



Biotech Daily

Tuesday November 15, 2022

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX DOWN, BIOTECH UP: ANTISENSE UP 9.5%;
- ALCIDION, CYNATA, PHARMAXIS DOWN 3%**
- * **ANTISENSE TO LOSE 21-YEAR M-D MARK DIAMOND**
- * **CSIRO TO LOSE CHIEF EXECUTIVE DR LARRY MARSHALL; CEO WANTED**
- * **BIONOMICS US OFFER TO RAISE UP TO \$7.7m**
- * **MTP CONNECT AWARDS 16 REDI FELLOWSHIPS**
- * **MEDIBIO RECEIVES \$938k FEDERAL R&D TAX INCENTIVE**
- * **NEUROSCIENTIFIC OVERSEAS FEDERAL R&D TAX INCENTIVE FINDING**
- * **CRONOS PLEADS SCHULTZ TO ASX 21% FALL QUERY**
- * **EBR TO RELEASE 45.5m CDIS FROM VOLUNTARY ESCROW**
- * **MESOBLAST WITHDRAWS 'VIRTUAL MEETINGS' AGM VOTE**
- * **VANGUARD TAKES 5% OF CSL**
- * **ATOMO APPOINTS DR CHERI WALKER DIRECTOR**
- * **KAVI BEKARMA REPLACES FIREBRICK CFO KYLA GARIC**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market slipped 0.07 percent on Tuesday November 15, with the ASX200 down 4.7 points to 7,141.6 points. Fifteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 12 fell, 10 traded unchanged and three were untraded. All three Big Caps rose.

Antisense was the best, up one cent or 9.5 percent to 11.5 cents, with 1.9 million shares traded. Imugene, Mesoblast and Nova Eye climbed more than seven percent; Avita was up five percent; Emvision improved 4.4 percent; Medical Developments, Paradigm and Telix rose more than two percent; Cochlear, CSL, Nanosonics, Next Science, Opthea, Pro Medicus and Proteomics were up more than one percent; with Polynovo and Resmed up by less than one percent.

Alcidion, Cynata and Pharmaxis led the falls, all down three percent to 16 cents, 32.5 cents and 6.4 cents, respectively, with 1.9 million shares, 312,675 shares and 620,000 shares traded, respectively. Neuren and Universal Biosensors shed two percent or more; Clinuvel, Immunetep, Impedimed, Kazia, Orthocell and Volpara were down one percent or more; with Starpharma down by 0.9 percent.

ANTISENSE THERAPEUTICS

Antisense says managing-director Mark Diamond will retire after 21 years and the longest serving chief executive officer an ASX-listed biotechnology company.

Antisense chair Dr Charmaine Gittleson said she “regretfully” acknowledged Mr Diamond’s resignation “to pursue other opportunities after more than 20 years in the role”. “Mark has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the company for the benefit of shareholders, patients and his team,” Dr Gittleson said.

“He became [chief executive officer] at a challenging time for the Australian biotech industry when few successful biotechnology companies existed,” Dr Gittleson said.

“Under his dedication and guidance, the company successfully transformed from a small start-up, with a licence to a second-generation antisense molecule, to an ASX listed biotech with a promising lead product ATL1102 which is entering later stage clinical development for Duchenne muscular dystrophy,” Dr Gittleson said.

“Mark is regarded as a most competent and successful leader in the Australian biotechnology industry and I am sure will continue making positive contributions to the sector,” Dr Gittleson said. “I sincerely thank Mark for his support, leadership, resilience, and contribution.”

Antisense said that a search for a replacement would follow its annual general meeting on November 17, 2022 and Mr Diamond would continue until the search concluded.

Antisense was up one cent or 9.5 percent to 11.5 cents with 1.9 million shares traded.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

The Federal Government says Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation chief executive Dr Larry Marshall will retire in June 2023.

A media release from the Minister for Industry and Science Ed Husic said that Dr Marshall had led the CSIRO since 2015 and “thanked [him] for his tenure”.

Mr Husic said that “Dr Marshall has steered CSIRO through a rapidly changing scientific environment ... a period of much scientific promise amid global turbulence, particularly through the Covid-19 pandemic”.

“Undoubtedly he will leave the organization with a lasting legacy and I thank him for his dedicated service,” Mr Husic said.

The CSIRO said that a search for a new chief executive officer was underway.

BIONOMICS

Bionomics says it will offer 600,000 American depositary shares (ADS) at \$US8.65 (\$A12.92) a share on the Nasdaq to raise up to \$US5,190,000 (\$A7,744,000).

Bionomics said the offer was underwritten with an option for the underwriter to purchase up to 90,000 additional ADSs worth about \$US778,500.

The company said that each ADS was equal to 180 Australian shares valuing the offer at about 7.17 Australian cents a share.

Last year, the company said it had raised about \$US20 million (\$A28 million) in an initial public offering of 1,622,000 ADSs on the Nasdaq (BD: Jan 16, 2022).

Today, the company said the funds would be used for the development of BNC210 for depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and associated trials and working capital.

Earlier today, Bionomics requested a trading halt pending the outcome of the offer.

Trading will resume on November 17, 2022 or on an earlier announcement.

Bionomics last traded at 6.8 cents a share.

MTP CONNECT

MTP Connect says it has awarded 16 Researcher Exchange and Development within Industry (REDI) Fellowships, worth up to \$250,000 each per year.

MTP Connect said that grant winners would work for up to 13 months with companies in Australia, the US, the UK and Europe, including CSL, Astrazeneca, Stryker, Penumbra, GE Healthcare Australia, Seer Medical and Speedx.

The industry organization said that the REDI Fellowship program provided financial support to medical technology and pharmaceutical companies to “bring the best Australian talent in-house to work on priority research projects”.

MTP Connect chief executive officer Stuart Dignam said that connecting researchers, clinicians and sector professionals with industry was “critical for the growth of Australia’s medical products sector” and congratulated the “16 new fellows who are doing crucial work in our sector for patients, and to the companies at home and abroad who are sponsoring them”.

MEDIBIO

Medibio says it has received \$938,000 from the Australia Tax Office under the Federal Government Research and Development Tax Incentive program.

Medibio said the rebate related to expenditure for the year to June 30, 2022.

Medibio fell 0.05 cents or 33.3 percent to 0.1 cents with 1.3 million shares traded.

NEUROSCIENTIFIC BIOPHARMACEUTICALS

Neuroscientific says up-to \$1.62 million of offshore expenditure has been approved under the Federal Government Research and Development Tax Incentive program.

Neuroscientific said the rebate related to an overseas finding claim for research and development expenditure for the year to June 30, 2022.

Neuroscientific was untraded at 7.4 cents.

CRONOS AUSTRALIA

Cronos has told the ASX that it is not aware of any information it has not announced which, if known, could explain recent trading in its securities.

The ASX said the company’s share price fell 21.3 percent from 75 cents a share on Friday, November 11 to 59 cents on Monday November 14, 2022, and noted a “significant increase” in the trading volume.

Cronos said that shares representing about 73.4 percent of its total available shares would be released from voluntary escrow on December 16, 2022 and “there may be speculation in the market that the market price of the company’s shares may fall upon the escrowed shares being released from voluntary escrow”.

Cronos was up three cents or 5.2 percent to 61 cents with 3.2 million shares traded.

EBR SYSTEMS

EBR says it will release 45,537,901 Chess depositary interests (CDIs) from voluntary escrow on November 23, 2022.

According to its most recent filing, EBR had a total of 263,564,991 shares on issue, with a further 6,335,369 CDIs held in ASX escrow.

EBR was unchanged at 45.5 cents.

MESOBLAST

Mesoblast says it has withdrawn the annual general meeting resolution amending its constitution to allow “wholly virtual meetings”.

Mesoblast said that “in light of having received notice of reservations by some proxy advisers about the proposed change ... to permit the company to hold wholly virtual meetings, the board has determined to remove from the amendments proposed to the constitution ... any capacity of the company to hold a wholly virtual general meeting of shareholders”.

Mesoblast was up 6.5 cents or 7.1 percent to 98 cents with 1.1 million shares traded.

CSL

Vanguard Group says it has become substantial in CSL with 24,112,875 shares or 5.0004 percent.

The Valley Forge, Pennsylvania-based Vanguard said that between July 8 and November 9, 2022 it bought and sold shares in more than 400 separate trades, at prices ranging from \$266.84 to \$300.92 a share.

CSL was up \$4.20 or 1.5 percent to \$290.75 with 734,108 shares traded.

ATOMO DIAGNOSTICS

Atomo says it has appointed Dr Cheri Walker as an independent, non-executive director. Atomo said Dr Walker had more than two decades of experience working in life science tools and medical diagnostics companies and was currently chief executive officer at the Waltham, Massachusetts-based Rhinostics Inc.

The company said Dr Walker had previously worked at Invitrogen, Qiagen, Charles River Laboratories, Abcam and Kailos Genetics.

Atomo said that Dr Walker held a Bachelor of Science from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and a Doctor of Philosophy from Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas.

Atomo was unchanged at 5.7 cents.

FIREBRICK PHARMA

Firebrick says Kavi Bekarma will replace chief financial officer Kyla Garic, effective from January 25, 2023.

Firebrick said that Mr Bekarma’s Tripleeight Corporate would replace Ms Garic’s Oynx Corporate for the provision of accounting and bookkeeping services from December 1, 2022 to allow for a “smooth handover before January 25, 2023”.

According to his LinkedIn page, Mr Bekarma held a Bachelor of Science from the University of Mauritius and a Master of Professional Accounting from Perth’s Edith Cowan University.

Firebrick was up one cent or 3.7 percent to 28 cents.