



Proteomics International

LABORATORIES LTD

ASX/Media Release

24 August 2016

ASX code: PIQ

Proteomics International expands diagnostics portfolio to endometriosis

Life sciences company Proteomics International Laboratories Ltd (PILL, ASX: PIQ) is applying its disruptive proteomics technology platform to new areas of significant unmet medical need.

- PILL is investigating protein ‘fingerprints’ that can diagnose endometriosis from a simple blood test.
- Endometriosis affects one in ten women in their reproductive years and costs Australia \$7.7 billion annually.
- The research employs PILL’s proven Promarker platform, which has already been used to develop a predictive test for diabetic kidney disease, and could deliver results within 12 months.

Perth company PILL is investigating proteins in the blood that are associated with endometriosis, paving the way for the development of a quick and easy diagnostic test for the painful condition.

Endometriosis occurs when the tissues that line the uterus spread and surround other organs. The condition affects one in ten women in their reproductive years (15-49) and costs \$12,000 per year for every person diagnosed—both incidence and health burden are comparable with diabetes.

Endometriosis causes chronic pain and infertility but is often difficult to diagnose because the symptoms are shared by many other gynaecological conditions. On average, it takes 8.5 years for women to be diagnosed from their first symptoms. Imaging scans and existing blood tests are inconclusive, so the current gold standard for detection is an invasive laparoscopy, where a camera is inserted into the pelvis through a small cut in the abdominal wall.

PILL managing director Dr Richard Lipscombe said each person has a unique make-up of proteins in their blood. “This protein ‘fingerprint’ can be used to diagnose a wide range of conditions,” he said.

Comparing blood taken from both sick and healthy people can produce a set of ‘biomarkers’—biological fingerprints that can show if people have a disease or not. “In our opinion existing tests fail to serve patient needs and the discovery of new protein-based diagnostics could lead to substantial improvements in treatment,” Dr Lipscombe said.

PILL will search for proteins associated with endometriosis with the company’s proprietary biomarker discovery platform Promarker. The technology has already been used in the development of a novel blood test to predict diabetic kidney disease, known as PromarkerD, for which the company recently signed a million dollar licensing deal. Finding biomarkers for diabetic kidney disease took five years but armed with this experience and advances in technology it is believed biomarkers for endometriosis can be identified in 12 months.

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The lack of understanding about endometriosis has hidden the serious economic burden the disease places on society. The condition is estimated to cost Australia \$7.7 billion annually, two thirds of which is attributed to lost productivity.

It is hoped early detection as a result of PILL's endometriosis study could open the door to new treatments. Once a suite of biomarkers is patented PILL's business model is to licence out the technology using a similar formula to the recently announced PromarkerD agreement.

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About Proteomics International Laboratories (PILL)

Proteomics International is a wholly owned subsidiary of PILL (ASX: PIQ), a life science company focused on the area of proteomics – the industrial scale study of the structure and function of proteins. In the last few years, proteins have become the drug class of choice for the pharmaceutical industry because of their intimate role in biological systems. Thus proteomics technology is now playing a key role in understanding disease, from finding new diagnostic biomarkers to determining drug targets, and discovering new biopharmaceutical drugs.

PILL is recognised as a global leader in the field of proteomics. It received the world's first ISO 17025 laboratory accreditation for proteomics services, and operates from state-of-the art facilities at the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research in Perth, Western Australia. The Company's business model uses its proprietary technology platform across three integrated areas, each massive growth markets:

- 1. Diagnostics:** Biomarkers of disease and personalised medicine - focus on diabetic kidney disease.
By 2020 the biomarkers market is estimated to double in size to \$45.6 billion, and the personalised medicine market is forecast to be worth over \$149 billion.
- 2. Analytical services:** Specialist contract research fee-for-service model – focus on biosimilars QC.
The global biosimilars market is expected to reach \$6.2 billion by 2020, almost trebling from its 2015 level, as it seeks to replicate the multiple billion dollar blockbuster drugs that are coming off patent.
- 3. Drug discovery:** Therapeutic peptide drug discovery - focus on painkillers and antibiotics.
The global peptide therapeutics market is currently estimated to be worth \$18 billion and is expected to increase at over 10% per year during 2016-2025.

In combination these areas offer, respectively, medium term products, near term cash flow, and blue sky potential by harnessing one complementary workflow centred on proteins.

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