

FDA nod for brain disease pill test

Zoe Smith

A daily pill that could change the way Alzheimer's disease is treated has reached a significant milestone.

Sydney-based company Actinogen Medical has made a huge step forward in the development of the drug Xanamem after making an agreement with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The agreement, which provides clarity on a future US marketing application for Xanamem, is being viewed as a major win and strengthens the Australian biotech's position in discussions with potential development and marketing partners.

Key outcomes of the agreement include the confirmation of regulatory starting materials for the commercial manufacturing of the Alzheimer's pill as well as the FDA's endorsement of a single 10mg dose vs placebo design for the pivotal trial.

Dr Steven Gourlay, the CEO and managing director of Actinogen, said Xanamem is the first and only drug to test whether you can slow or halt Alzheimer's disease by lowering tissue levels of the "stress hormone" cortisol, which has long been associated with brain toxicity.

"The new agreement confirms a clear path to approval of Xanamem by the FDA and allows Actinogen to proceed with its planned clinical trials in Australia and globally with confidence," he said.

Dr Gourlay said the FDA feedback on the Xanamem program was positive and meant that Actinogen had the option to take Xanamem to market with or without other biopharmaceutical partners.

"Alzheimer's disease is the leading cause of death in women in Australia and number 2 for men," he said.

"The reasonable and measured feedback from the FDA on the final stages of the Xanamem program shows that the FDA is keenly interested in safer and more effective therapies for this terrible disease.

"Currently available drugs for Alzheimer's disease are modestly effective at best, and Xanamem has the potential to be a safer, more effective and more convenient once-a-day pill."



Queen Mary and former queen Margrethe at Møns Klint, a famous Denmark attraction. Instagram

Pair of queens just ace

Maria Bervanakis

Queen Mary has made a rare joint appearance with her mother-in-law, Denmark's former Queen Margrethe.

Tasmanian-born Mary was in her element as the duo took a tour of Møns Klint, a famous natural attraction in Denmark.

For the outing, Mary looked chic in a brown merino wool blazer by Harris Wharf London, a midnight flora patterned cotton

blouse by ME+EM, and burnt orange straight-leg trousers by The Fold London.

Details of the appearance were posted on the Danish royal family's official Instagram account, together with photos from the day.

Margrethe reigned from 1972 until her abdication in 2024. She was the second-longest-reigning Danish monarch after Christian IV.

From the start, Mary was embraced by Margrethe, who gave the couple her

consent to marry during an official state council meeting in September 2003.

In May 2018, while celebrating then-Crown Prince Frederik's 50th birthday with a royal banquet at Christiansborg Palace, Margrethe praised her son but also dedicated part of her speech to Mary.

"The two of you make Denmark bigger, and you are a credit to Denmark," she said. "You make me so happy!"

Aussies bound to stand by PNG

Mutual defence obligation

Joseph Olbrycht-Palmer

Anthony Albanese has been asked point blank if Australians are "willing to die defending another country" as he prepares to ink a historic mutual defence pact with Papua New Guinea.

The treaty is reportedly legally binding and compels Australia and PNG to defend each other if either is attacked.

It also gives the Australian Defence Force more freedom to operate on PNG's territory.

Speaking in Port Moresby on Tuesday, the Prime Minister said it was unrealistic that Australia "would sit back and watch" if Papua New Guinea was attacked.

"The idea that Papua New Guinea could be under attack and we would sit back and watch ignores the history which is there between our two great nations," he said. "Ignores geography and ignores practical issues as well."

He called Australia's northern neighbour a "great democracy" and said the treaty "is about advancing the sovereignty and security of both of our nations".

Mr Albanese earlier played down concerns that Indonesia might be unhappy with the arrangement.

While PNG officially recognises Indonesia's sovereignty over West Papua, skirmishes occasionally break out between pro-independence militia and Indonesian troops along the 820km border. There is also some political support for the West Papuan independence movement within PNG.

During a morning show

blitz, Mr Albanese was asked what Australia would do "if PNG is in a stink with Indonesia". He replied that Indonesia had been consulted.

The treaty, which has been years in the making, is set to be signed on Wednesday – a day after the 50th anniversary of PNG's independence from Australia.

In a statement marking the anniversary, Mr Albanese announced that Australia would build a new ministerial wing for PNG's parliament.

The Albanese government has kept mum on the details of the deal, publicly acknowledging bits and pieces. PNG's government, however, has not been so tight-lipped.

Citing a copy of the treaty included in a submission to PNG's national cabinet, the ABC reported it declared an attack on either Australia or PNG "dangerous to the other's peace and security" and promised to "act to meet the common danger".

"The treaty is meant to prepare our militaries to be battle-ready and for a very bad day," the submission is reported to have said. "It has the ability to bite and, like a crocodile, its bite force speaks of the interoperability's and preparedness of the military for war."

Talk of war has spiked in recent years as Western governments, including Australia, watch China's rapid military build-up and ever-expanding economic might.

The Trump administration has warned that China could make a move on Taiwan as early as 2027 – a view taken seriously in Canberra, according to government sources.

Probe into Kirk post

A South Australia Police employee is under investigation for social media posts relating to the assassination of conservative US commentator Charlie Kirk.

The Adelaide Advertiser reports the employee shared an article about the shooting and wrote: "Amongst all Gaza, Ukraine, Trump news, sometimes something wonderful happens."

SA Police has confirmed the post is now subject to a Police Complaints and Discipline Act investigation.

The same profile commented about the shooter that "dude has a steady hand", adding a fist emoji.

The Facebook account allegedly responsible for the posts was visible to the public as of Tuesday morning.

Restaurant gas leak kills one, injures six

Emma Kirk

A 25-year old man has died after a gas leak at a Sydney restaurant, despite first responders' desperate efforts to revive him.

Emergency services were called to Haveli Indian restaurant on Garfield Rd at Riverstone at about 9.15am on Tuesday.

Another member of the public and five police officers were

taken to hospital in a stable condition.

Authorities suspect it was a carbon monoxide poisoning.

Several people were evacuated from the ground and second storeys of the building after the restaurant owner called emergency services for help.

Assistant Commissioner Gavin Wood said that the 25-year-old man was found unresponsive, with five police

officers trying to revive him before realising something was amiss and smelling a strong odour in the building.

He said the man was pulled from the restaurant and officers continued CPR, but he could not be saved.

"The five police officers who were involved with the CPR and the intervention in the initial component, or initial part of the process, were extremely brave," he said.

"They've all been now taken to (hospital), where they've been treated for some sort of effects as a result of the odour that's been seen or located within the within the restaurant area.

"We're dealing with a tragedy here - a young 25-year-old male has lost his life."

Police believed the 25-year-old victim may have been employed at the restaurant, but they were still investigating.