Prima Biomed Limited signed an agreement with the Burnet Institute of Melbourne giving Prima first rights to commercialize new developments focused in ex vivo cell therapies for cancer. The agreement enables Prima to broaden its pipeline in dendritic cell-based cancer therapies. It covers two years and is renewable for a further two years subject to consent by both parties. In exercising its first rights, Prima and the Burnet Institute would negotiate commercialization terms.

The Burnet Institute has built a reputation for excellent research into infectious diseases and now also has a broad interest in cancer immunotherapies following the merger of the Austin Research Institute (ARI) with the Burnet in January 2006. Before the merger, Prima had a long-standing strategic relationship giving the company first rights to intellectual property (IP) originating from research at the ARI.

By entering into this strategic relationship with the Burnet Institute, Prima also maintains its long standing relationship with the key Mucin-1 research team originally based with the ARI. Mucin-1 is a molecule patented by the Imperial College in London and secured by Prima through a license with its US partner Biomira Inc. The Burnet Institute and the Imperial College are amongst the pre-eminent authorities in Mucin-1 research and Prima’s licenses ensure exclusive access to both their IP for CVac™.

Since the merger with the ARI, the Burnet Institute has become one of the major shareholders in Prima.

“The Burnet is keen to work with Prima to develop our ex-vivo cell-based cancer therapies through to the clinic. Prima has already successfully taken IP originating from the ARI to two clinical trials of immunotherapy in the treatment of cancer and we look forward to working with them to advance the development,” said Professor Steve Wesselingh, CEO of the Burnet Institute.

About Prima Biomed Ltd
Prima Biomed is a biotechnology company based in Melbourne, Australia and is developing technologies in the fields of immunology and cancer immunotherapy originating from the Austin Research Institute in Melbourne now merged with the Macfarlane Burnet Institute for Medical Research and Public Health.

About the Burnet Institute
The Macfarlane Burnet Institute for Medical Research and Public Health is one of Australia’s leading organizations focused on finding solutions to some of the world’s greatest health issues. The major research and public health focus is on infectious diseases, immunology, immunotherapy and cancer.