



Biotech Daily

Monday March 29, 2021

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH DOWN: IMPEDIMED UP 9%; IMMUTEP DOWN 10%**
- * **CHRISTIAN PORTER MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY, SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY**
- * **CANN GROUP, ER YA TRADE IN HONG KONG COURT FOR \$3.5m**
- * **CYNATA EXPANDS STEM CELL ARDS TRIAL BEYOND COVID-19**
- * **ANTERIS: 'ADAPT TISSUE BEATS MEDTRONIC FOR CALCIFICATION'**
- * **USCOM: BP+ IN CHINA'S FINAL REVIEW PHASE**
- * **LIVING CELL ENDS PEPTIDE RESEARCH, PAYS AUCKLAND UNI \$366k**
- * **OVENTUS SIGNS INHOME AS 1st VGM APNOEA CONTRACT**
- * **CANN GROUP, EMYRIA PLAN FAST TGA O-T-C MARIJUANA**
- * **PHARMAUST'S EPICHEM JOINS WA BUSINESS PROGRAM**
- * **RESPIRI, KEVIN CHAN TRIAL ASTHMA TELEHEALTH PROGRAM**
- * **ALTHEA LAUNCHES CHEAPER 20ml 'FLEXI' MARIJUANA OIL PRODUCTS**
- * **CEO DR SEAN HALL DILUTED TO 18% OF MEDLAB**
- * **CHAIR MICHAEL HALL DILUTED BELOW 5% OF MEDLAB**
- * **DIRECTOR DREW TOWNSEND BELOW 5% OF MEDLAB**
- * **REGAL TAKES 6% OF ADHERIUM**
- * **MESOBLAST APPOINTS SURGCENTER PHILIP FACCHINA DIRECTOR**
- * **PYC APPOINTS JASON HADDOCK DIRECTOR**
- * **MARK COMPTON REPLACES NEXT SCIENCE CHAIR GEORGE SAVVIDES**
- * **SUDA APPOINTS PROF ANIL SOOD ADVISOR**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market fell 0.36 percent on Monday March 29, 2021, with the ASX200 down 24.7 points to 6,799.5 points. Fourteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 19 fell, six traded unchanged and one was untraded.

Impedimed was the best, up one cent or 8.7 percent to 12.5 cents, with 1.7 million shares traded. Dimerix climbed six percent; both Medical Developments and Prescient were up 4.8 percent; Starpharma was up 3.5 percent; Antisense, Optiscan, Resonance and Uscom rose more than two percent; Compumedics, Cyclopharm, Genetic Signatures, Nova and Orthocell were up one percent or more; with Resmed up by 0.8 percent.

Immutep led the falls, down 4.5 cents or 9.8 percent to 41.5 cents, with 5.4 million shares traded. Next Science, Osprey and Paradigm lost more than five percent; Actinogen and Imugene fell more than four percent; Alterity, Cynata, Opthea and Patrys were down three percent or more; Avita, Clinuvel, Mesoblast, Polynovo, Pro Medicus and Telix shed more than two percent; Proteomics and Volpara were down more than one percent; with Cochlear, CSL and Nanosonics down by less than one percent.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Prime Minister Scott Morrison has proposed demoting Attorney-General Christian Porter to the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, responsible for innovation. The Prime Minister's Office said that until the reshuffled Ministry was sworn-in by the Governor General, the Ministry list was "proposed" rather than confirmed.

The reshuffle follows a series of Government scandals, including Defence Minister Linda Reynolds' responses to allegations of a rape in her office and Mr Porter naming himself as the Cabinet Minister alleged to have raped a fellow teenager in 1988.

Mr Porter denies the accusations.

Greg Hunt continues as the Minister for Health and Aged Care.

The Prime Minister did not name a Minister or Assistant Minister for Innovation.

CANN GROUP

Cann Group says it has begun proceedings in the Hong Kong's High Court against Er Ya Trade Ltd to recover EUR2.25 million (\$A3.47 million).

Cann Group said that Er Ya Trade was a third party defendant incorporated in Hong Kong. In February, Cann Group said it had "a cyber security incident, involving an unknown third party" resulting in a \$3.6 million missing payment to an overseas contractor in relation to works for its Mildura facility, but "those payments have been received by an unknown third party as a result of a complex and sophisticated cyber fraud perpetrated against the company and its overseas contractor" (BD: Feb 8, 2021) (AVW: Feb 12, 2021).

Today, the company said an injunction had been granted by the Court to freeze certain assets of the defendant Er Ya Trade and to compel disclosure of ancillary information relating to assets held by it.

Cann Group said the court process was "likely to take between four and six months".

The company said there was "no guarantee that any amount will be awarded to Cann or funds ultimately recovered from the defendant through this process".

Cann Group fell two cents or 3.5 percent to 55 cents with 1.7 million shares traded.

CYNATA THERAPEUTICS

Cynata says it has ethics approval to expand recruitment criteria in its 24-patient, open-label, randomized, controlled trial of mesenchymal stem cells for Covid-19.

Cynata said it was approved to expand recruitment criteria from patients in intensive care with respiratory failure to include causes beyond Covid-19, such as influenza.

The company said the 'Mend' trial would investigate the early efficacy of Cymerus mesenchymal stem cells (MSCs) in patients with respiratory failure, who met the established criteria for acute respiratory distress syndrome (Ards).

Cynata said the trial expansion increased the pool of eligible patients and was expected to significantly accelerate recruitment.

The company said that the trial was initially designed to investigate the early efficacy of Cymerus mesenchymal stem cells in adults admitted to intensive care with Covid-19 and "in view of the current state of control of the Covid-19 pandemic in Australia, this expansion of recruitment criteria is expected to substantially increase the pool of potential subjects for the trial".

Cynata chief operating officer Dr Kilian Kelly said the expansion would "increase the number of patients eligible for recruitment into this trial, which is designed to investigate the potential benefits of our MSCs in treating these severely ill patients".

Cynata fell two cents or 3.2 percent to 61 cents.

ANTERIS TECHNOLOGIES (FORMERLY ADMEDUS)

Anteris says a 48-rat comparison study shows that its Duravr, three-dimensional, single piece aortic valve has 38 percent less calcification than its main competitor.

In 2020, the then Admedus said it had begun the study to compare its Adapt treatment anti-calcification properties for cow and pig heart valve substitutes (BD: May 19, 2020).

In November, the company said juvenile rats were implanted with four samples of Adapt-treated and Medtronic amino oleic acid (AOA)-treated tissues and were compared to a control over four months or half of the study length (BD: Nov 10, 2020).

Anteris said interim results showed that Adapt-treated tissue had 40 percent less calcium concentration compared to the AOA arms of the study.

Today, the company said that its Adapt-treated tissue had about 38 percent less calcium concentration compared with the Medtronic AOA porcine arm tissue, used in commercially available trans-catheter aortic heart valves, and 26 percent less calcium in the bovine tissue in some of the Medtronic surgical aortic valve replacements.

Anteris said the geometric mean calcium content for Adapt was significantly less than AOA bovine ($p = 0.007$) and significantly less for AOA porcine ($p < 0.001$).

Anteris chief executive officer Wayne Paterson said the findings "clearly demonstrated the superior performance of the Adapt tissue engineered process as an anti-calcification technology against some of the top competitors in the marketplace".

Anteris was up four cents or 03 percent to \$12.94.

USCOM

Uscom says its BP+ non-invasive blood pressure monitor is in the final review phase of China's National Medical Products Administration regulatory approval.

Uscom said it has not received any requests for additional documents after its final submission on March 17, 2021 and expected the final approval between April and August, this year.

Uscom was up half a cent or 2.9 percent to 17.5 cents.

LIVING CELL TECHNOLOGIES

Living Cell says it will terminate its work on peptides effective from March 25, 2021 and pay the University of Auckland \$NZ400,000 (\$A366,148) for the work done.

Living Cell said it was developing pre-clinical candidates of lipidated calcitonin gene-related peptides and lipidated pramlintide peptide compounds for treating migraine and obesity, respectively, but the projects were terminated as endpoints were not met.

Living Cell was unchanged at 1.4 cents with 2.2 million shares traded.

OVENTUS MEDICAL

Oventus says it has signed the first contract under its agreement with the Waterloo, Iowa-based VGM & Associates, with Inhome Oxygen and Medical Equipment.

Oventus said the Reading, Pennsylvania-based Inhome was a member of VGM and had “a full line of durable medical equipment and oxygen rental services, including respiratory care for the treatment of sleep apnoea”.

Last year, Oventus said it had an initial one-year marketing agreement with VGM to provide its devices to member organizations (BD: Nov 23, 2020).

Today, the company said that Inhome could offer sleep apnoea patients its O2Vent therapy as an alternative and would market Oventus O2Vent Optima sleep treatment devices as the preferred oral appliance therapy.

Oventus said that potential patients would be able to visit an Inhome store physically, online or over the telephone and schedule a telehealth consultation followed by dentist guided at-home telehealth impression and device delivery consultations.

The company said that custom-fit devices would be shipped within two to three weeks to the patient’s home.

Oventus chief executive officer Dr Chris Hart said the company was “very excited to be launching Inhome Oxygen and Medical as the first VGM member to adopt our innovative telehealth homecare delivery model, which is enabling more patients than ever to be able to benefit from Oventus airway technology”.

Oventus was up one cent or 5.3 percent to 20 cents.

CANN GROUP, EMYRIA

Cann Group and Emyria say they will seek “accelerated registration” of a low-dose, cannabidiol-only capsule from the Therapeutic Goods Administration.

The companies said the successful registration of the product as a schedule three medicine would result in an “over-the-counter, pharmacist-only” cannabidiol medicine.

Cann Group and Emyria said that under the agreement Emyria’s EMD-003 drug development program would use Cann Group’s Gelpell micro-sphere technology as the basis for the schedule three registration for treating unmet needs in mental health.

Last month, Cann Group said it would buy Satipharm for \$C4 million in scrip, with the acquisition providing rights to the Gelpell technology (BD: Feb 15, 2021).

Today, Cann Group said it would incorporate the technology and manufacturing at its facility under construction near Mildura, while Emyria would lead the registration program.

Emyria was up half a cent or 2.9 percent to 18 cents with 1.9 million shares traded.

PHARMAUST

Pharmaust says wholly-owned subsidiary Epichem has been accepted into Western Australia's Quantum Technology Exchange Cross Sector Acceleration program.

Last week, Pharmaust said Epichem would develop waste to fuel technology with Thermaquatica's oxidative hydro-thermal dissolution (OHD) technology and combine it with biomass or feedstock "flow-reactor material science" (BD: Mar 23, 2021).

Today, Epichem chief executive officer Colin La Galia said the extra support would "help us with the scale up of our OHD project and other Epichem projects".

Pharmaust was unchanged at 10 cents with 1.3 million shares traded.

RESPIRI

Respiri says it is working with Dr Kevin Chan to trial a telehealth and remote management program for providing asthma support to patients.

Respiri said the program would bring together its Wheezo asthma monitor, a respiratory specialist, primary care provider and its connected care nurse team to provide a remote, ambulatory care service for patients with moderate to severe persistent asthma.

The company said the patients would be charged a fee for access to the program and their clinical information would be uploaded regularly for review.

Respiri chief executive officer Marjan Mikel said the program was a "fantastic opportunity to trial Wheezo with ... fee-paying patients in a clinical setting and will allow us to use real-world data to establish a scalable patient pathway that aims to improve the lives of asthma sufferers across Australia and very importantly provide us with the basis of the patient model and program for the US prescription or reimbursement market".

Respiri was unchanged at 16 cents with 1.5 million shares traded.

ALTHEA GROUP HOLDINGS

Althea says it has launched a range of 20ml marijuana oil products providing a cheaper option to try the treatment.

Althea said the smaller unit sizes could be used in the two to three week "titration period" to determine if the treatment was beneficial to the patients.

The company said it expected patients to experience positive outcomes from the medication and transition to "more economical on a price per [millilitre] basis larger sized bottle".

Althea chief executive officer Joshua Fegan said "we understand that price remains a challenge for many potential new patients that want to trial medicinal cannabis for their conditions."

"We believe the launch of the new Althea 'flexi' 20ml cannabis oil range will be a great way to provide more access to patients via trial size products," Mr Fegan said.

Althea did not disclose the prices of its 20ml bottles, nor its existing products.

Althea fell one cent or 1.9 percent to 51 cents.

MEDLAB CLINICAL

Executive director Dr Sean Hall says his 58,425,555 Medlab shares have been diluted from 21.70 percent to 17.81 percent.

Earlier this month, Medlab said it had raised \$15 million in a placement at 24 cents a share (BD: Mar 19, 2021)

Medlab was unchanged at 25.5 cents.

MEDLAB CLINICAL

Medlab chairman Michael Hall says he has ceased his substantial shareholding following a dilution due to a placement (see above).

MEDLAB CLINICAL

Independent director Drew Anthony Townsend says he has ceased his substantial shareholding in Medlab following a dilution due to placement (see above).

ADHERIUM

Regal Funds Management says it has become a substantial shareholder in Adherium with 52,718,327 shares or 6.21 percent.

The Sydney-based Regal Funds said that on March 24, 2021 it acquired 52,718,327 shares for \$790,775 or 1.5 cents a share.

Earlier this month, the company said it had commitments to raise \$18 million at 1.5 cents a share (BD: Mar 18, 2021).

Adherium was unchanged at 1.6 cents with two million shares traded.

MESOBLAST

Mesoblast says it has appointed Surgcenter Development chief strategic officer Philip Facchina as a director.

Earlier this month, Mesoblast said it has agreements to raise \$US110 million (\$A141.8million) in a private placement at \$2.30 a share to the principals of the Towson, Maryland-based Surgcenter (BD: Mar 2, 2021).

Mesoblast said the Mr Facchina had more than 35 years' experience in corporate strategy, finance and business development in several industries including healthcare.

The company said Mr Facchina was previously a partner, co-portfolio manager and chief operating officer at Ramsey Asset Management, led the technology, media, and communications and healthcare investment banking groups at FBR Capital Markets and was an independent director for Vion Corp and Milltechfx.

Mesoblast fell six cents or 2.6 percent to \$2.22 with 2.3 million shares traded.

PYC THERAPEUTICS

PYC says it has appointed Jason Haddock as a director.

PYC said Mr Haddock had more than 20 years of financial, commercial and operational experience in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries.

The company said Mr Haddock was currently a director at Codiak Biosciences, and was previously the chief financial officer at Array Biopharma, held various roles including chief financial officer and chief operating officer at Bristol-Myers Squibb and was the chief financial officer at Archerdx.

PYC said Mr Haddock held a Bachelor of Science in accounting from Illinois State University and Master of Business Administration from Washington University in St. Louis.

The company said Mr Haddock would be issued 2.5 million options exercisable at 17 cents a share within three years and subject to shareholder approval would be issued a further 1.25 million options annually.

PYC fell half a cent or three percent to 16 cents with 1.5 million shares traded.

NEXT SCIENCE

Next Science says chair George Savvides will not seek re-election at its annual general meeting expected on May 5, 2021 and will be replaced by Mark Compton.

Next Science said Mr Savvides had been the chair for “nearly three years”.

Next Science fell eight cents or 5.9 percent to \$1.28.

SUDA PHARMACEUTICALS

Suda says it has appointed Prof Anil K Sood to its scientific advisory board for his expertise on platelets for its anagrelide program.

Suda said the Houston, Texas-based Prof Sood was the lead investigator in a study which described the role of platelets in ovarian cancer with relation to patient survival.

The company said it was developing anagrelide as an oral spray formulation to be used as an adjunct therapy for thrombocytosis, or elevated platelets, and metastatic disease.

Suda said Prof Sood was currently vice-chair for translational research at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, director of Blanton-Davis multi-disciplinary ovarian cancer research program and co-lead of ovarian cancer Moon Shot program.

The company said Prof Sood held a Doctor of Medicine from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Suda was up 0.1 cent or 2.3 percent to 4.4 cents.