Biotech Daily

Thursday August 13, 2020

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

*** ASX DOWN, BIOTECH UP: MESOBLAST UP 10%; IMMUTEP DOWN 5%**

*** QBIOTICS, MERCK EBC46, KEYTRUDA MELANOMA TRIAL**

*** PHARMAXIS REVENUE UP 12% TO $7.4m, LOSS DOWN 31% TO $14m**

*** OSPREY WINS CE MARK FOR DYEVERT POWER XT**

*** IMAGION PLEADS SCHULTZ TO ASX 29% QUERY**

*** PHARMAXIS 942k CEO PERFORMANCE RIGHTS FOR AGM**

*** BIO-MELBOURNE: 'MANUFACTURING'S COVID-19 RAPID RESPONSE'**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market fell 0.67 percent on Thursday August 13, 2020, with the ASX200 down 41.0 points to 6,091.0 points.

Nineteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 17 fell and four traded unchanged.

Mesoblast was the best, ahead of tonight's US FDA meeting, up 31 cents or 10.1 percent to $3.38, with 22.2 million shares traded (BD: Aug 11, 2020).

Amplia, Osprey and Patrys climbed eight percent or more; Optiscan was up 6.25 percent; Cyclopharm improved 5.7 percent; Dimerix, Next Science, Proteomics were up four percent or more; Genetic Signatures, Medical Developments, Opthea and Uscom rose more than two percent; Avita, Compumedics and Polynovo were up more than one percent; with Clinuvel, Nanosonics, Pro Medicus and Resmed up less than one percent.

Immutep led the falls, down one cent or 5.3 percent to 18 cents, with 1.6 million shares traded.

Kazia, Oncosil and Prescient fell more than four percent; Alterity, LBT and Universal Biosensors were down more than three percent; Actinogen Impedimed and Neuren shed more than two percent; Antisense, CSL, Imugene, Paradigm and Starpharma were down one percent or more; with Cochlear, Cynata, Telix and Volpara down by less than one percent.

QBIOTICS GROUP

Qbiotics says it has an agreement with Merck & Co for an up-to 25 patient study of its EB46, or tigilanol tiglate, combined with Merck's Keytruda for unresectable melanoma.
Qbiotics chief executive officer Dr Victoria Gordon told Biotech Daily that the Sydney-based Merck Sharp & Dohme, the Australian subsidiary of the Kenilworth, New Jersey-based Merck & Co would supply pembrolizumab, or Keytruda, for the phase I/II, open label, dose escalation and expansion study.
The company said it would recruit patients with unresectable melanoma patients who had received with prior exposure to immune checkpoint inhibitors.
Qbiotics said that the primary endpoint was determining the maximum tolerated dose or maximum feasible dose of the combination therapy.
The company said the secondary endpoints included assessing tumor responses in both injected tumors and non-injected tumors, as well as clinical efficacy parameters. Qbiotics said tigilanol tiglate was a small molecule administered by intra-tumoral injection directly into the solid tumor mass, which triggered rapid, but highly localized, inflammatory responses, increased permeability and destruction of tumor vascular endothelium, and rapid tumor cell death.
Dr Gordon said that patients with unresectable melanoma who had prior checkpoint inhibitors "currently have limited effective treatment options".
"Through this program we hope to see that when combined, tigilanol tiglate and Keytruda may produce additive anti-tumor immune responses, and improve outcomes for patients," Dr Gordon said.
"This study follows on from encouraging phase I data where tigilanol tiglate as a monotherapy showed a 27 percent treatment response rate, including an 18 percent complete response with full tumor destruction across a wide variety of solid tumor types," Dr Gordon said.
Qbiotics is a public unlisted company.

PHARMAXIS

Pharmaxis says "total revenue" for the year to June 30, 2019 was down 0.39 percent to $13,029,000 with loss down 30.5 percent to $13,943,000.
Excluding Government grants and the Federal Government Research and Development Tax Incentive, Pharmaxis said its income from the sale of goods and bank interest was up 12.2 percent from $6,585,000 to $7,391,000.
The company said that revenue from sales of its lung function test Aridol for asthma and its inhaled dry powder Bronchitol for cystic fibrosis were up 23.8 percent to $7,027,000 compared to the previous corresponding period.
Pharmaxis said that Bronchitol sales were up 105.2 percent from $2,564,000 to $5,262,000, while sales of Aridol fell 43.3 percent to $1,765,000.
On page 41 of its 64-page preliminary final report, Pharmaxis said that bank interest fell 59,95 percent from $909,000 to $364,000 and "other income" included the Federal Research and Development Tax Incentive, down 13.5 percent from $5,962,000 to $5,159,000, a Federal Government "Covid-19 cash flow boost" for $50,000 and an unspecified "other" down 19.5 percent to $429,000.
Pharmaxis said that net tangible assets per share were down from 4.0 cents to zero cents, with diluted loss per share 3.5 cents compared to last year's 5.3 cents.
The company said it had cash and cash equivalents of $14,800,000 at June 30, 2020 compared to $31,124,000 at June 30, 2019.
Pharmaxis was unchanged at 10.5 cents with 1.6 million shares traded.

OSPREY MEDICAL

Osprey says it has Conformité Européenne (CE) mark approval for its second generation Dyevert Power XT device for automatic injection in imaging procedures.

Osprey said Dyevert reduced the amount of dye, or contrast, used during cardiac angiographic imaging procedures, lessening the patient's risk of dye-related kidney damage, known as contrast-induced acute kidney injury (CI-AKI), while maintaining image quality.

The company said it expected Dyevert Power XT to be a core product in the portfolio commercialized by GE Healthcare, its exclusive distributor in Europe, Russia, the Middle East, Africa, Central Asia and Turkey (BD: Jul 30, 2020).

Osprey chief executive officer Mike McCormick said the CE Mark was a “significant achievement as it ultimately enables Osprey to target the full coronary angiography market as our portfolio is now compatible with both automatic and manual injection methods”.

Osprey was up 0.3 cents or 8.6 percent to 3.8 cents with 34.4 million shares traded.

IMAGION BIOSYSTEMS

Imagion has told the ASX that it is not aware of any information it has not announced which, if known, could explain recent trading in its securities.

The ASX said the company’s share price rose 2.2 cents or 28.6 percent from a closing price of 7.7 cents yesterday, August 11, to a high of 9.9 cents on August 12, with a “significant increase” in the volume of securities traded between August 10 and 12.

Imagion fell two cents or 20.2 percent to 7.9 cents with 121.2 million shares traded.

PHARMAXIS

Pharmaxis says it will propose to issue 942,000 performance rights to chief executive officer Gary Phillips at its annual general meeting this year.

Pharmaxis said the rights would be issued pending corporate objectives in the 12 months to June 30, 2021 and would vest in equal tranches at June 30, 2022 and June 30, 2023, but any shares acquired could not be traded until June 30, 2023, pending board approval.

The company said shareholder approval would be sought at its annual general meeting.

BIO-MELBOURNE NETWORK

The Bio-Melbourne Network says it will host a forum titled ‘Made in Australia: Victoria’s Rapid Response to Manufacturing Demands During the Pandemic’.

The Network said the event would provide insight into the manufacturing sector’s “rapid response of in meeting demand for emergency ventilators, led by Grey Innovation”.

The Bio-Melbourne Network said the forum would include a broader discussion on Victoria’s advanced manufacturing capabilities.

The Network said the State Government of Victoria would sponsor the event, to be held on August 20, 2020 from 4pm to 5:30pm (AEST).

To register go to: https://bit.ly/2DDe6Vw.