



Biotech Daily

Thursday February 6, 2020

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

Biotech Daily Editorial: 2019-nCoV Coronavirus

Biotech Daily has been following the 2019-nCoV coronavirus news as closely as everyone else, but has been cautious on joining the bandwagon.

While impressed with the news from the Peter Doherty Institute that it had grown the virus, we have been aware that many major players have been working on tests, vaccines and drugs since the infection was first announced.

Uscom has seen a price surge, which executive chairman Prof Rob Phillips attributes to public knowledge that the company's Ultra-Sonic Cardiac Output Monitor (Uscom-1A) was used in China to measure patient cardiovascular health in the previous severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak (see below).

Last week, the Salt Lake City, Utah-based Co-Diagnostics announced "the successful initial verification of its screening test designed to identify the presence of the novel coronavirus ... [which] will soon be ready for validation in, and subsequent distribution to, any appropriate venue across the globe".

Vaxart, the company formerly known as Melbourne's Biota, which developed and co-marketed the Prof Peter Colman-invented Relenza, claimed it had "a program to develop a coronavirus vaccine candidate based on its proprietary oral vaccine platform, Vaast". The news helped pushed the company from a market capitalization of \$16 million to \$77 million.

Prof Colman, now with the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, told Biotech Daily that "scientists, academics and laboratories in China are as advanced, and possibly better funded, than their Australian, European and US counterparts".

According to Lodge Partners' analyst Marc Sinatra: "Every large pharma with antivirals, that actually work, is testing them against the virus or making them available to the Chinese for the virus". "There are also a number of majors working on vaccines," Mr Sinatra said.

David Langsam, Editor

Biotech Daily can be contacted at: [PO Box 5000, Carlton, Victoria, Australia, 3053](mailto:editor@biotechdaily.com.au)
email: editor@biotechdaily.com.au; www.biotechdaily.com.au; twitter: [@biotech_daily](https://twitter.com/biotech_daily)