Biotech Daily

Wednesday May 25, 2022

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

*** ASX UP, BIOTECH DOWN: COMPUMEDICS UP 21%; PROTEOMICS DOWN 9%**

*** TAMORX: BRANDON LEADS $14m RAISE FOR CANCER**

*** FIREBRICK: MALAYSIA PATENT FOR NASODINE**

*** NUHEARA: $71k VOX SCRIP FOR MINING ROYALTIES**

*** VECTUS 2nd MULTIPLE ASCENDING VB0004 DOSE COHORT**

*** CHIMERIC TO LICENCE NATURAL KILLER CELL TECHNOLOGY**

*** EMYRIA: MARIJUANA EMD-RX5 'SAFE, BIOEQUIVALENT TO EPIDYOLEX'**

*** BOD MEDICABILIS CANNABIGEROL 'IMPROVED SYMPTOMS'**

*** IMAGION AGM 19% OPPOSE REMUNERATION REPORT**

*** REGAL REDUCES TO 5.5% OF ALTHEA**

*** FIREBRICK APPOINTS DR RICHARD TREAGUS DIRECTOR**

*** ANTERIS APPOINTS PROF DION STUB ADVISER**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.37 percent on Wednesday May 25, 2022, with the ASX200 up 26.4 points to 7,144.2 points. Fourteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 21 fell, four traded unchanged and one was untraded.

Compumedics was the best, up 3.5 cents or 21.2 percent to 20 cents, with 230,853 shares traded. Patrys climbed 15 percent; Resonance rose 4.9 percent; Dimerix and Micro-X were up more than three percent; Volpara rose 2.1 percent; Antisense, Immutep, Impedimed, Kazia, Nanosonics and Pharmaxis were up more than one percent; with Cochlear, Mesoblast and Next Science up by less than one percent.

Proteomics led the falls, down 9.5 cents or 9.3 percent to 92.5 cents, with 119,995 shares traded. Uscom lost 7.8 percent; Clinuvel, Medical Developments, Opthea and Pro Medicus were down five percent or more; Cynata, Imugene and Universal Biosensors fell four percent or more; Oncosil lost 3.7 percent; Atomo, Emvision, Genetic Signatures, Neuren, Nova Eye and Telix shed two percent or more; Orthocell fell 1.35 percent; with Avita, CSL, Paradigm, Polynovo, Resmed and Starpharma Nanosonics down by less than one percent.

TAMORX, BRANDON CAPITAL

Tamorx says Brandon Capital and the University of Auckland Inventors' Fund have provided $NZ15.25 million ($A13.85 million) to develop a new cancer treatment.
Tamorx said that the investment included a Callaghan Innovation repayable grant of $NZ750,000 from Brandon Capital, a partner in the Callaghan Innovation Technology Incubator Programme.
In March, Brandon Capital said that its fund the Brandon Biocatalyst, formerly the Medical Research Commercialisation Fund, had invested in more than 50 biotechnology companies in Australia and New Zealand (BD: Mar 9, 2022).
Today, Tamorx co-founder Dr Joanna Mathy said the company would focus on improving the immune attack on cancer cells within tumors.
"We discovered a new mechanism that restricts the immune system from fighting cancer," Dr Mathy said.
"The technology is a small molecule inhibitor of an undisclosed new pathway that suppresses the ability of the immune system to attack tumors," Dr Mathy said.
"We are aiming to free patients' immune systems from this restriction and increase the immune attack on cancer cells within tumors," Dr Mathy said.
"To do this we need to develop new drugs that can target this immune control mechanism without affecting other cells in the body," Dr Mathy said.
"We want to move quickly so we can bring [the] new immunotherapy to patients as soon as possible, and the scale of this new investment will allow us to move all the way to early-stage clinical trials if we're successful in our pre-clinical development," Dr Mathy said.
Tamorx co-founder Prof Rod Dunbar said that "we know that immunotherapy is the most promising therapy to achieve long-term survival from cancer in cases where it has spread through the body".
"Although this kind of therapy can cure some patients with even the most advanced cancer, we need to be able to target many different mechanisms within the immune system to enable more patients to benefit," Prof Dunbar said. "The new immune control pathway we discovered offers new hope for a broad range of cancer patients."
Dr Mathy told Biotech Daily that the funds should take the company to the conclusion of a phase I clinical trial.
Tamorx is a private company.

FIREBRICK PHARMA

Firebrick says the Intellectual Property Corporation of Malaysia has granted a patent covering its Nasodine nasal spray as a common cold treatment and preventative. Firebrick said the patent, titled 'Treatment and prevention of the common cold using povidone-iodine', would provide protection to Nasodine to 2035.
Firebrick was up 1.5 cents or 3.95 percent to 39.5 cents.

NUHEARA

Nuheara says 80 percent subsidiary Terrace Gold has sold a Peruvian mining royalty to Vox Royalty Corp subsidiary Silverstream SEZC for $US50,000 ($A71,000) in scrip.
According to ASX data, in early 2016, Nuheara backdoor-listed on the ASX through Wild Acre Metals Limited (WAC).
Today, the company said the Grand Cayman-based Silverstream would pay a further $US450,000 in cash or scrip on registration of the royalty rights to the El Galeno mine.
Nuheara fell 3.5 cents or 22.6 percent to 12 cents with 1.7 million shares traded.

VECTUS BIOSYSTEMS

Vectus says it has begun a multiple ascending dose cohort of its 40-volunteer phase I trial of VB0004, following the completion of all five single ascending dose cohorts.
In February, Vectus said its trial safety review committee had approved the highest dose of VB0004 and a multiple ascending dose cohort (BD: Feb 21, 2022).
Today, the company said results of the 2mg, 10mg, 30mg, 100mg, and 300mg single dose cohorts, as well as the 10mg multiple dose cohort in which a volunteer was dosed daily over 14 days, had been reviewed with no adverse events observed at any of the dose levels.
Vectus said it would move to its second multiple ascending dose cohort.
The company said that interim pharmaco-kinetic data showed that maximal concentration occurred six to eight hours after dosing, and that plasma half-life was 17 to 17.5 hours, data which the company said was consistent with its aim of a once-daily dosing regimen for VB0004.
Vectus was up 10 cents or 9.1 percent to $1.20.

CHIMERIC THERAPEUTICS

Chimeric says it has exercised its option for the Case Western Reserve University's Core-NK natural killer cell technology and will negotiate an exclusive licence.
Last year, Chimeric said it had an option to licence the Core-NK anti-cancer platform from the Cleveland, Ohio-based Case Western Reserve University (BD: Dec 1, 2021).
In March, Chimeric said one of nine "heavily pre-treated" cancer patients in its phase I trial of Core-NK (CHM0201) had a complete response at 100 days (BD: Mar 7, 2022).
Today, Chimeric said it would proceed with negotiations for an exclusive licence of Core-NK from the University, and "expects to use the Core-NK platform while leveraging its existing portfolio of [chimeric antigen receptors] to pursue new clinical trials in blood cancers and solid tumors beginning in 2023".
Chimeric was unchanged at 11.5 cents.

EMYRIA

Emyria says a 12-person, phase I study comparing its EMD-RX5 150mg cannabidiol (CBD) to Epidyolex showed it is safe, well tolerated, with equivalent bio-availability.
Emyria said the study showed bio-equivalence between EMD-RX5 and Epidyolex, with EMD-RX5 providing an average 24-hour cannabidiol exposure of 579 nanograms/millilitre (ng/ml) compared to Epidyolex's 588ng/ml.
The company said the study showed EMD-RX5 to exhibit more than twice the bioavailability of other Australian CBD products with published pharmacokinetic data.
Emyria said EMD-RX5 had more predictable bio-availability between patients, resulting in more predictable dosing characteristics
The company said EMD-RX5 also exhibited higher cannabidiol exposures at three and eight hours post-dosage, which it said provided an ideal dosing profile for Emyria's initial target clinical indications, and support for once to twice daily dosing.
Emyria said that it would advance EMD-RX5 to pivotal phase III clinical trials to support an Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration over-the-counter registration for treatment of symptoms of psychological distress.
Emyria fell 3.5 cents or 11.7 percent to 26.5 cents.

BOD AUSTRALIA

Bod says a 23-participant proof-of-concept, safety and efficacy study of its marijuana-based Medicabilis cannabigerol reports an improvement in symptoms.

An article published in the journal Molecules said that Cannabigerol was “a minor non-psychoactive cannabinoid present in Cannabis sativa at low levels (< 1% dry weight), that serves as the direct precursor to both cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) https://www.mdpi.com/1420-3049/27/2/491.

Bod said the three-month proof-of-concept study enrolled patients with symptoms associated with fibromyalgia, inflammatory bowel disease and anxiety.

The company told Biotech Daily that the proof-of-concept, observational study enrolled 23 participants.

Bod said participants were administered 50mg/ml of the product orally, twice daily and asked to rate the improvement in symptoms on a scale of one to 10.

Bod said that 74 percent of participants reported “a noticeable improvement in their conditions within two to four weeks of using Medicabilis CBG 50 twice a day”, and that “when participants were asked to rate the improvement on a scale of one to 10, 64 percent reported a rating above six”.

The company did not detail safety data.

Bod said it expects to launch Medicabilis CBG 50 in June this year as a prescription medicine.

Bod chief executive officer Jo Patterson said “the completion of this initiative has highlighted that Medicabilis CBG 50 is both safe and effective for use across a range of new symptoms”.

“The study will also allow Bod to explore the possibility of using its extract as an alternative treatment or all-encompassing route for conditions that require a mix of surgery, medication and other routines,” Ms Patterson said.

Bod was unchanged at 14 cents.

IMAGION BIOSYSTEMS

Imagion says its annual general meeting voted 19.31 percent opposition to the adoption of the company’s remuneration report.

Imagion said the remuneration report resolution was opposed by 30,348,717 votes (19.31%), with 126,830,304 votes (80.69%) in favor.

The company said all resolutions passed but it faced 13.12 percent opposition to its employee incentive plan, 12.59 percent opposition to the 10 percent placement facility, with the election of directors Jovanka Naumoska and Michael Harsh passing more easily.

According to the company’s most recent filing, Imagion had 1,121,218,534 shares on issue, meaning that the opposition to the remuneration report amounted to 2.71 percent of the company, which - if the US-based Imagion were subject to Australian law - would be insufficient to requisition annual general meetings.

Imagion was unchanged at 4.1 cents with 1.75 million shares traded.

ALTHEA

Regal Funds says it has reduced its substantial share-holding in Althea from 20,435,513 shares (6.48%) to 17,295,221 shares (5.47%).

The Sydney-based Regal said that between March 15 and May 19, 2022, it sold shares in Althea, with the largest single sale 488,777 shares for $73,561, or 15.1 cents a share.

Althea was up half a cent or 4.35 percent to 12 cents.

FIREBRICK PHARMA

Firebrick says it has appointed Dr Richard Treagus as a non-executive director, effective June 1, 2022, and intends to grant him 100,000 options, pending shareholder approval.
Firebrick said the options would be exercisable at a 43 percent premium to the five-day volume-weighted average price of shares at the time of approval, within four years of the date of grant.
The company said Dr Treagus was previously Acrux's chief executive officer, executive chair of Neuren Pharmaceuticals, and South Africa's Aspen Pharmacare commercial director.
Dr Treagus is the chair of BTC Health.

ANTERIS TECHNOLOGIES

Anteris says it has appointed Prof Dion Stub to its Australian medical advisory board.
Anteris said Prof Stub was an associate professor at Monash University and the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne, specialising in structural heart procedures, including angioplasty, aortic valve replacement and balloon valvuloplasty.
Anteris was unchanged at $17.00.