed was the best, up one cent or 6.1 percent to 17.5 cents, with 903,135 shares traded. Ellex and Uscom climbed more than four percent; Immutep improved 3.7 percent; Cyclopharm and Oncosil rose more than two percent; Opthea, Medical Developments and Volpara were up more than one percent; with Cochlear, CSL and Resmed up by less than one percent.

Actinogen led the falls, down 0.4 cents or 9.3 percent to 3.9 cents with 53.5 million shares traded. Dimerix fell 4.35 percent; LBT, Neuren and Prescient lost more than three percent; Compumedics, Cynata, Orthocell, Pharmaxis, Polynovo, Pro Medicus, Proteomics, Telix and Universal Biosensors shed more than two percent; Antisense, Clinuvel, Mesoblast and Nanosonics were down one percent or more; with Next Science and Starpharma down by less than one percent.

BLUECHIIP

Bluechiip says it has raised $4.6 million in a placement at 15 cents a share and hopes to raise more funds through a share purchase plan at the same price.
Bluechiip said that the record date for the share plan was October 23, tha plan would open on October 30 and close on November 15, 2019.
The company said the non-renounceable and non-transferable share plan allowed for a minimum of $2,000 and maximum of $30,000 of new shares,
Bluechiip chief executive officer Andrew McLellan said the demand for the placement "exceeded our proposed placement amount, which reflects strong support from both existing and new institutional investors".
"The company has achieved significant progress in recent months which is reflected in our current share price rise and now the placement demand," Mr McLellan said.
He said the funds would help scale-up operations "especially with regard to our chip production" for its sample-tracking systems and support manufacturing partners.
Bluechiip said CCZ Statton Equities was the lead manager to the placement.
Bluechiip was up half a cent or 3.3 percent to 15.5 cents.

PHARMAXIS

Pharmaxis says the 40-subject, phase Ia dose-ranging trial of its oral anti-fibrotic lysyl oxidase (LOX) inhibitor was safe, well-tolerated and showed a dose-related activity.
Pharmaxis said that the study dosed the healthy volunteers in five groups, with a single oral dose or a placebo.
The company said that no safety signals were identified, the data showed good pharmacokinetics and showed a dose-related inhibition of the LOX family of enzymes, including LOX, LOXL1, LOXL2, LOXL3 and LOXL4, with upper doses causing significant inhibition for 24 hours after a single application.
Pharmaxis said it had begun dosing 16 phase Ib subjects in a multiple ascending dose study, in two groups, with each receiving a different dose or a placebo daily for 14 days.
Pharmaxis chief executive officer Gary Phillips said the phase Ib study was "due to report mid-year, but we delayed it while we completed three-month toxicity testing to further de-risk the drug".
Mr Phillips said that on completion of the phase I study, the company would have "all the data required to support the commencement of clinical proof-of-concept studies in either myelofibrosis or pancreatic cancer".
Mr Phillips said Pharmaxis planned to discuss the program with the US Food and Drug Administration] prior to filing an investigational new drug application for phase II by the end of 2020.
The company said it was developing the once-a-day anti-fibrotic lysyl oxidase inhibitor for cancers including myelofibrosis and pancreatic cancer.
Pharmaxis said it expected to report phase Ib data by April 2020.
Pharmaxis fell half a cent or 2.4 percent to 20.5 cents.

ACTINOGEN

Actinogen says it has received $4,580,736 from the Australian Tax Office under the Federal Government Research and Development Tax Incentive program.
Actinogen said the rebate related to research and development expenditure for the year to June 30, 2019, with about $650,000 expected later this year
Actinogen fell 0.4 cents or 9.3 percent to 3.9 cents with 53.5 million shares traded.

ACRUX

Acrux says it has received $501,605 from the Australian Tax Office under the Federal Government Research and Development Tax Incentive program.

In a media release to the ASX, titled 'Receipt of first R&D Tax Incentive Rebate', Acrux said the rebate was received by its 100 percent owned subsidiary Acrux Commercial Pty Ltd and related to research and development expenditure for the year to June 30, 2019.

The company said that a further $1,513,637 was expected by 100 percent owned subsidiary Acrux Pharma Pty Ltd by the end of the year.

In January, Acrux said it received $2,056,759 from the Australian Tax Office for research and development expenditure for the year to June 30, 2018 (BD: Jan 21, 2019).

An Acrux executive told Biotech Daily that the payment was "the first of two" for the year to June 30, 2019.

Acrux fell one cent or 4.4 percent to 21.5 cents.

MEDICAL DEVELOPMENTS INTERNATIONAL

Medical Developments says its Penthrox inhaled methoxyflurane analgesic has been recommended as a first-line treatment for moderate and severe pain in Europe.

Medical Developments said Penthrox was included in the European Society for Emergency Medicine (EUSEM) guidelines for the management of acute pain.

The company quoted the guidelines saying Penthrox "provides rapid, effective pain relief which is well tolerated; the handheld inhaler provides ease of administration and portability".

Medical Developments chief executive officer John Sharman said the recommendation of Penthrox as a first line trauma medication in Europe was "a quantum step forward for Penthrox's ability to develop a market leading position".

"The inclusion of Penthrox in the EUSEM guidelines is the result of several years of investment in clinical studies by [the company] and our partner in Europe, Mundipharma International Corp," Mr Sharman said. "This achievement will help develop the profile of Penthrox in Europe and across the world."

Medical Developments was up 10 cents or 1.8 percent to $5.75 cents with one million shares traded.

NOVITA HEALTHCARE

Novita says its Tali Detect digital attention deficit screening program has been approved for US reimbursement by the American Medical Association.

Novita said the current procedural terminology (CPT) code 96146 would allow insurance reimbursements for Tali Detect up-to $US36.04 ($A52.67) and would be "allocated at a yet to be determined rate between participants delivering the service and Novita".

The company said the Durham, North Carolina-based Duke University would screen about 2,000 children and each child would require two or three screenings.

Novita said that 9.4 percent of US children were currently diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and the roll-out would begin by the end of 2019.

The company said it expected a CPT code reimbursement for Tali Train in the near future.

Novita managing-director Glenn Smith said the US clinical market was "a massive opportunity for Tali" and would assist securing relevant partners and customers.

"On average, in the US, every classroom of 30 students has up to three children with ADHD, with 6.1 million children diagnosed with ADHD currently in the US," Mr Smith said.

Novita was up 1.6 cents or 145.45 percent to 2.7 cents with 609.5 million shares traded.

GENETIC SIGNATURES

Genetic Signatures says it has requested a trading halt pending an announcement of “the results of an institutional placement”.
Trading will resume on October 28, 2019 or on an earlier announcement.
Genetic Signatures last traded at $1.08.

KAZIA THERAPEUTICS

Kazia has requested a trading halt “pending the release of an announcement with regard to a proposed capital raising”.
Trading will resume on October 28, 2019 or on an earlier announcement.
Kazia last traded at 46.5 cents.

MEDIBIO

Medibio says it has an agreement with Price Waterhouse Coopers, or PWC, Australia to provide access to its Ilumen heart rhythm-based mental health assessments.
Medibio said its Ilumen platform would screen PWC staff for symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress and its biometric data would provide staff assessments from October 2019 for 12 months.
The company said the agreement followed a program with PWC in 2018.
Medibio fell 0.1 cents or 8.3 percent to 1.1 cents with 3.1 million shares traded.

ADALTA

Adalta says its annual general meeting will vote to issue chief executive officer Dr Tim Oldham 4,929,060 options, exercisable at 25 cents a share within six years.
Adalta said that the options would vest in four tranches over three years, pending conditions including that Dr Oldham be employed by the company.
The company said the meeting would vote to approve the remuneration report, its omnibus equity plan, the 10 percent placement facility and to elect directors Dr Rosalind Wilson and Dr Robert Peach.
The meeting will be held at K & L Gates, Level 25, Rialto South Tower, 525 Collins Street, Melbourne on November 26, 2019 at 4pm (AEDT).
Adalta was unchanged at 12 cents.

OPTHEA

Credit Suisse Holdings (Australia) says it has become a substantial shareholder in Opthea with 13,243,243 shares or 5.29 percent of the company.
The Sydney-based Credit Suisse said that between August 7 and October 21, 2019 it bought, sold and borrowed shares in more than 200 trades, through a master prime brokerage agreement, with the single largest purchase 887,297 shares for $2,812,732 or $3.17 a share on August 28, 2019.
Opthea was up six cents or 1.6 percent to $3.74.

ESENSE LAB

James Schwarz and Jamber Investments say they have become substantial shareholders in Esense with 10,000,000 shares or 5.27 percent of the company.
The Vaucluse, New South Wales-based Jamber said that between September 2 and October 14, 2019 it acquired the shares for $168,725.39 or an average of 1.7 cents a share.
Esense fell 0.1 cents or 5.9 percent to 1.6 cents.

NUHEARA

Nuheara says it has appointed David Buckingham as a non-executive director, effective from November 1, 2019.
Nuheara said Mr Buckingham had experience in mergers acquisition and “disrupting entrenched industries by focusing on service and customer experience”.
The company said that Mr Buckingham was previously the chief executive officer and chief financial officer for both Navitas and Iinet.
Nuheara fell 0.05 cents or 1.3 percent to 3.85 cents with 1.7 million shares traded.

INVION

Invion says chief operating officer Craig Newton will begin his role as chief executive officer from November 1, 2019, starting on $280,000 a year (BD: Jul 22, 2019).
Invion said Mr Newton would receive a base salary of $280,000, not including statutory superannuation, and would be eligible for a short-term incentive bonus of up to 30 percent of his annual salary, pending performance.
The company said Mr Newton would receive 13,628,807 options, expiring on February 12, 2023, exercisable at no less than 150 percent of the share price on the day of issue and vesting over four years from December 1, 2019.
Invion said that chief executive officer Dr Greg Collier would continue as a non-executive director from October 31, 2019.
Invion was unchanged at 1.3 cents.