



Biotech Daily

Monday September 9, 2024

Daily news on ASX-listed biotechnology companies

- * **ASX DOWN, BIOTECH UP: OPTHEA UP 14%; UNIVERSAL BIO DOWN 7%**
- * **AUSTCO \$1.7m JURONG UPGRADE**
- * **CONTROL BIONICS APPOINTS SMART BOX UK, IRELAND DISTRIBUTOR**
- * **FIREBRICK FILES NASODINE 'NASAL ANTISEPTIC' TO EU**
- * **NEUROTECH MARIJUANA NTI164 'REVERSES DYSREGULATION'**
- * **NYRADA DOG HEART STUDY: 'SAFE, TOLERABLE'**
- * **S&P: CLARITY, IMMUTEP, OPTHEA UP; NANOSONICS DOWN**
- * **CONTROL BIONICS 1.7m M-D OPTIONS AGM**
- * **MEMPHASYS REQUESTS 'CAPITAL RAISING' TRADING HALT**
- * **SELECTOR FUNDS TAKES 7.9% OF NANOSONICS**
- * **EISAI BELOW 5% OF COGSTATE**
- * **VITURA APPOINTS DR STEFAN SCHMIDT CTO**
- * **FIREBRICK HIRES KEITH SHORTALL FOR NASODINE IN SINGAPORE**

MARKET REPORT

The Australian stock market fell 0.32 percent on Monday September 9, 2024, with the ASX200 down 25.3 points to 7,988.1 points. Seventeen of the Biotech Daily Top 40 stocks were up, 15 were down and eight traded unchanged.

Opthea was the best, up 7.5 cents or 14.0 percent to 61 cents, with 6.4 million shares traded. Orthocell climbed 10 percent; Amplia was up 5.3 percent; Clarity, Prescient and SDI improved four percent or more; Immutep and Genetic Signatures were up more than three percent; Alcidion, Avita, Dimerix, Medadvisor, Neuren and Pro Medicus were up more than one percent; with Cochlear, Cyclopharm, Nanosonics, Polynovo and Resmed up by less than one percent.

Universal Biosensors led the falls, down one cent or 7.1 percent to 13 cents, with 163,249 shares traded. Compumedics and Resonance lost more than six percent; Impedimed fell 4.2 percent; Micro-X and Proteomics were down more than three percent; Aroa, Cynata, Emvision, Mesoblast and Percheron shed two percent or more; with 4D Medical, Clinuvel, CSL, Imugene and Telix down by more than one percent.

[AUSTCO HEALTHCARE](#)

Austco says Singapore's Jurong Health Complex has granted it an additional \$1.7 million contract to further upgrade its Tacera Care Communications System.

Last year, Austco said it had an \$3.8 million contract to refresh the Tacera Nurse Call platform at Singapore's 700-bed Ng Teng Fong General Hospital and 400-bed Jurong Community Hospital, including its care communications system and real-time location system-enabled call points (BD: Nov 3, 2023).

Today, the company the second phase upgrade would expand the communication capabilities' already in place, including further deployment of its real-time location system-enabled call points to improve staff locating and duress notifications, enhance workflow automation and patient safety features, and continued integration with other hospital systems.

Austco was up one cent or 4.55 percent to 23 cents with 1.1 million shares traded.

[CONTROL BIONICS](#)

Control Bionics says it has appointed the Dublin-based Smart Box to sell its Neuronode patient communication device in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Control Bionics said the commercial terms of the deal were "confidential" but that the agreement was for an initial term of two years, with a minimum order of 10 units and 30 days payment terms, with either company allowed to terminate with six months' notice.

The company said Smart Box was "the leading provider of assistive technology in the UK".

Control Bionics chief executive officer Jeremy Steele said Neuronode had been paired with hundreds of Smart Box devices as well as devices with Smartbox software.

"We're excited to extend this successful relationship to the UK and Ireland for the first time and look forward to building on this strong foundation to enhance the lives of users across these countries," Mr Steele said. "By leveraging Smart Box's expertise and established network, we are confident that this partnership will accelerate the adoption of Neuronode across the UK and Ireland and improve the quality of life for countless individuals with speech and motor impairments."

Control Bionics was up 0.1 cents or 1.1 percent to 8.9 cents.

[FIREBRICK PHARMA](#)

Firebrick says it has filed an application for marketing its Nasodine nasal spray in Europe as a "nasal antiseptic".

Firebrick said the application had passed validation and had entered the "evaluation phase", with Sweden as the reference member state, leading the review of the application, and Iceland conducting a parallel assessment, which if successful would allow for approval in other European countries under its "mutual recognition procedure".

The company said the initial evaluation could be completed by December 19, 2024, with the final approval expected after mid-2025.

Firebrick said that, should approval be obtained or a positive outcome appeared likely, it would begin to seek European marketing partners to manufacture, distribution and market Nasodine to markets including consumers, doctors, hospitals and governments.

Firebrick chair Dr Peter Molloy said: "Filing for approval in Europe is an important step forward in our strategy to make Nasodine widely available as a nasal antiseptic."

"Approval success of this application will initiate access to the 27 countries of the [European Union]," Dr Molloy said.

Firebrick fell 0.1 cents or 1.5 percent to 6.5 cents with 1.1 million shares traded.

NEUROTECH INTERNATIONAL

Neurotech says its marijuana-based NTI164 “[reversed] immune dysregulation” in a 15-patient, open-label phase I/II trial for paediatric neuro-psychiatric disorders.

Last year, Neurotech said the trial of NTI164 for children with paediatric autoimmune neuro-psychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections (Pandas) and paediatric acute-onset neuro-psychiatric syndrome (Pans) met its primary endpoint for anxiety and depression, with a 30 percent improvement in overall symptoms from high severity at baseline to low severity from week four onward ($p = 0.016$) (BD: Oct 6, 2023).

Today, the company said its original trial included an exploratory endpoint at 12 weeks to investigate potential biomarkers of disease passed on “changes to the proteomic and genomic profile” of patients who received NTI164 compared to baseline and control.

Neurotech said Pandas/Pans was believed to result from an epigenetic gene regulation syndrome, and that it had used single-cell RNA sequencing and proteomics to identify cellular “dysregulation” and determine the effects of treatment.

The company said NTI164 was shown to “positively modify immune cell function and gene translation dysregulation, improving overall health and functional outcomes of children”, and that “dysregulated pathways associated with immune function and gene translation significantly reversed with NTI164”, including the methyl CpG binding protein-2 (MECP2), the defective gene in Rett syndrome.

Neurotech said proteomics analysis studied interactions, functions and changes in expression of an organism’s complete set of expressed proteins.

The company said its research showed that NTI164 led to the downregulation of pathways relating to immune function after 12 weeks, compared to baseline and control, while pathways relating to gene translation and epigenetic modulation became “significantly up-regulated”.

Neurotech said it also analyzed its patients’ phospho-proteome, or complete set of phosphorylated proteins within a cell, and found the profile after 12 weeks of treatment to be “significantly modified with many pathways upregulated at baseline subsequently down-regulation, and those down-regulated at baseline upregulated at week 12”, and showing a “significant normalization towards matched healthy normal controls.

The company said its researchers concluded that “Pandas/Pans patients have inflammatory cellular environments due to gene dysregulation, and NTI164 normalized this”.

Neurotech said that “NTI164 appears to have both significant anti-inflammatory effects, as well as potential as an epigenetic modulator”.

Neurotech was up 0.2 cents or 2.9 percent to seven cents with 2.2 million shares traded.

NYRADA

Nyrada says a dog cardio-vascular study has shown that NYR-BI03 showed safety and tolerability.

Nyrada said that the dog cardio-vascular study assessed the effects of NYR-BI03 on heart function, blood pressure, and overall cardiovascular health through echo-cardio-gram (ECG).

The company said that with an earlier study, the dog cardio-vascular study completes the regulatory cardiac safety profiling of NYR-BI03 necessary to begin a phase I study.

Nyrada said that the remaining brain injury studies would be analyzed and reported as they became available and subject to satisfactory completion it would apply for ethics approval for a trial by January 2025.

Nyrada was up 0.1 cents or 1.85 percent to 5.5 cents.

STANDARD AND POOR'S DOW JONES INDICES

Standard & Poor's says Clarity, Immutep and Opthea will be promoted to the S&P-ASX300, with Nanosonics demoted from the ASX200.

Standard & Poor's said the changes would be effective from the open of trading on Monday September 23, 2024.

Previously, Standard and Poor's has told Biotech Daily that inclusion in the indices is based solely on market capitalization.

The Biotech Daily Top 40 Index (BDI-40) is based on quality of science, benefit to human health, board and management, investment potential and market capitalization.

CONTROL BIONICS

Control Bionics says its annual general meeting will vote to issue managing director Jeremy Steele 1,698,113 options exercisable at 5.3 cents within five years.

Control Bionics said that 25 percent of Mr Steele's options would vest each year, from the anniversary of the date of issue, provided he remained with the company.

The company said investors would also vote to accept its remuneration report, re-elect director Damian Lismore, ratify and approve the issue of options and shares, and increase its placement capacity.

The meeting will be held at Level 11, 66 Clarence Street, Sydney on October 10, 2024 at 9am (AEDT).

MEMPHASYS

Memphasys has requested a trading halt pending an announcement "regarding a proposed capital raising".

Trading will resume on September 11, 2024 or on an earlier announcement.

Memphasys last traded at 0.9 cents.

NANOSONICS

Selector Funds Management says it has increased its substantial shareholding in Nanosonics from 19,772,677 shares (6.53%) to 23,907,496 shares (7.89%).

The Sydney-based Selector Funds said that it bought 4,134,819 shares on market for "various" consideration, on "various" dates.

Nanosonics was up one cent or 0.3 percent to \$3.57 with 1.7 million shares traded.

COGSTATE

Eisai Co says it has ceased its substantial shareholding in Cogstate.

The Tokyo-based Eisai said it sold shares between August 28 and September 9, 2024, with the single largest sale 791,614 shares for \$638,041 or 80.6 cents a share.

Separately, Cogstate said that Eisai currently owned 8,510,019 shares (4.983%).

Cogstate said that the sale of shares "does not impact the commercial relationship between Eisai and Cogstate".

The company said that Eisai planned to sell a further 645,396 shares and had told Cogstate "it does not intend to sell any further Cogstate shares beyond this number for at least 12 months".

Cogstate was up 7.5 cents or 8.7 percent to 94 cents with 1.8 million shares traded.

VITURA HEALTH

Vitura says it has appointed Dr Stefan Schmidt as its chief technology officer, effective from today.

Vitura said Dr Schmidt had more than 20 years in product design and conception, digital platform development, and machine learning and artificial intelligence, including for Woolworths, and was Vodafone's head of technology.

The company said Dr Schmidt would assume responsibility for the management and development of its various technology platforms, including transitioning it to a new platform to replace Canview.

According to LinkedIn, Dr Schmidt held a Bachelor of Science from the Duisburg, Germany's University of Duisburg-Essen, and a Master of Information Technology and Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Technology Sydney.

Vitura fell 0.2 cents or 2.3 percent to 8.4 cents.

FIREBRICK PHARMA

Firebrick says it has hired Singapore-based consultant Keith Shortall to help it establish pharmacy distribution for its Nasodine nasal spray in Singapore.

Firebrick said Mr Shortall was recently Johnson & Johnson's Asia-Pacific head of customer experience, and previously its North Asia managing director.

The company said it would pay Mr Shortall consulting fees for an initial 50-days of work to December 31, 2024, as well as 1.5 million share performance-dependent options exercisable at 9.0 cents within three years, valued at \$57,030.

Firebrick said the options would vest on the distribution of its Nasodine nasal spray in either chain or independent pharmacies in Singapore "on or before June 30, 2025".

The company said Mr Shortall's secondary objective was to evaluation distribution to other Southeast Asia markets and partnership opportunities in the region.