



# Biotech Daily

Tuesday September 7, 2021

*Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies*

**VALE DR KEVIN HEALEY (MAY 26, 1952 – SEP 3, 2021)**

- \* **ASX FLAT, BIOTECH DOWN: IMUGENE UP 6%; PHARMAXIS DOWN 10%**
- \* **RHYTHM RAISES \$4.3m, PLACEMENT FOR \$1.275m MORE**
- \* **VECTUS COMPLETES SECOND VB0004 COHORT**
- \* **ECOFIBRE, SOUTHERN CROSS UNI START MARIJUANA SLEEP TRIAL**
- \* **ORTHOCELL: CANADA, HONG KONG PATENTS FOR CELGRO**
- \* **LITTLE GREEN WA PSILOCYBIN LICENCE, STEPHEN BRIGHT ADVISOR**
- \* **IMRICOR REQUESTS 'CAPITAL RAISING' TRADING HALT**

## MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market edged up 0.02 percent on Tuesday September 7, 2021, with the ASX200 up 1.8 points to 7,530.3 points. Fourteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 19 fell and seven traded unchanged.

Imugene was the best, up 2.5 cents or 6.25 percent to 42.5 cents, with 31.2 million shares traded.

Orthocell climbed 5.3 percent; Medical Developments improved 4.5 percent; Opthea was up 3.6 percent; Cochlear, Mesoblast and Optiscan rose two percent or more; Clinuvel, CSL, Proteomics and Telix were up more than one percent; with Cyclopharm, Cynata, Nanosonics, Polynovo and Pro Medicus up by less than one percent.

Pharmaxis led the falls, down 1.5 cents or 10.3 percent to 13 cents, with 1.4 million shares traded.

Compumedics lost 8.9 percent; LBT retreated 7.7 percent; Antisense and Nova Eye were down more than five percent; Actinogen, Patrys and Resonance fell more than four percent; Dimerix and Starpharma were down more than three percent; Amplia, Kazia and Oncosil shed more than two percent; Avita, Immutep, Neuren, Next Science, Paradigm and Volpara were down by more than one percent; with Resmed down 0.8 percent.

## DR KEVIN HEALEY

Dr Kevin Healey was a seminal figure in the biotech scene of the late 1990s and early 2000s, writes Prof Andrew Wilks.

He was the founder, with Nicholas Mathiou, of Medica Holdings, an ASX-listed pooled development fund that spawned Alchemia (now AP Hemp), Xenome and Cytopia.

Cytopia ultimately reverse-listed into Medica in May 2004, and Kevin was Cytopia's chief executive officer through most of that company's ASX-listed life.

He was highly regarded as a pioneer of the Australian biotech sector, and was renowned for his back-room strategic brilliance.

Kevin earned his Doctor of Philosophy in organic chemistry at the University of Melbourne and was CSL's head of immunochemistry research for three years to 1987.

His first foray into technology commercialization was as a consultant to Vision Systems.

After his stint as CEO of Cytopia, he was appointed as a director of Cancer Trials Australia, Biolink and Hunter Immunology, becoming Hunter's managing-director from 2008 to 2011.

Most recently, Dr Healey was a director of Nidor and for eight years ran Myostin Therapeutics, as well as Biostrat Consultants.

His impact can be seen through the recollections of many who knew him and his contributions. "Brilliant", "irascible", "difficult", "dazzling" are all adjectives that have been used to describe him.

Nick Mathiou worked with Kevin at Invetech, leaving at the same time to embark on their great adventure - Medica Holdings.

Nick Mathiou said: "Kevin was not only a colleague, but a wonderful friend. There would have been no Medica Holdings, and its portfolio companies, without him. A brilliant, entrepreneurial man, who I will always remember with great fondness."

Cytopia founder Prof Andrew Wilks said: "This is terribly sad news."

"Kevin had an exceptionally sharp and brilliant mind. I came across Kevin and Nick Mathiou in 1997, when I was trying (and failing) to start Cytopia."

"He and Nick were very much co-founders of my company and those few years starting Cytopia were an exhilarating ride."

"Put him in front of a whiteboard and real magic happened"

"I learnt such a lot about start-up culture, and from my conversations with others with whom he had worked, I think we all felt the same. His major difficulty was overcoming his pathological shyness. I can't think of anyone with that much backroom talent who was so averse to getting up in public to tell his story. He really was one of a kind."

Former Xenome chief executive officer Tony Evans described Kevin as "a deep thinker, not full of himself, and always available to share his thinking. He will be a sadly missed piece of the nation's biotech jig saw puzzle."

Former Cytopia research director, now an Amplia director, Dr Chris Burns said: "Kevin was a wonderful support to me when I started the medicinal chemistry team at Cytopia. His scientific knowledge and deep strategic insight helped drive the success of a number of our programs."

Kevin was a pretty decent singer, by all accounts, and pretty decent sailor too. He participated in at least one Sydney to Hobart race and this sailing connection was important since much of the money that started Medica Holdings came from the Melbourne Yachting community.

We pass our condolences on to his family and those who knew him well. Vale Dr Kevin Healey.

**Compiled by Prof Andrew Wilks, chair, Synthesis Med Chem**

## RHYTHM BIOSCIENCES

Rhythm says its "heavily oversubscribed" rights offer raised \$4,296,130 and it will place further shares to raise \$1,275,000, taking the total raised to \$5,571,130.

In July, Rhythm said it hoped to raise \$4.3 million in a one-for-40 rights offer at 85 cents a share (BD: July 30, 2021).

Today, the company said it had valid applications for 3,670,735 shares with a shortfall of 1,383,535 shares, which would be distributed via a scaled back method to applicants.

Rhythm said subscriptions, including entitlements, additional share applications and commitments totalled \$12.05 million, about 280 percent more than the amount sought.

The company said that due to the stronger than expected interest, it had determined that a "small, heavily scaled back placement" up-to 1,500,000 shares would be made to several sophisticated and other exempt investors to raise \$1,275,000, with participants to receive one class A and one class B unlisted option for every two shares acquired.

The company said that class A options would be exercisable at \$1.20 each by August 31, 2022, and class B options would be exercisable at \$1.80 each by July 31, 2024.

The company said it would have 208,725,081 shares issued following the capital raise.

Rhythm was up four cents or 3.5 percent to \$1.17 with 1.2 million shares traded.

## VECTUS BIOSYSTEMS

Vectus says it has completed its second cohort of 10mg doses of VB0004 in a phase I/Ib trial for patients with mild to moderate hypertension with low cardiovascular risk.

Vectus said the first cohort was dosed at 2mg in the five planned cohorts of the single ascending dose segment for its first-in-human trial.

The company said the single-centre, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled, dose-escalating trial was studying the safety, tolerability, and pharmaco-kinetics of single and repeat doses of VB0004 administered orally to healthy volunteers.

Vectus was up three cents or 2.2 percent to \$1.39.

## ECOFIBRE

Ecofibre says Southern Cross University has enrolled the first of 438 patients in a phase IIb trial of over-the-counter botanical cannabidiol for sleep disturbances.

Last year, the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration said it had down-scheduled "certain low dose cannabidiol preparations" to over-the-counter but there are no products available at that time (BD: Dec 15, 2020).

The TGA said it had moved low-dose cannabidiol (CBD) containing products, up to a maximum of 150mg/day, from schedule 4 (prescription medicine) to schedule 3 over-the-counter (pharmacist only medicine) without a prescription.

Today, Ecofibre said that Southern Cross University's Dr Janet Schloss was the lead investigator in the phase IIb, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled, multi-site clinical trial comparing Ecofibre's Ananda Hemp botanical cannabidiol (CBD) with placebo on participants' self-reported changes in sleep disturbances.

The company said that enrolment was progressing despite the impact of Covid-19 and study was an important part of its strategy to be a first mover in the Schedule 3 over-the-counter market in Australia.

Ecofibre chair Barry Lambert said the process of undertaking schedule 3 research and product registration was "rigorous and lengthy, but we expect in the future this will be a large, well-regulated and highly accessible channel for Australian patients".

Ecofibre was up nine cents or 12.0 percent to 84 cents.

## [ORTHOCELL](#)

Orthocell says Canada and Hong Kong have granted patents for its Celgro collagen device for suture-less repair.

Orthocell said the patents, titled 'Suture-less repair of soft tissue' would protect its intellectual property until October 12, 2035.

The company said the patents were approved in Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan with further applications progressing in the US and the European Union.

Orthocell said suture-less repair of soft tissue was a method of repairing damaged tissue without the use of sutures or stitches, which had the potential to improve the efficacy of surgical procedures by simplifying techniques, reducing surgery time and reducing the risk of additional trauma to soft tissue caused by the use of stitches.

Orthocell managing-director Paul Anderson said the patents were "an important addition to our global intellectual property portfolio".

"Suture-less or tensionless repair is of particular importance in the optimal repair of damaged nerves and is a key part of the repair process undertaken in the Celgro nerve regeneration clinical study," Mr Anderson said.

Orthocell was up 2.5 cents or 5.3 percent to 49.5 cents.

## [LITTLE GREEN PHARMA](#)

Little Green says Western Australia has approved its schedule 9 licence to supply psilocybin and Dr Stephen Bright has been appointed an advisor.

Little Green said the Western Australia Department of Health approved the licence to supply psilocybin to eligible licence holders for its "psychedelic assisted psychotherapy" for conditions including depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety.

The company said that 'magic mushroom' derived psilocybin induced a psychedelic state through its action on the brain's 5-hydroxy-tryptamine-2A serotonin receptors, and it was "well advanced in planning to sponsor a ground-breaking Perth-based clinical trial into psilocybin assisted psychotherapy".

Little Green said it had established subsidiary Alternative Therapies to conduct its psychedelic business and Dr Stephen Bright had been appointed an advisor.

The company said Dr Bright was a clinical psychologist, the co-founder of Prism and a lecturer in addiction at Edith Cowan University.

Little Green managing-director Fleeta Solomon said "psychedelics is a logical fit with our long term stated goals of solving real patient problems and transforming their lives".

"We have developed so much experience over the years through the cannabis industry and we genuinely believe we can now bring that to bear on the development of the psychedelics," Ms Solomon said.

Little Green was up five cents or 6.5 percent to 81.5 cents with 1.9 million shares traded.

## [IMRICOR MEDICAL SYSTEMS](#)

Imricor says it has requested a trading halt pending an announcement "in relation to an update in connection with a proposed capital raising".

Trading will resume on September 9, 2021, or on an earlier announcement.

Imricor last traded at \$1.035.