



Proteomics International

LABORATORIES LTD

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Proteomics International and QIMR Berghofer Institute partner to target oesophageal cancer

Highlights

- **Proteomics International partners with QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute (QIMR Berghofer) to improve detection of oesophageal adenocarcinoma, the most common oesophageal cancer.**
- **The Partnership will use the Promarker™ platform with QIMR Berghofer biomarkers to develop a simple blood test for a cancer whose incidence is rising rapidly.**
- **The test targets Barrett’s oesophagus, a pre-malignant condition associated with an increased risk of developing cancer of the oesophagus (food pipe) due to acid reflux.**
- **Significant unmet medical need with current diagnosis involving invasive endoscopy and biopsy which requires specialist medical expertise and costs US\$2,750 per patient¹.**
- **Across North America, Australia and Europe over 6 million patients suffer from the disease, with 850,000 of them having endoscopic screens each year in the USA alone.**
- **The collaboration is part of Proteomics International’s strategy to continually expand its diagnostics portfolio in areas of significant unmet medical need.**

Proteomics International Laboratories Ltd (Proteomics International; ASX: PIQ), a medical technology company specialising in novel clinical diagnostics, and QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute (QIMR Berghofer) have joined forces to improve detection of oesophageal adenocarcinoma, the most common form of oesophageal cancer in Australia.

The partnership will see Proteomics International use its Promarker™ platform to analytically and then clinically validate a panel of biomarkers—protein ‘fingerprints’ in the blood—that QIMR Berghofer researchers found are associated with early stages of the cancer. The aim is to develop a simple blood test for oesophageal adenocarcinoma.

Upon development, the test could be offered to patients with Barrett’s oesophagus, a pre-malignant condition associated with an increased risk of developing oesophageal cancer. Barrett’s oesophagus is a condition that affects approximately 2% of the population² and occurs when the oesophagus is damaged by acid reflux.

The American Gastroenterological Association recommends people with Barrett’s oesophagus are regularly screened to check for pre-cancerous cells, with surveillance ranging from every three months to triennially. If discovered early, the pre-cancerous cells can be treated to prevent oesophageal cancer.

QIMR Berghofer medical researcher Associate Professor Michelle Hill, who led the team that discovered the biomarkers, said the blood test under development could fundamentally change oesophageal cancer screening.

¹ www.newchoicehealth.com/endoscopy

² Barrett’s oesophagus: epidemiology, diagnosis and clinical management (2016); doi.org/10.5694/mja16.00796

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“At the moment, patients have to undergo an invasive endoscopy, with a camera passed down their throat to look for changes in the oesophagus tissue, and a biopsy taken. It’s uncomfortable for patients, requires specialist expertise, and comes with some risk of perforation and bleeding,” she said. Endoscopies are also expensive, costing an average of US\$2,750 in the USA.

Proteomics International managing director Dr Richard Lipscombe said the new technology aimed to identify the 5% of people most at risk of oesophageal adenocarcinoma, and prioritise treatment for those patients. “It has huge potential to bring down the overall number of endoscopy procedures, limit unnecessary patient discomfort and reduce the burden on the health system,” he said.

If the oesophageal adenocarcinoma collaboration is successful, Proteomics International will have first rights to license the IP and commercialise the test worldwide. The collaboration will be for one year and both parties will bear their own costs. QIMR Berghofer has patents pending for the biomarker panel in Australia, Canada, China, Europe and the United States.

The collaboration is part of Proteomics International’s strategy to continually expand its diagnostics portfolio, including in-licensing IP to strengthen the Company’s Promarker™ R&D pipeline. Proteomics International’s proprietary Promarker™ platform has already been used to develop PromarkerD, the world’s first commercially-available test for diabetic kidney disease.

Oesophageal adenocarcinoma has been highlighted as a major global health concern, and the incidence is rising rapidly having increased five-fold in Australia in the last 40 years. Across North America, Australia and Europe it is estimated there are over 6 million patients suffering from the disease, with 850,000 of them having endoscopic screens each year in the USA alone.

Authorised by Dr Richard Lipscombe (Managing Director) on behalf of the Board of PIQ.

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About QIMR Berghofer (www.qimrberghofer.edu.au)

QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute was established by the Queensland Government 75 years ago and has a rich history of scientific discoveries and translational medical research. QIMR Berghofer is focused on improving health by developing new diagnostics and better treatments and prevention strategies, specifically in the areas of cancer, infectious diseases, mental health and chronic disorders. The Institute works in close collaboration with clinicians and other research institutes and is home to approximately 1000 scientists, students and support staff. QIMR Berghofer has an active program for the commercialisation of technologies, including those developed in conjunction with academic or commercial collaborators.

About Proteomics International Laboratories (PILL) (www.proteomicsinternational.com)

Proteomics International (Perth, Western Australia) is a wholly owned subsidiary and trading name of PILL (ASX: PIQ), a medical technology company at the forefront of predictive diagnostics and bio-analytical services. The Company specialises in the area of proteomics – the industrial scale study of the structure and function of proteins. It received the world’s first ISO 17025 laboratory accreditation for proteomics services, and operates from state-of-the-art facilities located on Perth’s QEII Medical Campus.

Proteomics International’s business model is centred on the commercialisation of the Company’s world-leading test for diabetic kidney disease, PromarkerD. The Company offsets the cash burn from R&D and product development through provision of specialist analytical services, whilst using its proprietary Promarker™ technology platform to create a pipeline of novel diagnostic tests.

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