



Biotech Daily

Monday April 27, 2020

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH UP: MESOBLAST UP 41%; ALTERITY DOWN 10%**
- * **IMUGENE TO START PHASE I VAXINIA, PD1-VAXX TRIALS THIS YEAR**
- * **TELIX, OSAKA DEVELOP 2nd GENERATION TLX101 FOR CANCERS**
- * **IMMUTEP REQUESTS PLACEMENT TRADING HALT**
- * **MEDADVISOR LAUNCHES TELEHEALTH, HOME DELIVERY SERVICE**
- * **HERAMED: FDA ALLOWS HERABEAT SALES AMID COVID-19**
- * **OVENTUS CLAIMS COVID-19 BENEFITS SALES; 6 NEW SITES**
- * **AUSTRALIA, JAPAN ALLOW CELLMID ÉVOLIS PATENT FOR ALOPECIA**
- * **TASMANIAN ALKALOIDS SUPPLIES MARIJUANA TO AVECHO**
- * **AUSTRALIAN ETHICAL REDUCES TO 12% OF ANTISENSE**
- * **ELIXINOL CEO OLIVER HORN STARTS ON \$395k**
- * **IMMURON DIRECTORS CASH CUT, REPLACED WITH SHARES**
- * **AVECHO APPOINTS DR PAUL GAVIN CEO, DR ROKSAN LIBINAKI COO**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 1.5 percent on Monday April 27, 2020, with the ASX200 up 78.8 points to 5,321.4 points. Twenty of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 10 fell, nine traded unchanged and one was untraded. All three Big Caps were up.

Mesoblast was the best, for the second trading day in a row, up \$1.12 or 41.0 percent to \$3.85, with 34.6 million shares traded. Prescient and Starpharma climbed more than 11 percent; Medical Developments was up 9.2 percent; Next Science rose seven percent; Compumedics and Neuren were up more than six percent; Clinuvel was up 5.3 percent; Ellex, Imugene, Pro Medicus and Resonance improved more than four percent; Cochlear, CSL, Nanosonics, Optiscan, Orthocell, Polynovo and Telix rose more than two percent; Avita, Kazia and Resmed were up one percent or more; with Opthea up 0.4 percent.

Alterity led the falls, down 0.2 cents or 10 percent to 1.8 cents, with 48,885 shares traded. Uscom lost 7.1 percent; Patrys and Proteomics were down more than six percent; Cyclopharm was down 5.6 percent; Actinogen and LBT fell more than four percent; with Dimerix, Pharmaxis and Volpara down more than two percent.

IMUGENE

Imugene says it plans to begin phase I trials of Vaxinia for mixed advanced solid tumors and PD1-Vaxx for non-small cell lung cancer by the end of 2020.

Imugene chief executive officer Leslie Chong told Biotech Daily that the trial of its oncolytic virus Vaxinia, or CF33-hNIS, would enrol up to 120 patients and the PD1-Vaxx, or IMU-201, trial would enrol up to 32 patients, with both expected to begin “in the second half” of the year.

Last year, the company acquired the Duarte, California-based City of Hope’s CF33 oncolytic virus technology through related company Vaxinia for \$462,500 in cash and \$1,619,000 in shares (BD: Jul 15, Nov 18, 2019).

Today, Imugene said that the phase I, multi-centre, dose escalation study of Vaxinia would investigate intra-tumoral and intravenous administration lines as monotherapy and in combination with immune checkpoint inhibitors in patients with advanced or metastatic melanoma, non-small cell lung, triple-negative breast, bladder, head and neck, gastric, colorectal and renal cell cancers.

The company said the primary endpoints were to determine safety and recommended phase II doses, with efficacy and immune responses to be measured.

Imugene said the phase I, multi-centre, dose escalation study of PD1-Vaxx would test different doses of PD1-Vaxx in patients with non-small cell lung cancer as monotherapy and in combination with immune checkpoint inhibitors.

The company said the primary endpoints were to determine safety and an optimal biological dose, with efficacy, tolerability and immune responses to be measured.

Imugene was up 0.1 cents or 4.35 percent to 2.4 cents with 4.3 million shares traded.

TELIX PHARMACEUTICALS

Telix says that with Osaka University it has developed “second-generation variants of TLX101” or 131-iodo-phenylalanine (131I-IPA) for cancer therapy.

Last year, Telix said that five of six trial sites were open and recruiting for both single and multi-dose cohorts of its phase I/II trial of TLX101 with radiotherapy for recurrent glioblastoma, with a mid-2020 readout for US Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency consultations (BD: Jan 19, 2020).

Today, Telix said the radiochemistry technology was the outcome of a 2018 collaboration with Osaka University, which enabled the production of TLX101 with high production efficiency as well as Astatine-211 variants, which might be suitable for other cancer indications.

The company said the research was funded by Telix and a grant from the Japan Science and Technology Agency’s Open Innovation Platform with Enterprises, Research Institutes and Academia (Opera) program.

Telix said Astatine-211 was a high energy alpha emitter and a promising radio-isotope for the development of new molecularly targeted radiation drugs, due to its short range in tissue of “a few cells deep” and its minimal effect on healthy tissues adjacent to cancer cells.

Telix Japan president Dr Shintaro Nishimura said that the radiochemistry was “a very significant result from the Opera program and I believe that Osaka University is very well placed to lead the clinical evaluation of astatinated radiopharmaceuticals in the future”.

Telix was up 2.5 cents or 2.3 percent to \$1.125 with 1.6 million shares traded.

[IMMUTEP](#)

Immutep has requested a trading halt pending “an announcement ... in relation to a proposed capital raising ... by way of an institutional placement”. Trading will resume April 29, 2020 or on an earlier announcement. Immutep last traded at 17.5 cents.

[MEDADVISOR](#)

Medadvisor says its telehealth general practitioner GP Link and on-demand pharmacy home delivery services have been launched in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney.

Last month, Medadvisor said it would launch a telehealth service and a no-contact pharmaceutical product delivery service to provide medical consultations and provide medication scripts to patients at home (BD: Mar 26, 31, 2020).

Today, the company said that about 1,000 pharmacies were offering delivery to Medadvisor patients and more than 3,000 delivery requests had come from patients in the past two weeks, with 9,000 items delivered.

Medadvisor was up 2.5 cents or 6.0 percent to 44 cents.

[HERAMED](#)

Heramed says the US Food and Drug Administration has allowed the sale of its Herabeat foetal heartrate monitor in the US in response to the Covid-19 crisis.

Heramed said that the FDA had released updated guidance notes “for the use of non-invasive foetal and maternal monitoring devices used to support patient monitoring during Covid-19” which included Herabeat.

The company said that the FDA believed that the guidelines would “help address public health concerns by helping expand the availability and capability of non-invasive foetal and maternal monitoring devices”.

Heramed was up half a cent or 4.2 percent to 12.5 cents.

[OVENTUS MEDICAL](#)

Oventus says the Covid-19 pandemic has increased interest in its sleep apnoea devices and it is launching six North American laboratory-inside-a-laboratory sites.

Last year, Oventus said its laboratory-inside-a-laboratory or ‘lab in lab’ business model used “a scanner to measure the patient’s mouth size for a custom-fit for the O2vent” for sleep apnoea (BD: Jun 24, 2019).

Today, the company said that two of the sites would be in Canada, taking the total number of Canadian sites to 45, with the other four sites in the US for a total of 18 US sites.

Oventus said that interest in its oral devices for obstructive sleep apnoea had increased due to concerns over the potential for continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) devices to spread Covid-19 “through aerosol droplets”.

The company said that the American Academy of Sleep Medicine had issued a warning that CPAP machines “may aerosolize the virus when the patient exhales ... [and] anyone who is in the room with the person using the device could be at increased risk of contracting Covid-19”.

Oventus chief executive officer Dr Chris Hart said that “as the literature continues to highlight that CPAP may contribute to Covid-19 spread, effective alternative [obstructive sleep apnoea] treatments are being sought”.

Oventus was up one cent or 3.6 percent to 28.5 cents with 1.1 million shares traded.

CELLMID

Cellmid says the Australian Patent Office and the Japanese Patent Office have allowed patents for its alopecia treatment Évolis.

Cellmid said that the patents, titled 'Method of treatment of Alopecia with Monoterpenoids', provided intellectual property protection until December 12, 2034. The company said that the patent covered the method of "administering a topical formulation containing monoterpenoid to inhibit the hair growth cycle regulatory protein fibroblast growth factor-5", which has been associated with the disruption of the hair cycle, followed by follicle rest and hair loss.

Cellmid said it had patent approvals for Évolis in Europe and China.

Cellmid was up half a cent or 2.2 percent to 23 cents with 1.4 million shares traded.

AVECHO BIOTECHNOLOGY (FORMERLY PHOSPHAGENICS)

Avecho says Tasmanian Alkaloids will supply medical marijuana products to combine with its tocopheryl phosphate mixture (TMP) vitamin-E technology.

Avecho said it would investigate how its TPM technology might increase oral absorption of cannabinoids from Tasmanian Alkaloids' products.

The company said that it agreed to purchase Tasmanian Alkaloid marijuana products when the process was commercialized.

Avecho said the supply agreement added to the agreement with the Athens, Georgia-based Purysis for the supply of pharmaceutical grade synthetic marijuana to combine with TPM to develop new oral cannabidiol products (BD: Apr 14, 2020).

Avecho executive chairman Dr Greg Collier said that "as the use of natural cannabis extracts expand, the lack of differentiation between products is already becoming apparent".

"Avecho's TPM may offer a unique solution, with the potential for patent protection, for companies striving to better differentiate their own medicinal cannabis product in this already busy market place," Dr Collier said.

Tasmanian Alkaloids chief operations officer Doug Blackaby said that "if TPM is confirmed to increase the oral absorption of cannabinoids, it could become a unique vitamin-based offering, sold by [Tasmanian Alkaloids] or our clients, to better differentiate our partner's cannabinoid resin or isolate products".

Avecho was up 0.2 cents or 33.3 percent to 0.8 cents with 42.6 million shares traded.

ANTISENSE THERAPEUTICS

Australian Ethical Investment says it has reduced its substantial shareholding in Antisense from 66,188,722 shares (13.54%) to 60,816,309 shares (12.44%).

The Sydney-based Australian Ethical said that between April 14 and 22, 2020 it sold 5,372,413 shares for \$263,788 or an average of 4.9 cents a share.

Antisense was unchanged at 4.9 cents.

ELIXINOL GLOBAL

Elixinol says recently appointed chief executive officer Oliver Horn will start on \$395,000 a year including superannuation (BD: Apr 21, 2020).

Elixinol said Mr Horn would be eligible for short-term incentives of up to 25 percent of his total base salary, and long-term incentives at the board's discretion.

Elixinol was up one cent or 2.7 percent to 38 cents.

IMMURON

Immuron says directors' fee will be suspended and replaced with company shares "for the foreseeable future" to preserve the company's cash position.

Immuron said that directors would be issued up to \$250,000 worth of shares, with an issue price of eight cents each, the five-day volume weights average price to March 25, 2020.

The company said it would distribute a pool of 9,000,000 unlisted options among directors, with an exercise price of 12 cents each within 48 months of the issue date, subject to shareholder approval.

Immuron was unchanged at 9.8 cents.

AVECHO BIOTECHNOLOGY (FORMERLY PHOSPHAGENICS)

Avecho says it had appointed Dr Paul Gavin as chief executive officer and Dr Roksan Libinaki as chief operations officer, effective from May 1, 2020.

Avecho said Dr Gavin joined the company in 2002, was appointed chief scientific officer in 2012, and was one of the inventors of the company's tocopheryl phosphate mixture (TPM) vitamin-E delivery technology.

The company said Dr Gavin held a Bachelor of Science and a Doctor of Philosophy from Melbourne's Monash University.

The company said Dr Libinaki had been with the company since 2001 and was the general manager of animal health and production.

Avecho said Dr Libinaki held a Bachelor of Science, a Doctor of Philosophy and a Master of Business Administration from Monash University.

The company said that executive chairman Dr Greg Collier would resume his role as non-executive chairman from May 1, 2020.