

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Australian Biotech leads new hope for influenza control**

MELBOURNE - 26 September 2017 - Australian researchers could pave the way for a new approach to influenza control with positive results presented today from preclinical studies demonstrating the effectiveness of anti-influenza drug compounds to prevent and treat influenza infections.<sup>1</sup> These data released by Aus Bio were presented at the Global Network Virus Meeting being held at the Peter Doherty Institute in Melbourne.

With Australia currently experiencing a particularly bad influenza season, ongoing research into the control of influenza remains critical. So far this year there has been 72 deaths and thousands of influenza-related hospitalisations.<sup>2</sup>

Internationally recognised influenza expert, Professor Lorena Brown, from the University of Melbourne presenting the results said “This preclinical research is very promising. Our results have indicated that these anti-influenza compounds are extremely potent and have long lasting effectiveness against a wide range of flu viruses including influenza A and B, and the subtype H3N2, the predominant circulating influenza A virus in Australia this year.”

While influenza vaccines remain the cornerstone of controlling influenza infections in the community, antiviral treatments are also vital. Antivirals complement vaccination programs by treating influenza and helping to stop the spread of new influenza strains that have changed since the vaccine was prepared.

The new anti-influenza drug compounds created by Aus Bio scientists control and stop influenza infections in a completely new way by disabling the influenza virus before it enters the respiratory cell. A single shot 12 days before infection completely prevents the disease in preclinical models. In addition, while currently used antivirals need to be given twice daily for several days starting within 48 hours of an influenza infection, University of Melbourne scientists have shown in well validated preclinical models that the Aus Bio drug candidates will effectively treat influenza infections when given once only even 72 hours after infection has occurred.

“As the influenza virus gets smarter and more resistant to our drugs, we need to get smarter with our research to tackle this public health challenge. These preclinical studies are a great example of the ingenuity of the Aus Bio scientists who have developed a novel way to control the infection. I will be delighted to see this translate into better health outcomes for people, particularly the young and old who face the greatest risk of serious complications from influenza,” added Professor Brown.

Preclinical results also showed that the drug compounds are highly effective against the avian influenza viruses H5N1 (“Bird Flu”) and H7N9, both which have pandemic potential.

With the support of Aus Bio’s loyal shareholders and the Commonwealth Government Research and Development Tax Incentive Scheme Aus Bio scientists will continue their work to create a one dose treatment regimen which effectively and promptly controls influenza infection and significantly improves patient outcomes.

-ENDS-



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## About Aus Bio

Aus Bio Ltd. is a public but unlisted, Melbourne based biotechnology research and development company. It develops innovative research program to create new therapeutic products for specific disease states. Aus Bio is uniquely placed to develop the next generation therapeutics to combat influenza as Aus Bio's senior scientists were closely involved, with others, in the design and synthesis of the first neuraminidase inhibitor. Aus Bio aims to design and synthesise new anti-influenza compounds that will result in improved therapeutic outcomes.

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## References

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2. Department of Health. Annual Influenza Surveillance Report. 19 August – 1 September 2017. Available at: [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-surveil-ozflu-flucurr.htm/\\$File/ozflu-surveil-no08-2017.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cda-surveil-ozflu-flucurr.htm/$File/ozflu-surveil-no08-2017.pdf) (Accessed 21 September 2017)