



**ASX Announcement (155)**

**22 March 2004**

**Placement Raises \$3.7 million**

Virax Holdings Limited (ASX:VHL) today advised it secured binding commitments for \$3.686 million in cash by placement of 7.677 million fully paid ordinary shares or 15% of its issued capital to institutions and professional investors. The excluded offer was managed by Burdett Buckenridge Young Limited, a participating organisation of the Australian Stock Exchange, with its associate Alchemy Corporate Advisors. "This raising is a significant and welcome vote of confidence by the capital market in Virax and its future, based on our recent announcements", said Dr Tom Quirk, Chairman of Virax. The Company expects to issue the placement shares on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2004.

The placement is part of the continued financing of the Company's development program and working capital as outlined in the 31 December 2003 Half Yearly Report.

Part of the program includes enhancing Virax's trial drug production capability and adding value to the Company's intellectual property. In anticipation of this, scientific staff for this aspect of the drug development program has increased from three to six, in recent months.

As described in the Half Yearly Report, Virax is also proceeding with Phase II development trials of its HIV therapeutic vaccine - VIR201. The aim is to fund the substantial trial expenditure from non-equity sources. Such sources include international government and foundation grants that are currently being tendered to leading projects in HIV/AIDS clinical research. The work to attract a commercial partner continues and funding by way of a grant would not preclude additional trials with such a partner.

The positive results from the VIR201 Extension Study were announced in October 2003. Last month, Professor David Cooper AO, the trial's Principal Investigator, presented detailed results at the 11<sup>th</sup> Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections in San Francisco.

Virax CEO, Dr David Beames said "These results are now being further evaluated by the HIV scientific community, having been well received by international peers at the Conference". "We believe this augurs well for finding the necessary financial support for the Phase II trials", he said.

Virax recently advised that Transgene S.A., a French biotech company, had announced positive interim Phase II trial results of a drug using Virax's Co-X-Gene™ technology in the treatment of several types of cancer.

“Transgene recognises that Virax has exclusive rights to the patents for the Co-X-Gene™ technology and that a licence from us will be required to commercialise its product. We are particularly encouraged by Transgene’s success because it further confirms the utility of Co-X-Gene™ technology and, more generally, it provides additional validation for the rapidly emerging new class of therapy known as “immuno-therapeutics” or “immune based therapy” said Dr David Beames.

**Further information:**

Tim Duncan  
Hinton & Associates  
Phone: 0408 441 122

Tracy Hocking  
Virax Holdings Limited  
Phone: 0421 061 166

**About Virax**

Headquartered in Melbourne, Virax Holdings Ltd (ASX:VHL) is a development-stage biotechnology company engaged in the development of some of the world’s most promising treatments for diseases such as prostate cancer, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis B and other infectious and autoimmune diseases.

Virax’s Co-X-Gene™ technology platform underpins the development of immune-based therapies (immunotherapy) – therapies that use biological signals to direct the immune system to treat and defend against disease.