



Biotech Daily

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Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

CSIRO, Doherty Institute Distance From 'Tier 1' Sars-Cov-2 Claims

[COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION](#)

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The CSIRO and Doherty Institute say tier 1 status does not mean a compound will show anti-viral activity against Sars-Cov-2.

A number of companies have made claims that their compound or compounds were "selected" as tier 1 for screening for anti-viral activity against severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (Sars-Cov-2) the virus which causes the Covid-19 disease.

Responding to a Biotech Daily inquiry, the CSIRO and Doherty Institute issued a joint statement rejecting the notion that selection for tier 1 was their imprimatur for efficacy.

"The groupings did not reflect an opinion that a compound would show antiviral activity against Sars-Cov-2 but rather that the compounds had some of the properties required to potentially show such activity and there were no obvious concerns [that is, they were] insoluble or toxic," the Doherty and CSIRO statement said.

A spokesman for the Institute and Organization told Biotech Daily that they could "only test a small number in a low-throughput assay".

The organizations said that a scientific panel reviewed applications and compounds were prioritized based on a series of criteria, with compounds that appeared to show the most promise “to have drug-like properties, supporting scientific data, oral availability and/or the ability to be manufactured at scale were prioritized for testing” and called group or tier 1.

“Compounds that did not have sufficient supporting information or that did not meet the criteria were placed in group/tier 2 or group/tier 3,” the statement said.

The organizations said that compounds were being tested on a fee-for-service, cost recovery model and “only compounds that received a group 1 score were offered to be tested in the fee-for-service model”.

“The goal of the program is to evaluate candidate compounds for their antiviral activity against the novel Sars-Cov-2 coronavirus,” the statement said.

The organizations said that the screening was multi-stage with compounds “first assessed against the virus in a cell-based assay at the Peter Doherty Institute, with compounds showing a minimum level of anti-viral activity in the absence of cytotoxicity progressing to the next stage of the program”.

The organizations said the Program was not taking further applications at this time.