



Biotech Daily

Wednesday April 14, 2021

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH UP: NEXT SCIENCE UP 13%; ANTISENSE DOWN 13%**
- * **RMIT: BLACK PHOSPHORUS KILLS BACTERIA, FUNGI**
- * **PHARMAXIS \$4.4m PLACEMENT**
- * **GEN PAYS PHARMAXIS \$2m FOR RUSSIAN BRONCHITOL RIGHTS**
- * **PARADIGM DOSES 1st PHASE IIb PPS OSTEOARTHRITIS PATIENT**
- * **TELEX: TGA STARTS ILLUCCIX (TLX591-CDX) PRIORITY REVIEW**
- * **UNIVERSAL BIO: SINGULARITY SENTIA WINE TEST CHILE DISTRIBUTOR**
- * **IMEX 142k FREE CEO, DIRECTORS' OPTIONS AGM**
- * **ALCIDION REQUESTS 'ACQUISITION, CAPITAL RAISING' TRADING HALT**
- * **STEMCELL UNITED REQUESTS 'PLACEMENT' TRADING HALT**
- * **CRESO, CANNABIS QUEEN BILATERAL DISTRIBUTION DEAL**
- * **DR TRACEY MYNOTT, MYENG REDUCE TO 5% OF ANATARA**
- * **APEIRON, CHRISTIAN ANGERMAYER TAKES 12% OF BIONOMICS**
- * **PETER MERCOURIS TO REPLACE IQ3 DIRECTOR MONIKA PAWEL**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.66 percent on Wednesday April 14, 2021, with the ASX200 up 46.2 points to 7,023.1 points. Twenty-one of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 11 fell and eight traded unchanged. All three Big Caps were up.

Next Science was the best, up 19 cents or 13.2 percent to \$1.63, with 545,192 shares traded. Osprey climbed 10.5 percent; Universal Biosensors was up 7.35 percent; Pharmaxis and Polynovo were up more than six percent; Pro Medicus rose 5.3 percent; Medical Developments improved 4.2 percent; Alterity and Nanosonics were up more than three percent; Clinuvel, Cochlear, Compumedics, CSL, Dimerix, Genetic Signatures, Immutep, Nova, Proteomics and Resmed were up one percent or more; with Avita, Cyclopharm, Mesoblast, Opthea and Telix up by less than one percent.

Antisense led the falls, down three cents or 12.8 percent to 20.5 cents, with 7.6 million shares traded. Amplia and Patrys lost more than eight percent; Kazia fell 5.85 percent; Neuren was down 3.9 percent; Optiscan, Paradigm and Resonance shed two percent or more; Cynata and LBT lost more than one percent; with Starpharma down 0.8 percent.

ROYAL MELBOURNE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology researchers says that a nano-thin coating of black phosphorus could be effective against drug-resistant bacteria and fungus.

In a media release, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) said that the black phosphorus-based “superbug-destroying” anti-microbial coating could be used on wound dressing and implants to prevent and treat bacterial and fungal infections, without causing harm to healthy human cells.

RMIT co-lead researcher Dr Aaron Elbourne told Biotech Daily that “black phosphorous was safe to handle and the research team planned mouse safety trials for later this year”. The Institute said that the coating was “based on an ultra-thin [two-dimensional] material that until now has mainly been of interest for next-generation electronics”.

RMIT said that studies on black phosphorus indicated that it had some anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties when spread in nano-thin layers on surfaces like titanium and cotton, but the material had “never been methodically examined for potential clinical use”. The research, titled ‘Broad-spectrum solvent-free layered black phosphorus as a rapid action antimicrobial’ was published in the journal Applied Materials and Interface, with an abstract available at <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acsami.1c01739>.

RMIT said antibiotic resistance caused at least 700,000 deaths a year and fungal infections killed about 1.5 million people a year, with the toll for both pathogens increasing. Dr Elbourne said finding one material that could prevent both bacterial and fungal infections was a “significant advance”.

“Our nano-thin coating is a dual bug killer that works by tearing bacteria and fungal cells apart, something microbes will struggle to adapt to; it would take millions of years to naturally evolve new defences to such a lethal physical attack,” Dr Elbourne said.

RMIT said that one study tested effectiveness of nano-thin layers of black phosphorous against five common bacteria strains, including Escherichia coli and methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, as well as five types of fungus including Aspergillus, and within two hours, up to 99 percent of bacterial and fungal cells were destroyed.

The Institute said that the black phosphorous used in the study had entirely disintegrated within 24 hours suggesting the material would not accumulate in the body.

Co-lead researcher Prof Sumeet Walia said that black phosphorous broke down in the presence of oxygen which was normally a problem for electronics “but it turns out materials that degrade easily with oxygen can be ideal for killing microbes”.

“It’s exactly what the scientists working on antimicrobial technologies were looking for,” Prof Walia said. “So our problem was their solution.”

RMIT said it was experimenting with formulations to test the efficacy of black phosphorus on a range of surfaces and the team would collaborate with potential industry partners to further develop the technology, for which a provisional patent application has been filed.

PHARMAXIS

Pharmaxis says it will raise \$4.4 million in a placement at eight cents a share to fund studies of its PXS-5505 for myelofibrosis and PXS-6302 for skin scarring.

Pharmaxis said the share price was a 1.3 percent premium to the last closing price on April 12, 2021.

The company said the placement had received commitments from investors including \$3.2 million from Karst Peak Capital and \$800,000 from BVF Partners.

Pharmaxis said Bell Potter Securities was the lead manager to the placement.

Pharmaxis was up half a cent or 6.3 percent to 8.4 cents with 3.1 million shares traded.

PHARMAXIS

Pharmaxis says the Ankara, Turkey-based Gen Pharmaceuticals will pay EUR1.25 million (\$A2 million) for the rights to distribute Bronchitol for cystic fibrosis in Russia.

Pharmaxis said the sale of the Russian distribution rights to Gen would save the company \$1 million in marketing and regulatory expenses.

The company said it would manufacture and export Bronchitol to Russia from its factory in Sydney which supplied the US, Europe and Australia.

Pharmaxis said it would receive 70 percent of the initial \$2 million from Gen now, with the remaining 30 percent due in 12 months.

PARADIGM BIOPHARMACEUTICALS

Paradigm says it has dosed the first of 60-patients in its phase IIb trial of pentosan polysulfate sodium for synovial fluid biomarkers in knee osteoarthritis pain.

In February, Paradigm said it had ethics approval for the randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial investigating changes in synovial fluid biomarkers associated with pain, inflammation and disease progression of osteoarthritis (BD: Feb 18, 2021).

Today, the company said that patients would receive a sub-cutaneous injection of either pentosan polysulfate sodium (PPS or Zilosul) or placebo twice a week for six weeks.

Paradigm said it has begun screening and enrolling the remaining patients.

Paradigm chief executive officer Paul Rennie said the company was “pleased to have progressed to the treatment phase of the knee synovial fluid biomarker study, by dosing of the first participant”.

“Additionally, the data generated will form part of Paradigm’s submission package to the [Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration] for the next step of the provisional approval application,” Mr Rennie said.

The company said it expected to have primary endpoint data on the change of synovial fluid biomarkers in knee osteoarthritis pain by the end of 2021.

Paradigm fell six cents or 2.3 percent to \$2.51 with 546,333 shares traded.

TELIX PHARMACEUTICALS

Telix says the Australian Therapeutics Goods Administration has started a priority review for the registration of its Illuccix prostate cancer imaging device.

Last year, the company said Illuccix, formerly TLX591-CDx or 68-gallium-prostate specific membrane-11 (68Ga-PSMA-11), had been granted TGA priority review status, which gave it a “significantly accelerated timeframe of 150 working days for product dossier review and approval” (BD: Dec 7, 2020).

Today, Telix said it expected an indicative decision from the TGA on November 12, 2021.

Telix chief executive officer Dr Christian Behrenbruch said the TGA submission acceptance and priority review brought the company “significantly closer to our goal of providing widespread access to state-of-the-art prostate cancer imaging for Australian men living with prostate cancer”.

“Should we be successful in gaining TGA registration of Illuccix in Australia, we would also anticipate filing a new medical application with Medsafe in New Zealand under the abbreviated evaluation process for medicines approved by recognized overseas regulators,” Dr Behrenbruch said.

The company said Illuccix was the subject of regulatory submissions in the US, Canada and European Union, with regulatory reviews in progress in 17 countries.

Telix was up two cents or 0.5 percent to \$4.06 with 486,046 shares traded.

UNIVERSAL BIOSENSORS

Universal Biosensors says it has appointed Singularity SpA as a non-exclusive distributor of its Sentia wine sulphur dioxide analyzer platform in Chile.

Universal Biosensors chief executive officer John Sharman said that “the launch of Sentia into Chile is another positive step in the commercialization of Sentia”.

“Chile is the eighth largest wine producing country in the world and Singularity is part of a leading group with diverse expertise in point-of-use devices with connections across Chile’s 200,000 hectares of vineyards,” Mr Sharman said.

“The deal includes an initial commitment to purchase Sentia devices and strips which will be delivered over the course of the next few weeks,” Mr Sharman said.

“We believe the possibility of Sentia’s future testing capability for glucose, fructose, malic acid and others will add significant value to the winemaking industry,” Mr Sharman said.

Universal Biosensors was up five cents or 7.35 percent to 73 cents with 1.4 million shares traded.

IMEX HEALTH SERVICES

Imex says its annual general meeting will vote to issue chief executive officer Dr German Arango with 43,519 free options and issue 98,594 free options to directors.

Imex said Dr Arango’s options would be issued in two tranches, conditional to the continuation of employment and performance hurdles including a total shareholder return (TSR) of at least 105 percent of the TSR of the ASX 300 Accumulation Index or another appropriate index as determined by board.

The company said all options would be issued “for nil consideration and no consideration will be payable” to exercise the options, with Dr Arango’s options expiring in 10 years from issue and valued at \$1.634 each, while the four year director options would be valued at \$2.24 each.

Imex said that chair Douglas Flynn would receive 39,437 options and directors Damian Banks, Dr Doug Lingard and Carlo Palacio would each receive 19,719 options.

The company said the directors’ options would vest immediately following shareholder approval and would lapse four years from the grant date.

Imex said the meeting would vote to adopt the remuneration report, re-elect directors Damian Banks and Dr Lingard, approve a 10 percent placement capacity and ratify the prior issue of shares.

The online meeting will be held on May 13, 2021 at 10am (AEST).

Imex was up two cents or 0.9 percent to \$2.30.

ALCIDION GROUP

Alcidion has requested a trading halt pending an announcement “regarding an acquisition and capital raising”.

Trading will resume on April 16, 2021 or on an earlier announcement.

Alcidion last traded at 34 cents.

STEMCELL UNITED

Stemcell United has requested a trading halt pending “an announcement in relation to a placement”.

Trading will resume on April 16, 2021 or on an earlier announcement.

Stemcell United last traded at 2.1 cents.

CRESO PHARMA

Creso says Cannabis Queen will distribute its cannabidiol-based products in South Africa and it will distribute Cannabis Queen's marijuana-based products in Europe.

Creso said it had a one-year bilateral commercial agreement with the Johannesburg-based Cannabis Queen for the mutual distribution of products.

The company said Cannabis Queen would distribute its Cannadol-branded cannabidiol (CBD)-based topical products and teas for stress, sleep and "well-being", which it launched earlier this month in Switzerland (BD: Apr 1, 2021).

Creso said that it would concurrently distribute Cannabis Queen's marijuana-based skin and hair oils in Europe and Switzerland.

Creso fell half a cent or 2.6 percent to 19 cents with 15.3 million shares traded.

ANATARA LIFESCIENCES

Myeng Pty Ltd and Anantara co-founder Dr Tracey Mynott say they have reduced their holding from 4,391,337 shares (8.89%) to 3,580,211 shares (5.09%).

The Brisbane-based Dr Mynott said that between January 21 and April 13, 2021 she sold 811,126 shares for \$176,733 or an average of 21.8 cents each.

Anantara was up one cent or 5.9 percent to 18 cents.

BIONOMICS

Apeiron Investment Group and Christian Angermayer say they have increased their holding in Bionomics from 75,833,000 shares (8.97%) to 123,240,066 shares (12.28%).

Malta's Apeiron and London's Mr Angermayer said that between March 22 and April 9, 2021 they acquired shares at prices ranging between 14.5 cents and 22.78 cents, with the single largest purchase 28,565,184 shares for \$4,125,857 or 14.5 cents each as part of Bionomics' rights offer.

Earlier this month, Bionomics said it had raised a total of \$22.9 million in a rights offer and a concurrent placement at 14.5 cents a share (BD: Apr 6, 2021).

Bionomics was unchanged at 19 cents.

IQ3 CORP

IQ3 says it has appointed Peter Mercouris as a director from today, replacing Monika Pawel, who will not stand for re-election at the next annual general meeting.

IQ3 said Mr Mercouris' had experience in "investigations and security" and has previously worked for the New South Wales Police.

IQ3 was untraded at 16 cents.