8th December 2016

Sector View

Pharmaceuticals

	1 M	3 M	6 M 3	1/12/15
Healthcare	2.6%	-8.3%	-9.3%	-15.2%
DJ Stoxx 600	4.8%	-1.4%	0.6%	-5.8%
*Stoxx Sector Indices				

Companies covered		
ACTELION	BUY	CHF194
ASTRAZENECA	BUY	5100p
BAYER	NEUTRAL	EUR98
GLAXOSMITHKLINE	BUY	1930p
GRIFOLS	NEUTRAL	EUR20
IPSEN	BUY	EUR72
NOVARTIS	NEUTRAL	CHF81
NOVO NORDISK	NEUTRAL	DKK270
ROCHE HOLDING	BUY	CHF285
SANOFI	NEUTRAL	EUR83
SHIRE PLC	BUY	6800p
SOBI	SELL	SEK90
UCB	NEUTRAL	EUR80

Unexpected failure for veliparib in MBC

With the outstanding results of niraparib in ovarian cancer and the pricey acquisition of Medivation by Pfizer, 2016 has been an exciting and promising year for PARP inhibitors. This is when AbbVie comes with disappointing results for its own PARP inhibitor veliparib, in breast cancer this time. Compared to the massive improvement reported by niraparib and olaparib in ovarian, the very modest and non-significant benefit of veliparib raises questions.

ANALYSIS

AbbVie yesterday reported disappointing results for its PARP inhibitor veliparib in locally recurrent or metastatic breast cancer with BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutations. Indeed it was a 290-patient phase II trial with three arms (+/- CT) and so not fully powered to detect a major statistically significant survival benefit (Tesaro's trial in ovarian cancer that reported stellar results back in July was twice as big). That said, median PFS was only brought from 12.3 to 14.1 months whereas median OS improved from 25.9 to 28.3 months. AbbVie sees in the results enough promise to move into phase III. We would be more balanced and would try to understand what could be behind the results in order to detect what could be drug-related, trial design-related or anything else. This may start by reading the results on a group by group basis and despite limited sample sizes try to identify higher response rates in some populations. The combination with either temozolomide or CarboTax is another sub-analysis to make to detect potential differences. Last but not least, 40% of patients recruited were having triple-negative breast cancer, which also requires a specific look.

VALUATION

• In our coverage universe, only AstraZeneca is exposed to the class. However, we have so far cautiously approached Lynparza in BC and so there is limited downside whatever happens, except for sentiment because the Oncology franchise must perform to make the call work.

NEXT CATALYSTS

• 2 February 2017: Full-year results AZN - Click here to download document

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Stock rating

BUY	Positive opinion for a stock where we expect a favourable performance in absolute terms over a period of 6 months from the publication of a
DUT	recommendation. This opinion is based not only on the FV (the potential upside based on valuation), but also takes into account a number of
	elements that could include a SWOT analysis, momentum, technical aspects or the sector backdrop. Every subsequent published update on the stock
	will feature an introduction outlining the key reasons behind the opinion.

- NEUTRAL Opinion recommending not to trade in a stock short-term, neither as a BUYER or a SELLER, due to a specific set of factors. This view is intended to be temporary. It may reflect different situations, but in particular those where a fair value shows no significant potential or where an upcoming binary event constitutes a high-risk that is difficult to quantify. Every subsequent published update on the stock will feature an introduction outlining the key reasons behind the opinion.
- SELL Negative opinion for a stock where we expect an unfavourable performance in absolute terms over a period of 6 months from the publication of a recommendation. This opinion is based not only on the FV (the potential downside based on valuation), but also takes into account a number of elements that could include a SWOT analysis, momentum, technical aspects or the sector backdrop. Every subsequent published update on the stock will feature an introduction outlining the key reasons behind the opinion.

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NEUTRAL ratings 33.5%

SELL ratings 10.8%

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