



Proteomics International

LABORATORIES LTD

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Proteomics International, University of Melbourne and Royal Women's Hospital collaborate to develop test for endometriosis

- **Proteomics International, the University of Melbourne and the Royal Women's Hospital partner to develop a simple blood test for endometriosis**
- **Tissue bank of biological samples from more than 900 women will be used to validate Proteomics International's biomarkers for endometriosis**
- **The collaboration will also research new biomarkers for the disease building upon the University of Melbourne's recently announced \$3.9 million Medical Research Future Fund's Emerging Priorities grant for endometriosis**
- **Endometriosis affects one in nine women and diagnosis typically takes 7 to 12 years due to the lack of a diagnostic tool beyond invasive surgery**

Proteomics International Laboratories Ltd (Proteomics International; ASX: PIQ) has today signed a research agreement with the University of Melbourne and the Royal Women's Hospital (the Women's) to collaborate to develop a non-invasive test for endometriosis. The partnership aims to develop the world's first blood test for the painful condition, which affects one in nine women and costs Australia \$9.7 billion each year¹.

The collaboration will aim to build on a Proteomics International study that identified protein 'fingerprints' in the blood - known as biomarkers - that could be used to test for endometriosis [ASX: 23 March 2020].

Key to the research is a world-leading endometriosis database managed by the Women's, which contains anonymous biological samples and survey information from more than 900 women with endometriosis. It is the largest and most in-depth endometriosis database and tissue bank in Australia and will be used to validate the panel of biomarkers discovered by Proteomics International.

The three organisations will also collaborate on research to identify new biomarkers for the disease. This study builds upon the recently announced \$3.9 million Medical Research Future Fund grant awarded to the University of Melbourne to improve diagnosis and treatment of endometriosis².

Endometriosis occurs when tissue similar to the lining of the uterus grows outside of the uterus in other areas of the body where it does not belong. This most often affects the reproductive system, and also frequently occurs in the bowel, bladder and other pelvic organs, with the most common symptoms being pelvic pain and infertility.

The Women's Director of Research, Professor Peter Rogers, and leading endometriosis researcher, Dr Sarah Holdsworth-Carson, said that a non-invasive test for endometriosis could save women years of

¹ www.endometriosisaustralia.org

² www.health.gov.au/news/continued-support-for-endometriosis-research

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suffering. "Endometriosis symptoms often start when women are teenagers," they said. *"But because it's so hard to diagnose, girls can struggle with unexplained pain throughout their lives. We're hoping to prevent this with a simple, accessible blood test that can be ordered by a family GP."*

At the moment, there is no simple way to test for endometriosis. The current gold standard for detection is an invasive laparoscopy, a surgical procedure where a camera is inserted into the pelvis through a small cut in the abdominal wall. On average, it takes women 7 to 12 years to be diagnosed.

Under the terms of the agreement the University of Melbourne and the Women's will provide blood samples and Proteomics International will perform the sample analysis. The parties will work together to assess the clinical significance of the results. The collaboration consists of two phases: validation of existing biomarkers (term: one year) and subsequent discovery of new biomarkers (term: open, will end on the date on which this phase of the collaboration is completed). The agreement is non-exclusive. The parties will bear their own costs, with Proteomics International further contributing a nominal fee to assist sample retrieval. Proteomics International will retain ownership of its background intellectual property (IP) and grants each other party a non-exclusive licence to use its background IP for the purpose of carrying out the research collaboration. Newly created IP will be owned jointly by each party that contributes to its creation. The agreement is also subject to the standard terms, conditions, and warranties typical of a contract of this type.

Proteomics International managing director Dr Richard Lipscombe said it was fantastic to be working with Australia's leading endometriosis research team. *"Endometriosis is an area of great unmet medical need,"* he said. *"We're excited to pair our Promarker™ technology platform - which has already been used to develop the world's first predictive diagnostic test for diabetic kidney disease - with the University of Melbourne and Royal Women's Hospital's exceptional clinical database and expertise in this field. It is exciting to think we could develop a world first blood test for diagnosing endometriosis."*

Authorised by the Board of Proteomics International Laboratories Ltd (ASX:PIQ).

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About University of Melbourne (www.unimelb.edu.au)

The University of Melbourne is a global leader in higher education. In the spirit of discovery the University convenes thought-leaders from around the world to tackle complex problems in innovative ways with investigator-led, interdisciplinary collaboration central to its purpose as a comprehensive research organisation. The University works with industry partners and specialist research institutes to address the major challenges that exist in the world. The University is embedded within world-leading clusters of expertise, including the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct, Melbourne Innovation District through Melbourne Connect and Southbank Arts Precinct. The University plays a leading role within these precincts to amplify the benefits of research.

About Royal Women's Hospital (www.thewomens.org.au)

The Women's is Australia's first and largest specialist public hospital dedicated to the health and wellbeing of women and newborn babies. For more than 160 years, it has been advocating for new approaches to improving women's health recognising the different health challenges that women face throughout their lives. As a major teaching hospital, the Women's is central to the Victorian health system providing high-quality care and compassionate care to more than 200,000 women who speak 60 different languages. It is also home to ten research centres, producing world-leading research to drive better outcomes for women and newborns.

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

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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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