

## **COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Prima BioMed Secures Key Cancer Patent**

**17th April 2003**

Prima Biomed Limited (ASX: PRR) has been granted a pivotal Australian patent for its subsidiary Cancer Vac Limited. Cancer Vac is developing a treatment for cancer based on inducing a patient's own immune system to attack tumours.

The granted Australian Patent protects the procedure and immune cell product used by Cancer Vac in its successful Phase I clinical trial, preliminary results of which were announced in October 2002. This latest Patent will remain in force until 2018.

The Cancer Vac immunotherapy involves collecting blood from a patient, extracting a special type of white blood cell from the blood and then "loading" the isolated cells with a vaccine (comprising a mixture of the cancer antigen Mucin 1 (MUC 1) and a sugar that is used to enhance uptake of the vaccine). These primed cells are then re-administered to the patient to stimulate a specific immune response to the cancer antigen MUC 1. The extracted cells are known as dendritic cells (DCs), a class of immune cells known to play a pivotal role in starting an immune response.

Cancer Vac has exclusively licensed four "families" of patent applications from the Austin Research Institute in Melbourne. Each family consists of applications in major countries, including the US, Europe, Japan, Australia and Canada and are mostly at advanced stages of examination for compliance with respective National Patent Law. A number of Patents, including the Patent announced today, have progressed to granted, enforceable Patents. The Patent referred to in this announcement is from Family 3, the group of Patent or patent applications directed at the procedure and immune cell product used by Cancer Vac.

Family 1 is directed to the mannan adjuvant - antigen conjugate, used to prime the immune system's dendritic cells.

Family 2 is directed to cancer antigens believed to be capable of stimulating anti-cancer immune responses. These are synthetic proteins that are based on MUC 1. Patents from families 1 and 2 have already been granted in Australia.

Family 4, like family 2, is directed to cancer antigens, specifically other immunogenic portions of MUC1. This family has recently been filed as national Patent applications in Australia, Canada, Europe and Japan, with an application already allowed and awaiting completion of formalities in the US. In the absence of any interference issues arising, the Patent is expected to be granted very shortly.

The initial stage of the Cancer Vac Phase I trial has been completed, meeting all of the study endpoints for safety and immune responses. In the study, all participants receiving the Cancer Vac immunotherapy generated immune responses that recognised the MUC 1 cancer antigen, with the

treatment being well tolerated by all patients. The original Phase I study has been extended to recruit new patients and to continue treatment in a small number of the original patients to enable the company to evaluate a streamlined treatment program and the effect of ongoing immunotherapy. Cancer Vac is currently preparing for a Phase II trial that will be designed around the enlarged and extended results of the Phase I trial.

The granting of this Patent is significant for Cancer Vac in further strengthening the IP portfolio and protection around the Cancer Vac suite of technologies. This also significantly strengthens Cancer Vac's commercialisation strategy which is currently progressing.

### **About Cancer Vac Limited**

Cancer Vac is a subsidiary of Prima Biomed Limited (65% owned). The company is focussed on delivering better health outcomes for cancer patients through the development of new approaches to cancer immunotherapy. Cancer Vac is developing immunotherapies based on effective Dendritic Cell priming.

### **About Prima Biomed**

Based in Melbourne, Prima Biomed (ASX: PRR) is a biotechnology company with a focus in developing and commercialising technology arising from the field of immunology and cancer immunotherapy that shows potential for commercial returns within three to four years. Prima Biomed holds first and last rights over such technologies from the Austin Research Institute.

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