



Biotech Daily

Tuesday April 26, 2022

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX, BIOTECH DOWN: NEXT SCIENCE UP 7%; DIMERIX, KAZIA DOWN 10%**
- * **AROA REVENUE UP 78% TO \$36.5m**
- * **FIREBRICK STARTS NASODINE SARS-COV-2 TRIAL**
- * **BOD STARTS UK MARIJUANA 'LONG COVID-19' TRIAL**
- * **ARGENICA: ARG-007 MAXIMUM TOLERATED DOSE ESTABLISHED**
- * **NUHEARA LICENCES HEWLETT PACKARD 'HP' TRADEMARK**
- * **MTP CONNECT APPOINTS STUART DIGNAM CEO**
- * **MEMPHASYS: ROBERT COOKE, ALISON COUTTS, SHANE HARTWIG**
- * **AUDEARA: JESSE CROOKS, ISTVAN NAGY FOR US, EURO SALES**
- * **PATRYS: REBECCA TUNSTALL CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT HEAD**
- * **ATOMO APPOINTS CHANDRA SUKUMAR, JIM MCMENAMY, ANNA TUCKER**
- * **OPTISCAN APPOINTS ANDREW BARKER, STEVEN SMART, DAISY LIU**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market fell 2.08 percent on Tuesday April 26, 2022, with the ASX200 down 155.3 points to 7,318.0 points. Four of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 28 fell, seven traded unchanged and one was untraded. All three Big Caps fell.

Next Science was the best of the four, up six cents or 7.1 percent to 90 cents, with 266,285 shares traded. Micro-X was up 5.1 percent; Uscom improved 4.65 percent; with Genetic Signatures up 1.1 percent.

Both Dimerix and Kazia led the falls, down 9.7 percent to 14 cents and 98 cents, respectively, with 581,045 shares and 187,743 shares traded, respectively. Proteomics lost eight percent; Impedimed fell 7.7 percent; Antisense, Paradigm and Universal Biosensors were down more than six percent; Clinuvel fell 5.4 percent; Avita and Imugene lost more than four percent; Compumedics, Oncosil, Prescient, Resmed and Starpharma were down more than three percent; Alcidion, Mesoblast, Neuren, Orthocell and Telix shed more than two percent; Cyclopharm, Cynata, Immunet, Medical Developments, Nanosonics, Polynovo and Volpara were down one percent or more; with Cochlear, CSL, Emvision and Pro Medicus down by less than one percent.

AROA BIOSURGERY

Aroa says unaudited revenue for the 12 months to March 31, 2022 was up 77.7 percent to \$NZ39,700,000 (\$A36,533,249).

In its Appendix 4C quarterly report, Aroa said that receipts from customers for the 12 months to March 31, 2022 were up 43.5 percent to \$NZ30,298,000.

Aroa said revenue came primarily from sales of its sheep-stomach-derived Myriad for soft tissue repair and Symphony for wound closure.

The company said it had cash and cash equivalents of \$NZ56,165,000 at March 31, 2022 compared to \$NZ15,381,000 at March 31, 2021.

Aroa was up 3.5 cents or four percent to 91 cents.

FIREBRICK PHARMA

Firebrick says it has recruited the first of up-to 210 patients in its phase II trial of Nasodine for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (Sars-Cov-2).

Firebrick said the multi-dose, randomized, placebo-controlled, South Africa-based trial was titled 'Reduction of nasal shedding of Sars-Cov-2 in Covid-19 positive patients by the use of Nasodine (providone-iodine 0.5%) nasal spray'.

The company said the primary aim of the trial was to show that frequent application of the Betadine-based anti-viral Nasodine, every two hours, up to eight-times-daily, over three days led "to a significant reduction in nasal shedding of severe acute respiratory Sars-Cov-2 ... compared to a placebo nasal spray".

Firebrick said that the secondary aims of the trial included whether Nasodine treatment, compared with placebo, reduced the number of days to a negative rapid antigen test and whether Nasodine increased the percentage of subjects who had cleared the virus from the upper respiratory tract within five days, based on a combined throat and nasal swab.

In March, Firebrick said it was appealing the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration's initial decision not to approve Nasodine based on the existing clinical data (BD: Mar 1, 2022).

At that time, Firebrick executive chair Dr Peter Molloy said that based on a 2019, 260-patient, phase III trial on the impact on nasal symptoms of Nasodine compared to a saline nasal spray placebo, he believed Nasodine should be approved in Australia "without additional studies".

According to the Firebrick prospectus, Nasodine "achieved a positive benefit of eight percent on that endpoint, but it was not statistically significant and as a result, the phase III trial did not meet its primary endpoint".

Today, the company said that prior to regulatory approval for any role in the management of Covid-19, Nasodine would "likely need to undergo a phase II trial in a specific aspect of Covid-19 that is clinically relevant to the management of the disease".

Dr Molloy said that "if the trial demonstrates that the Nasodine regimen reduces or eliminates viral shedding, it could point to a potentially important role for Nasodine treatment in anyone who has been recently diagnosed with Covid-19".

"While secondary to our focus on the common cold, this phase II Covid-19 trial is important because it may provide proof-of-principle for the reduction of Sars-Cov-2 nasal viral load in patients who are shedding the virus," Dr Molloy said.

"Demonstrating that an agent kills a virus in the laboratory is one thing; proving that it translates clinically is a big step, which we are now taking," Dr Molloy said.

Firebrick fell half a cent or 1.1 percent to 45.5 cents.

BOD AUSTRALIA

Bod says it has enrolled the first of 30 patients in its trial of its medicinal marijuana product Medicabilis for symptoms associated with the long-term impact of Covid-19.

Bod said the six-month, open-label trial, with London's Drug Science UK would explore the effectiveness of Medicabilis five percent cannabidiol (CBD) on the symptoms associated with the long term-impacts of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (Sars-Cov-2), the virus that caused Covid-19.

The company said symptoms included shortness of breath, fatigue, chest discomfort, loss of concentration, chronic pain, anxiety and insomnia.

Bod chief executive officer Jo Patterson said that "long Covid-19 is a major market" and the trial would provide potential evidence for the use of marijuana for the illness.

Bod fell one cent or 5.9 percent to 16 cents.

ARGENICA THERAPEUTICS

Argenica says its ARG-007 neuroprotective peptide candidate toxicology studies in rats and non-human primates have established a maximum tolerated dose.

Argenica said the studies determined that the maximum tolerated dose of ARG-007 was "up to 10 times the efficacious range identified in animals and [provided] a desirable safety margin to establish the safe starting dose in the Phase I clinical trial" but it did not state the maximum tolerated dose.

The company said that its single-dose extended good laboratory practice toxicology studies were conducted in rats and non-human primates to determine the onset, degree of severity and length of time in which a dose of ARG-006 demonstrated any toxic effects.

Argenica said that the results would be a "key inclusion" in its submission to the human research ethics committee for approval of the phase I clinical trial.

Argenica chief executive officer Dr Liz Dallimore said the toxicology data showed that ARG-007 had a good safety margin from the efficacious to the maximum tolerated dose.

Argenica was unchanged at 53 cents.

NUHEARA

Nuheara says it has a worldwide trademark licence to develop and manufacture its sound filtering and hearing aid products under the Hewlett Packard (HP) trademark.

Nuheara did not disclose the financial terms of the agreement but said that the agreement granted it a licence to use the HP trademarks on the licenced products distributed by it to distribution partners or end-user customers, and on materials used by it in connection with the manufacture, distribution, marketing, advertising, and sale of the licensed products, including the pending over-the-counter hearing aid category to be sold to directly to consumers without the involvement of a professional.

The company said the agreement with Hewlett Packard would expire on December 31, 2027 and that under the agreement, it would pay a licence fee and market competitive royalty fee to Hewlett Packard for products sold under the brand.

Nuheara said the trademark agreement did not impact its three-year original equipment manufacturer agreement with Hewlett Packard for its HP Elite Buds, or any other original equipment manufacturer agreements.

Nuheara chief executive officer Justin Miller said the agreement was "a significant achievement for Nuheara's growth as a medical device company".

Nuheara was unchanged at 1.5 cents with 4.4 million shares traded.

MTP CONNECT

MTP Connect says that it has appointed acting chief executive officer Stuart Dignam as its permanent chief executive officer.

MTP Connect said Mr Dignam was formerly its chief operating officer, was first appointed in August 2018 and had been interim chief executive officer since January 31, 2022.

MTP Connect said that previously Mr Dignam worked for Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA) Australia and the Queensland Government as Americas deputy trade and investment commissioner.

MTP Connect said that Mr Dignam had worked as a broadcaster for ABC Radio and as a government media and policy advisor.

MEMPHASYS

Memphasys says Robert Cooke has been appointed non-executive chair, replace Alison Coutts, continues as managing-director and chief executive officer.

Memphasys said Shane Hartwig had resigned as a director, effective from April 25, 2022 to “focus on other business interests”.

The company said that Mr Cooke had more than 40 years of experience in the health industry, and was currently Optiscan’s chair, and most recently was managing director of Melbourne’s Healthscope.

Memphasys managing-director Alison Coutts said that “securing someone with the experience, capabilities and proven track record in the healthcare sector as Mr Cooke is a significant gain for Memphasys and our shareholders”.

“His appointment comes at a pivotal time as we accelerate the commercialization path of our Felix device while further developing our world-class product portfolio addressing major human and animal reproduction issues,” Ms Coutts said.

Memphasys fell 0.1 cents or 1.7 percent to 5.9 cents with 2.35 million shares traded.

AUDEARA

Audeara says it has appointed Jesse Crooks as its US territory sales and development manager and István Nagy for European sales.

Audeara said that Jesse Crooks was based “in the capital of the audiology industry” in Minneapolis Minnesota and István Nagy would be based in Budapest.

The company said that it was expanding its international team to “support momentum that is building in the US and accelerate the opportunities identified with European headquartered audiology groups”.

Audeara was up 0.4 cents or 4.2 percent to 10 cents.

PATRYS

Patrys says it has appointed Dr Rebecca Tunstall as head of corporate development, effective from May 16, 2022.

Patrys said Dr Tunstall had experience in pharmaceutical clinical development, most recently working as stakeholder engagement director at MTP Connect and previously worked for Glaxosmithkline Australia, in various roles including head of study management.

The company said that Dr Tunstall held a Bachelor of Applied Science and a Doctor of Philosophy from Victoria’s Deakin University.

Patrys was unchanged at 2.3 cents with 8.6 million shares traded.

ATOMO DIAGNOSTICS

Atomo says it has appointed Chandra Sukumar as its chief operating officer, and Jim McMenemy and Anna Tucker as head of business development and partnerships. Atomo said that the Sydney-based Ms Sukumar would replace the UK-based Mark Smith as chief operating officer.

The company said that Ms Sukumar had joined Atomo in 2017 and had more than 25 years of experience in the medical device industry, previously working for Resmed.

Atomo said that Mr McMenemy would be based in San Diego, California and be the head of business development and partnerships in the Americas.

Atomo said that Mr McMenemy had more than 30 years of experience in the point-of-care diagnostics market, previously working for Becton Dickinson, Quidel Corp, Acon Laboratories, Inverness Medical, Agen Biomedical, Samsung Diagnostics and Henry Schein Animal Health.

The company said that Mr McMenemy had worked in marketing, sales, business development and general management in human and veterinary point-of-care diagnostics markets.

Atomo said that London's Ms Tucker would be the head of business development and partnerships in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

Atomo said that Ms Tucker had more than 25 years of experience in the life sciences sector, working in sales, distribution management and field marketing, previously for Congenica as director, distributor sales for Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

The company said that the expansion of its executive team supported its "strategic focus on establishing a new US business entity and expanding its commercial activity in high value developed markets".

Atomo was unchanged at 11.5 cents with 1.1 million shares traded.

OPTISCAN IMAGING

Optiscan says it has appointed Andrew Barker as marketing manager, Steven Smart as commercial manager and Daisy Liu as finance manager.

Optiscan said that Mr Barker had more than 20 years of experience, previously working for Smith & Nephew, Incitec Pivot, Convatec, Ansell and CSL's Seqirus and most recently at Lattitude Financial Services.

The company said that Mr Barker held a Bachelor of Business Studies from the University of Sheffield in South Yorkshire.

Optiscan said that Mr Smart had more than 25 years of experience working for Roche Diagnostics, Glaxosmithkline, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Hollister and most recently at Independence Australia.

Optiscan said that Mr Smart held a Bachelor of Science from Melbourne's Swinburne University.

The company said Ms Liu previously worked for Bosch, Rubicon Water and Jetstar Airways and according to her LinkedIn page, held a Bachelor of Arts from the Beijing Institute of Machinery and a Master of Accounting from Sydney's Macquarie University.

Optiscan was unchanged at 14.5 cents.