Biotech Daily

Thursday March 5, 2020

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

*** ASX, BIOTECH UP: IMPEDIMED UP 16%; ONCOSIL DOWN 8%**

*** WEHI: WM382 KILLS DRUG RESISTANT MALARIA PARASITE IN MICE**

*** AVITA ENROLS 1st RECELL PAEDIATRIC SCALD TRIAL PATIENT**

*** ATOMO $30m IPO FOR HIV PROFESSIONAL, SELF TESTS IPO**

*** MICRO-X $1m DRX REVOLUTION NANO ORDERS; COVID-19**

*** COGSTATE CLAIMS $9.1m CLINICAL TRIAL CONTRACTS IN 2 MONTHS**

*** MEDADVISOR: $825k FROM 2 US PATIENT PROGRAMS**

*** RESPIRI RECEIVES 1st 500 WHEEZO ASTHMA DEVICES**

*** MEDLAB REQUESTS 'NANABIS CANCER RESULTS' TRADING HALT**

*** SIMAVITA: DUSSMAN DILUTED TO 19.9%, CHEVRON 14%, HEGGIN 6%**

*** MEDICAL DEVELOPMENTS TO LOSE 10-YEAR CEO JOHN SHARMAN**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market recovered 1.11 percent on Thursday March 5, 2020, with the ASX200 up 70.3 points to 6,395.7 points. Twenty-three of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 10 fell and seven traded unchanged. All three Big Caps were up.

Impedimed was the best, up 1.3 cents or 16.05 percent to 9.4 cents with 1.7 million shares traded. Uscom climbed 15.7 percent; Alterity was up 14.3 percent; Proteomics rose 10.9 percent; Neuren was up 9.0 percent; Imugene improved 8.7 percent; Amplia climbed 7.6 percent; Cynata, Opthea and Universal Biosensors climbed more than six percent; Osprey and Telix were up more than five percent; Kazia and Resmed improved more than four percent; CSL, Ellex and Resonance were up more than three percent; Avita, Cyclopharm, Nanosonics, Pharmaxis, Prescient and Starpharma rose two percent or more; Orthocell was up 1.5 percent; with Cochlear and Volpara up by less than one percent.

Oncosil led the falls, down one cent or eight percent to 11.5 cents, with 3.9 million shares traded. Medical Developments lost 6.5 percent; Antisense fell 5.1 percent; Clinuvel and LBT were down more than four percent; Actinogen Mesoblast and Paradigm were down three percent or more; Pro Medicus shed 2.5 percent; with Genetic Signatures down 1.4 percent.

THE WALTER AND ELIZA HEALTH INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute says it has developed anti-malarial compounds that effectively kill malaria parasites and overcome parasite drug resistance in mice.
The Institute said pre-clinical testing showed that the compounds targeted a previously unexplored parasite pathway and were effective against different species of malaria parasites, including Plasmodium falciparum, and at multiple stages of the parasite lifecycle.
WEHI said the lead compound WM382 targeted two crucial enzymes in the malaria parasite and blocked their function, killing the parasite.
The Institute's deputy director Prof Alan Cowman said WM382 killed malaria parasites in the blood and liver and prevented parasites in the blood from being transmitted to mosquitos.
"This novel class of compounds has the potential to not only cure people with malaria, but also prevent transfer of the parasite to the mosquito and, consequently, halt further transmission of the disease," Prof Cowman said.
"This is an exciting prospect, as current anti-malarial drugs kill the malaria parasite in the blood but do not fully prevent transmission," Prof Cowman said.
"In pre-clinical testing, malaria parasites that were resistant to the lethal effects of current anti-malarial drugs were fully susceptible to WM382," Prof Cowman said.
"It is also very difficult to induce resistance to this compound in malaria parasites in the lab," Prof Cowman said.
WEHI said researchers hoped drugs based on these early compounds would soon enter phase I clinical trials.
The Institute said the research collaboration with Merck Sharp and Dohme, titled 'Dual Plasmepsin-Targeting Antimalarial Agents Disrupt Multiple Stages of the Malaria Parasite Life Cycle', was published in Cell Host and Microbe and was available at: https://www.cell.com/cell-host-microbe/fulltext/S1931-3128(20)30113-X.

AVITA MEDICAL

Avita says it has enrolled the first of 160 patients aged one to 16 years of age in its 52-week prospective, multi-centre, pivotal trial of Recell for paediatric scald injuries.
Avita said patients would be enrolled at the Phoenix, Arizona-based Valleywise Medical Health Centre's Arizona Burn Centre to compare the use of Recell to standard wound dressing and autografting.
The company said the primary endpoint was to show that the use of Recell spray-on skin to treat partial thickness burn injuries within 72 hours increased healing at day 10 compared to standard wound dressing.
Avita said that a clinician blinded to the treatment allocation would assess the effects of both treatments on time to heal, incidence of conventional autografting, pain, itching, scarring, health-related quality of life and resource utilization.
The company said the study would have an adaptive study design and it would conduct an interim analysis.
Avita chief executive officer Dr Mike Perry said the "immediate treatment of scald injuries in paediatric patients represents a shift in thinking as surgeons currently favor a delayed approach to avoid the additional trauma associated with conventional skin grafting".
"With the commencement of this pivotal trial, we intend to demonstrate that treatment with the Recell system within the first three days of a pediatric burn improves healing and decreases the need for autografting," Dr Perry said.
Avita was up 1.5 cents or 2.4 percent to 63.5 cents with 30.5 million shares traded.

ATOMO DIAGNOSTICS

Atomo says it hopes to raise up to $30 million at 20 cents a share to list on the ASX and commercialize its HIV professional and self-tests.
Atomo said it supplied devices for the rapid testing of blood by professional users and consumers to detect and test for infectious diseases, chronic health conditions and consumer wellness.
The company said its first commercialized rapid test screened for HIV infection, and both the self-test and professional test had Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) approval and European Conformité Européenne (CE) mark approval.
Atomo said its revenue came primarily from product sales through third-party distributors, including Mylan NV and Owen Mumford, which allowed it to access large markets without extensive sales and marketing expenditures.
The company said it also had long-term device supply agreements to sell its devices to international diagnostic companies that commercialized the devices with their own diagnostic tests.
Atomo said it currently had 310,598,986 shares and 23,469,632 options on issue and a $30 million capital raising would value the company at $80,310,000.
The company said the proceeds from the offer would be used to accelerate its expansion and development activities, reduce debt, for administration costs and for working capital.
The company said the offer would open on March 12, 2020 with minimum investments of $2,000 and would close on March 30.
Atomo said its board comprised of chairman John Keith, managing-director John Kelly and non-executive directors Connie Carnabuci, Curt LaBelle and Paul Kasian.
The company said the management team included Mr Kelly, chief financial officer William Souter, chief operating officer Mark Smith and chief commercial officer Fabio Baglioni.
Atomo said Canaccord Genuity Australia was lead manager to the offer and it expected to list on the ASX on April 16, 2020.
The prospectus is at: https://events.miraqle.com/atomo-IPO/country-validation/.
Atomo is a public unlisted company.

MICRO-X

Micro-X says it has an additional $1.0 million in orders of its Carestream DRX Revolution Nano by an unnamed buyer.
Micro-X said the order took the current quarter sales to a total of $1.8 million and the additional orders would be delivered to Asia and Europe within four weeks.
The company said the end customer use was not specified, but “due to the size and urgency of the orders, some of these Nano units are to be deployed in connection with the ongoing Covid-19 [coronavirus] epidemic”.
Micro-X was up 1.5 cents or 8.8 percent to 18.5 cents with 10.8 million shares traded.

COGSTATE

Cogstate says that it has written $9.1 million in clinical trial contracts in the two months from January 1, 2020, following $26.9 million for the six months to December 31, 2019.
In its half yearly report, Cogstate said that revenue for the six months to December 31, 2019 was $US9,699,164 ($A14,711,303.99) and included $US8,252,878 ($A12,476,700.96) in clinical trials revenue, down 24.8 percent on the six months to December 31, 2018 (BD: Feb 26, 2020).
Cogstate was up 10.5 cents or 27.3 percent to 49 cents.

MEDADVISOR

Medadvisor says two US pilot patient engagement programs are expected to begin by July 2020 and return about $825,000 in revenue over 12 months.

Medadvisor said the programs, with unnamed partners, would allow pharmaceutical companies to reach patients with its health interventions, educate patients and improve "adherence to lift patient outcomes".

The company said that three pharmaceutical companies in Malaysia and the Philippines had agreed to conduct pilot digital adherence programs through its Zuellig Pharma joint venture.

Medadvisor said it was on track to deliver a UK pharmacy product and application through its Day Lewis deal.

The company said that in Australia it had added two new pharmaceutical companies for a total of 18 companies using its health program delivery.

Medadvisor was up one cent or 2.7 percent to 37.5 cents.

RESPIRI

Respiri says Sydney's SRX Global has delivered the first batch of 500 Wheezos asthma tests, with 95 percent passing compliance testing.

Respiri said the units would be used in a patient and clinician experiential program planned to begin by July 2020 to provide clinicians and patients access to its Wheezo electronic health 'software-as-a-service' platform and to gain data and insights for a commercial launch by the end of the year.

Respiri was up 0.4 cents or 5.7 percent to 7.4 cents.

MEDLAB CLINICAL

Medlab has requested a trading halt "pending an announcement in relation to the release of the results from the Nanabis advanced cancer pain trial".

Trading will resume on March 9, 2020 or on an earlier announcement.

Medlab last traded at 22.5 cents.

SIMAVITA

Simavita says that the Dussman Group's 102,019,031 shareholding has been diluted from 24.62 percent to 19.91 percent.

Simavita said the Dussman Group was diluted in the $2.9 million private placement at 2.0 cents per Chess depository interest (CDI) (BD: Feb 26, 2020).

Simavita fell 0.1 cents or 5.6 percent to 1.7 cents.

SIMAVITA

Simavita says that the Chevron Corp has increased its substantial shareholding in from 52,178,317 shares (12.59%) to 72,178,317 shares (14.08%).

SIMAVITA

Simavita says that Daniel Hegglin has become a substantial shareholder with 32,633,333 shares or 6.37 percent of the company.

MEDICAL DEVELOPMENTS INTERNATIONAL

Medical Developments says chief executive officer John Sharman has resigned “to pursue other business interests”.

Medical Developments said Mr Sharman had been with the company for almost 10 years and would remain for at least three months to assist with the transition.

Medical Developments chairman David Williams thanked Mr Sharman “for his outstanding leadership and significant contribution to the company over the last 10 years”.

The company said that it had begun a search for a new chief executive officer.

Medical Developments fell 55 cents or 6.5 percent to $7.96 with 569,489 shares traded.