



# Biotech Daily

Tuesday October 24, 2023

*Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies*

- \* **ASX UP, BIOTECH EVEN: PATRYS UP 14%; NEXT SCIENCE DOWN 21%**
- \* **AUSBIOTECH MELBOURNE, BRISBANE CONFERENCES NEXT WEEK**
- \* **AVITA TO PAY EX-CEO DR MICHAEL PERRY \$1.6m**
- \* **IMRICOR RAISES \$4.25m**
- \* **BOTANIX: UP SCRIPT DIGITAL FOR SOFDRA LAUNCH**
- \* **RHINOMED TO CUT STAFF; COSTS BY 30%**
- \* **UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES 'ANTI-BACTERIAL HUMAN TISSUE MIMIC'**
- \* **RECCE: SAFETY COMMITTEE R327 UTI 15-MIN DOSING OK**
- \* **EMVISION ASSEMBLES 2nd GENERATION BRAIN SCANNER PROTOTYPE**
- \* **IMUGENE HER-VAXX HER2 ANTIBODY RESPONSE**
- \* **KAZIA EVT801 'POTENTIAL MECHANISMS OF ACTION'**
- \* **IMMUTEP WITHDRAWS 36% OPPOSED AGM PLACEMENT FACILITY**
- \* **DIMERIX: 2m M-D OPTIONS AGM**
- \* **NEUROSCIENTIFIC 4m CHAIR, DIRECTOR 'PERFORMANCE' RIGHTS AGM**
- \* **MERCATOR INCREASES, DILUTED TO 5.5% OF EMYRIA**
- \* **NEXT SCIENCE APPOINTS KATHERINE OSTIN DIRECTOR**
- \* **3-WEEKS TO BIO-MELBOURNE 'EU MASTERCLASS'**

## MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market was up 0.19 percent on Tuesday October 24, 2023, with the ASX200 up 12.8 points to 6,856.9 points. Fifteen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 16 fell, seven traded unchanged and two were untraded.

Patrys was again the best, up 0.1 cents or 14.3 percent to 0.8 cents, with 177,644 shares traded. Pharmaxis climbed 12.1 percent; Emvision rose 11.2 percent; Imugene and Nova Eye improved more than seven percent; Dimerix climbed 6.9 percent; Cynata, Impedimed and Mesoblast were up more than four percent; Kazia and Starpharma were up more than three percent; 4D Medical and Prescient rose more than one percent; with Antisense, CSL and Telix up by less than one percent.

Next Science led the falls for the second day in a row, down six cents or 20.7 percent to 23 cents, with five million shares traded. Actinogen and Paradigm lost more than five percent; Micro-X fell four percent; Immutep was down three percent; Avita, Clinuvel, Pro Medicus, Resmed and Volpara shed two percent or more; Cyclopharm, Opthea, Orthocell, Polynovo, Proteomics and Resonance were down one percent or more; with Cochlear and Nanosonics down by less than one percent.

## [AUSBIOTECH](#)

Ausbiotech says the 2023 Ausbioinvest will be held in Melbourne on October 30, and the annual Ausbiotech conferences will be in Brisbane from November 1 to 3, 2023.

Ausbiotech said its Ausbioinvest conference would allow companies to pitch to investors, including venture capital, private equity, high net worth individuals, research analysts and brokers, industry executives and major stakeholders.

The industry organization said the program featured keynote presentations and panel discussions from investment specialists on topics including industry trends and market updates.

Ausbiotech said speakers included Investment Banking JP Morgan chair Jennifer Nason, Boston's Nextech Ventures partner Kanishka Pothalu and the ASX manager of listed company services Akita Tynan.

Ausbiotech said that the Bioinvest program was available at:

<https://www.ausbiotechinvestment.com.au/programme>.

The organization said qualified investors could apply for complimentary registration at:

<https://www.ausbiotechinvestment.com.au/register>.

Ausbiotech said the Brisbane conference was sponsored by the Queensland Government, had attracted more than 1,000 delegates across the three days and was "Australia's flagship biotechnology conference".

Ausbiotech said the conferences would feature 50 sessions with more than 120 industry leaders, "highlighting Australia's role in advancing biotechnology on the world stage".

The industry organization said the conference included keynote speakers and panel discussions from local and foreign thought-leaders on the latest research, technologies, challenges and market access strategies.

Ausbiotech said that the Prof Nancy Millis Oration would be delivered by the developer of the Gardasil human papillomavirus vaccine Prof Ian Frazer.

Ausbiotech said other keynote speakers included Sanofi chief technical officer for mRNA products Dr Frank DeRosa, Sydney's Children's Cancer Institute executive director Prof Michelle Haber and Biomebank chief executive officer and co-founder Dr Sam Costello.

The organization said the topics being explored at the conference included 3-4 methylenedioxymethamphetamine, psilocybin and next generation mental health medicines, environmental, social, and governance in life sciences, artificial intelligence and machine learning in clinical trials, antimicrobial resistance, collaborating with First Nations Australians for biotechnology discovery and development, as well as bio-preparedness.

Ausbiotech said the conference's final session on November 3, 2023 would be chaired by its New South Wales general-manager Robyn Linder with a discussion on drug development by Amplia managing-director Dr Chris Burns.

Ausbiotech said Dr Burns would discuss his role as head of chemistry for Cytosia and the discovery of two anti-cancer agents, including the US Food and Drug Administration-approved Ojjaara, or momelotinib, a JAK1/2 inhibitor for the treatment of myelofibrosis, which was developed from Cytosia's CYT387.

The industry organization said that the discovery, originating from the identification of the JAK, of Janus, kinases at Melbourne's Ludwig Institute in 1989, culminated in US Food and Drug Administration approval in September 2023 and "stands as a significant milestone in Australian biomedical science".

The organization said the Brisbane conference program was available at:

<https://www.ausbiotechnc.org/conference-programme-2023>.

Ausbiotech said that registration for the conference was available at:

<https://www.ausbiotechnc.org/register2023>.

## AVITA MEDICAL

Avita says it will pay former chief executive officer Dr Michael Perry \$US1 million (\$A1.58 million) to release claims and for a “mutual non-disparagement agreement”.

In an announcement titled ‘Form 8-K’ Avita told the US Securities and Exchange Commission that it had “a settlement and release agreement ... with former company CEO Dr Michael Perry”.

The company said Dr Perry would receive “payments in consideration of a general release of claims in favor of the company ... [along with] a mutual non-disparagement agreement”.

Avita said it “did not admit to any allegations under the terms of the agreement”.

The company said Dr Perry would receive settlement payments broken into non-wage payment, such as lawyers’ fees and costs and wage payment for a total amount of \$US1 million “in consideration of a general release of claims in favor of the company”.

Last year, Avita said it appointed director James Corbett as chief executive officer, replacing five-year chief executive officer Dr Mike Perry (BD Sep 29, 2022).

At that time, Avita chair Lou Panaccio said the company was “grateful to Dr Perry for his many contributions to Avita Medical [and thanked] him for his commitment to Avita Medical, its customers, employees, shareholders and the patients we serve”.

Avita fell nine cents or 2.7 percent to \$3.21.

## IMRICOR MEDICAL SYSTEMS

Imricor says it has raised \$US2,699,000 (\$A4,253,932) through a placement of CHESS depositary interests (CDIs) and US shares.

Imricor said investors outside the US purchased 7,126,000 CDIs at 50 Australian cents each, while US investors purchased 1,406,250 shares at 32 US cents each.

The company said non-US investors also received 10-year warrants to purchase 1,781,000 additional CDIs at 95.0 Australian cents each, while the US investors received 10-year warrants to buy 351,563 shares of class A common stock at 60 US cents a share.

Imricor said its class A common stock was subject to a 12-month holding lock and once released could be converted to CDIs on a one-for-one basis and traded on the ASX.

The company said it would use the proceeds for sales and marketing, development, clinical and regulatory, covering the offer costs, and general working capital.

Imricor said it had drawn \$145,822 from the \$30 million Gem Global facility, but cancelled it due to the placement and would issue 309,600 CDIs at 47.1 Australian cents and 43,952 CDIs at 49.8 cents to settle the draw down amount (BD: Jul 7, 2023).

Imricor was unchanged at 45 cents.

## BOTANIX PHARMACEUTICALS

Botanix says Up Script Health will provide a digital platform and telehealth services to launch its Sofdra sofpironium bromide gel for hyperhidrosis, or excessive sweating.

Botanix said the Pheonix, Arizona-based Up Script Health was the first company to deliver prescriptions online and had served more than one million patients.

The company did not disclose commercial terms of the agreement.

Botanix said the Up Script website would be the first point of entry for the majority of patients looking for a prescription for Sofdra, with patients to be matched with Up Script’s network of US physicians for online consultations.

Botanix chief executive officer Dr Howie McKibbin said the agreement was “a cornerstone of the commercial infrastructure required for the successful launch of Sofdra”.

Botanix was unchanged at 12.5 cents with 4.3 million shares traded.

## RHINOMED

Rhinomed says after a strategic review of its operations it will reduce costs including staff, by \$4.8 million, or 30 percent, for the year to June 30, 2024.

Rhinomed said the review identified a reduction in staff, marketing expenditure and board and management remuneration to be actions it could undertake “to scale its operating capacity and personnel to better meet its immediate requirements”.

The company said the reduced operational expenditure was “in line with its expected near-term revenues and [would] ensure that future expenditure [was] closely aligned with company growth” and it expected record unaudited revenues for the three months to September 30, 2023 of \$2.23 million and hoped for cash-flow break-even in the six months to June 30, 2024.

Rhinomed chief executive officer Michael Johnson said the company acknowledged “that the regulatory approval process our rapid antigen test kit partners are undertaking is taking significantly longer than expected”.

Rhinomed was untraded at 3.5 cents.

## THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The University of New South Wales says it is developing a material that mimics human tissue and fights bacteria.

University of New South Wales Prof Kris Kilian says the tryptophan zipper hydrogels, or Trpzip, material was made from “simple, short peptides ... the building blocks of proteins”. “The material is bioactive, which means that encapsulated cells behave as if they are living in natural tissue,” Prof Kilian said.

“At the same time, the material is antimicrobial, meaning that it will prevent bacterial infections,” Prof Kilian said.

“This combination lands it in the sweet spot for materials that might be useful in medicine,” Prof Kilian said.

“The material is also self-healing, which means that it will reform after being squished, fractured, or after being expelled from a syringe,” Prof Kilian said.

“This makes it ideal for [three-dimensional] bio-printing, or as an injectable material for medicine,” Prof Kilian said.

The University said the research paper, titled ‘Hierarchical assembly of tryptophan zipper peptides into stress-relaxing bioactive hydrogels’ was published in Nature Communications and was at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-023-41907-1>.

The article said the tryptophan zipper had “tunable visco-elasticity and unique yield-stress properties that allow immediate harvest of embedded cells through a flick of the wrist”.

The University said other hydrogels were useful in biomedical research because they could mimic human tissue as space fillers, but that they were unable to recreate “the complex properties of real human tissue”.

The University said further development involved partnering with industry and clinical scientists to test the use of Trpzip gels in tissue culture and research applications that show its dynamic characteristics like three-dimensional bio-printing and stem cell delivery. “With Trpzip, we have a synthetic material that not only shows potential in many areas where natural materials are currently used, but also could outperform them in others, such as clinical research,” Prof Kilian said.

“We think that Trpzip hydrogels and materials like it will provide a more uniform and cost-effective alternative to animal-derived products,” Prof Kilian said.

The University of New South Wales said that doctoral student Ashley Nguyen made the discovery during the Covid-19 lockdown using computer simulations.

## RECCE PHARMACEUTICALS

Recce says an independent safety committee has approved the next R327 dosing cohort in its phase I/II trial for urinary tract infections and urosepsis.

Recce said the committee unanimously agreed R327 was safe and well tolerated at the previous dose, which infused 3,000mg in 30 minutes, enabling it to graduate to the faster infusion rate of 3,000mg administered in 15 minutes.

The company said antibiotics administered as an intravenous infusion could reduce nursing time and costs and improve safety, as well as increase the number of patients treated, patient wait times and duration that patients would be connected to infusers. Recce chief executive officer James Graham said the company was pleased to receive the committee's approval to start dosing R327 at the faster infusion rate, 15 minutes, compared to the previous 1-hour and 30-minute infusion rates.

"This data reaffirms R327's potential first-line treatment for patients suffering from life-threatening infections such as urosepsis or sepsis as the mortality of sepsis increases by six to eight percent for every hour that treatment is delayed," Mr Graham said.

Recce was up 1.5 cents or 3.4 percent to 45.5 cents.

## EMVISION

Emvision says it has assembled a prototype of its second-generation portable brain scanner helmet and will test it for useability, ergonomics and signal benchmarking.

Emvision said the scanner weighed less than 10kg, could be transported in a backpack and used a 28-antenna, three-dimensional array to scan the entire brain, with a reusable and replaceable silicon membrane to couple the antennas to the head.

The company said the prototype was a precursor to its "proof of concept" system that it expected to assemble by July 2024, and that it was pursuing ethics approval for human testing, which it expected to begin "in the coming months".

Emvision said the device was planned for use in road and air ambulance trials in collaboration with the Australian Stroke Alliance.

Emvision said it would use its previous scanner as a predicate device to apply for US Food and Drug Administration 510(k) device approval.

Emvision was up 16.5 cents or 11.2 percent to \$1.635.

## IMUGENE

Imugene says HER-Vaxx induced anti-HER2 antibody responses, inhibiting the HER2 receptor and cancer signaling pathways in a phase II stomach cancer study.

Imugene said it studied HER-Vaxx in combination with chemotherapy in patients with human epithelial growth receptor-2 (HER2+) advanced stomach cancer.

The company said HER-Vaxx-based vaccination of patients with HER2- overexpressing gastric cancer validated the mechanism of action by showing that it induced anti-HER2 antibody responses ( $p < 0.001$ ) with dose-dependent functionality in binding to human HER2-expressing gastric cancer cells; along with intracellular phosphorylation inhibition of the HER2 receptor; and inhibited the cancer signaling pathway kinases Akt and MAPK. Imugene said that the data "further validate the proof of concept for the first-in-class B-cell immunotherapy HER-Vaxx".

The company said the results, which it presented at the European Society for Medical Oncology congress in Madrid, "validate[d] the mechanism of action" behind HER-Vaxx and the presentation was at: <https://www.imugene.com/conference-presentations>.

Imugene was up 0.3 cents or 7.3 percent to 4.4 cents with 49.8 million shares traded.

## KAZIA THERAPEUTICS

Kazia says data from six ovarian cancer patients in its 20-patient, phase I trial of EVT801 for advanced solid tumors indicates three potential mechanisms of action.

Kazia said the data, presented at the European Society of Medical Oncology Congress in Madrid, showed three sequential anti-cancer mechanisms for EVT801, including impairing tumor and lymph blood vessel growth, decreasing immune-suppressive cytokines and cells near the tumor, and promoting T-cell infiltration into the tumor.

The company said high levels of vascular endothelial growth factor-3 (VEGFR3) expression, related to blood vessel growth “tended to be correlated” with higher levels of hypoxia and increased immune checkpoint resistance, and negatively correlated with CD8 positive T-cell infiltration.

Kazia said that, while the findings needed to be confirmed in patients in different indications, the correlations were “encouraging” and suggested that patients with hypoxic, high-grade serous ovarian cancer (HGS-OC) that were poorly infiltrated with CD8 positive T-cells and with high VEGFR3 expression “may benefit from EVT801 treatment”.

Kazia chief executive officer Dr John Friend said that previous data showed “a high prevalence of VEGFR-3 expression in HGS-OC tumours, and we have now presented data showing a positive correlation between VEGFR-3 expression and hypoxia and PD1 resistance signature and a negative correlation with CD8 positive T-cell infiltrations”.

Kazia was up 0.3 cents or 3.4 percent to 9.2 cents.

## IMMUTEP

Immutep says it has withdrawn a resolution to approve its 10 percent placement capacity at its annual general meeting after facing 36.01 percent opposition.

Immutep said 311,466,828 votes (63.99%) supported the resolution, with 175,289,308 votes (36.01%) in opposition.

The company said all other resolutions, including the adoption of its remuneration report, the election of directors Dr Russell Howard and Elisabeth Boyce and the issuing of performance rights to Dr Howard and Ms Boyce and the ratification of the prior issue of shares were passed with more than 95 percent of votes.

According to its most recent filing, Immutep had 1,188,834,559 shares on offer, meaning the 175,289,308 votes against the placement facility amounted to 14.7 percent of the total shares on offer, sufficient to requisition extraordinary general meetings.

Immutep fell one cent or three percent to 32 cents with 2.4 million shares traded.

## DIMERIX

Dimerix says its annual general meeting will vote to issue 2,052,956 options to managing-director Dr Nina Webster at its annual general meeting.

Dimerix said the options would vest in three tranches, with 645,405 options exercisable at 20 cents and vesting March 31, 2023, 686,104 options exercisable at 30 cents and vesting 24 months from grant, and the final 721,447 options exercisable at 40 cents and vesting 36 months from grant, with all tranches expiring four years from the grant date.

The company said shareholders would also vote to adopt the remuneration report, elect directors Dr Sonia Poli and Clinton Snow, approve its 10 percent placement capacity and renew proportional bid provisions in the constitution.

Dimerix said the meeting would be held at 425 Smith Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne on November 21, 2023 at 2pm (AEDT).

Dimerix was up one cent or 6.9 percent to 15.5 cents with 9.3 million shares traded.

## NEUROSCIENTIFIC BIOPHARMACEUTICALS

Neuroscientific says its annual general meeting will vote to issue 2,000,000 performance rights each to chair Paul Rennie and director Dr Linda Friedland.

Neuroscientific said Mr Rennie's performance rights were for his role as acting interim chief executive officer, on-top of his \$160,000 yearly salary, \$16,800 superannuation and \$440,706 in share-based payments.

Last year, the company said it had appointed Mr Rennie interim chief executive officer replacing Matt Liddelov and while his remuneration would remain unchanged, he would be granted 2,000,000 performance rights, vesting on a phase I trial ethics approval (BD: Nov 23, 2022).

Last week, Neuroscientific said it had appointed Dr Friedland as an independent, non-executive director and issued her 2,000,000 performance rights (BD: Oct 19, 2023).

Today, the company said Dr Friedland's rights were on-top of her \$60,000 annual consulting fee and provided a cost effective, "performance linked incentive component" to her remuneration package to "motivate and reward her performance" as a director.

The company said shareholders would vote to adopt the remuneration report, re-elect Mr Rennie and Dr Friedland as directors, approval of a 10 percent placement capacity, adopt its employee incentive plan and amend its constitution.

The meeting will be held online on November 23, 2023 at 11am (WST).

Neuroscientific fell one cent or 14.3 percent to six cents.

## EMYRIA

Mercator Shipwrights Pty Ltd says it has increased but been diluted in Emyria from 19,600,000 shares (7.15%) to 19,655,556 shares (5.47%).

The Perth-based Mercator Shipwrights said that on February 23, 2023 it bought 55,556 shares for 18.0 cents a share, and was diluted by a placement on October 5, 2023.

Earlier this month, Emyria said that its one-for-7.5 share rights offer raised \$1.18 million of a hoped-for \$3.1 million at 7.5 cents a share, taking the total raised with the placement to \$3.18 million (BD: Oct 5, 2023).

Mercator Shipwrights is believed to be a vehicle for former Emyria director Matt Callahan, who resigned in August (BD: Nov 29, 2021, Aug 21, 2023).

Emyria was up 0.6 cents or 9.7 percent to 6.8 cents.

## NEXT SCIENCE

Next Science says it has appointed Katherine Ostin as a non-executive director, effective from October 24, 2023.

Next Science said Ms Ostin was previously an audit, assurance and risk consulting partner at KPMG, had worked in the aged care and healthcare industries, and established and led KPMG's New South Wales Health, Ageing and Human Services audit practice between 2006 to 2018, and had worked in Australia, the US, UK and Asia.

The company said Ms Ostin was currently a director of 3P Learning, Dusk Group, Capral and Alex Corp.

Next Science said Ms Ostin held a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of New South Wales.

Next Science fell six cents or 20.7 percent to 23 cents with five million shares traded.

## [BIO-MELBOURNE NETWORK](#)

The Bio-Melbourne Network says in November it will host a three-part “masterclass” on how to enter European Union markets for long-term success.

The Bio-Melbourne Network said the series of classes, titled ‘Unlocking Europe: Operational Priorities for EU Market Entry’, was sponsored by the Victoria State Government and would include industry experts from Dublin’s Orphan Drug Consulting. The Network said participants would be guided on how to “prioritize operations, plan and budget for expansion, optimize product supply strategy, negotiate with investors and potential partners, or go it alone”.

The Bio-Melbourne Network said the program would begin with Part A - a forum at Allens law firm, 37th Floor, 101 Collins Street, Melbourne on November 14, 2023 from 4pm to 6:30pm (AEDT).

The Network said that Part B would be a workshop at the Monash Conference Center, Level 7, 30 Collins St, Melbourne on November 15 from 8:30am to 5pm (AEDT), and Part C would be a series of 30-minute advisory sessions on November 16 and 17, 2023.

For details and registration go to: <https://bit.ly/3ERtHgL>.