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Pfizer bids \$100 million for Brisbane app that listens for Covid

A Brisbane start-up promises to detect Covid through your phone's microphone. And now it's just agreed to a huge takeover.

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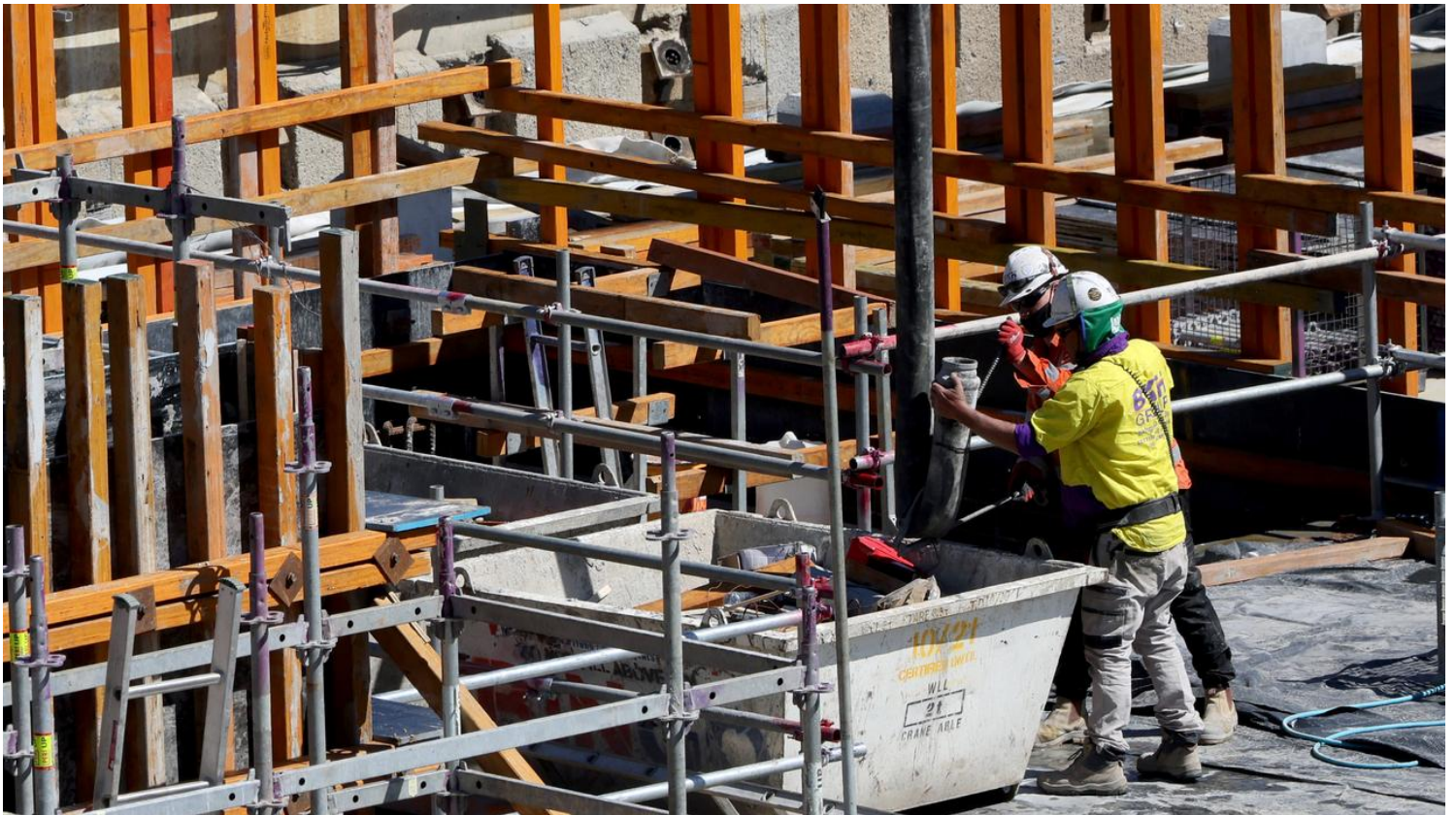


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Britain's Queen Elizabeth said COVID-19 had left "one very tired and exhausted" as she talked to health workers and a former patient about her own experience of "this horrible pandemic".

ResApp, a Brisbane-based company that promises to diagnose Covid-19 through an app that listens to the sound of a cough, has agreed to a \$100 million takeover by pharmaceutical giant Pfizer.

The ASX-listed company made headlines last month when it announced that it had developed an app that

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The company claimed the app's algorithm "exceeds the real-world measured sensitivity of rapid antigen tests". ResApp said in the announcement that it was preparing to gain regulatory approval for the product.



Pfizer developed its Covid-19 vaccine in conjunction with BioNTech. Picture: Justin Tallis / AFP

The algorithm correctly detected Covid-19 in 92 per cent of infected people in a pilot clinical trial of 741 patients in India and the US, ResApp said.

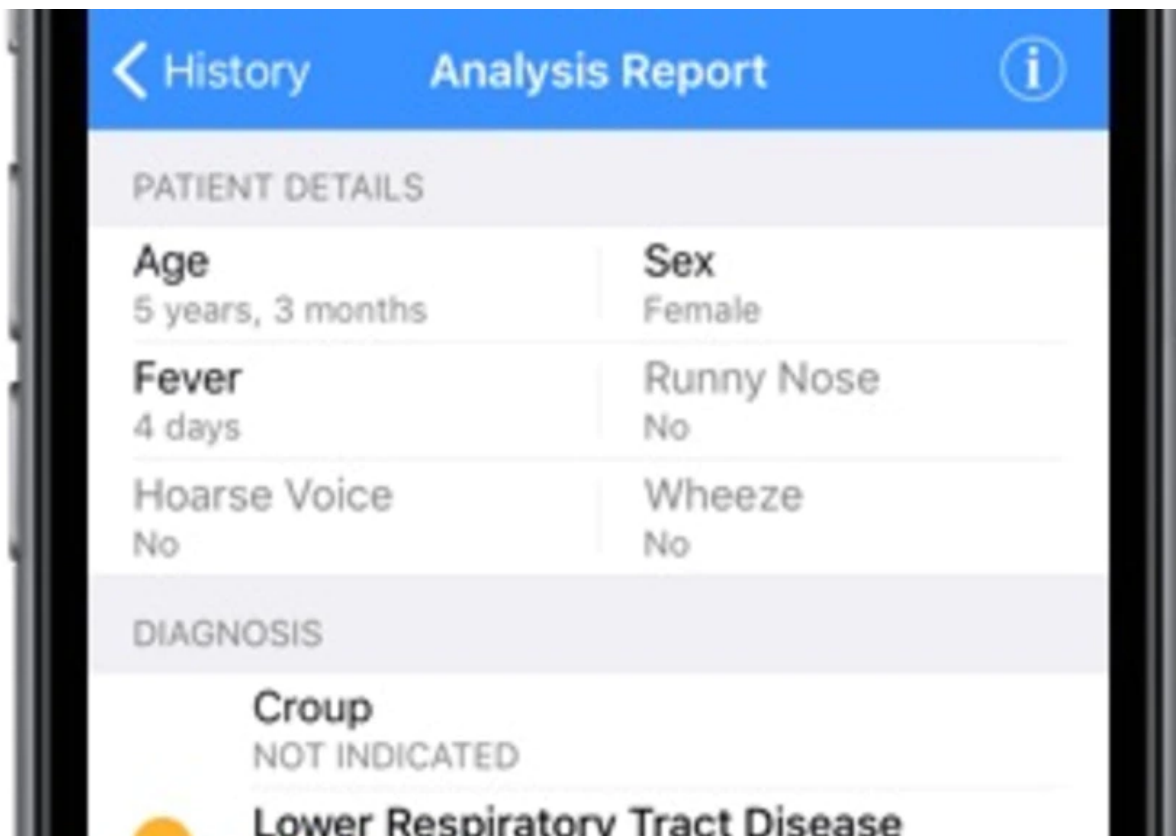
It is based off research that shows the sound profile of coughs contain information that can go to identify its cause. The company's website says this sound is less "compromised" than what a doctor would usually hear in a stethoscope because it does not have to travel through a patient's chest.

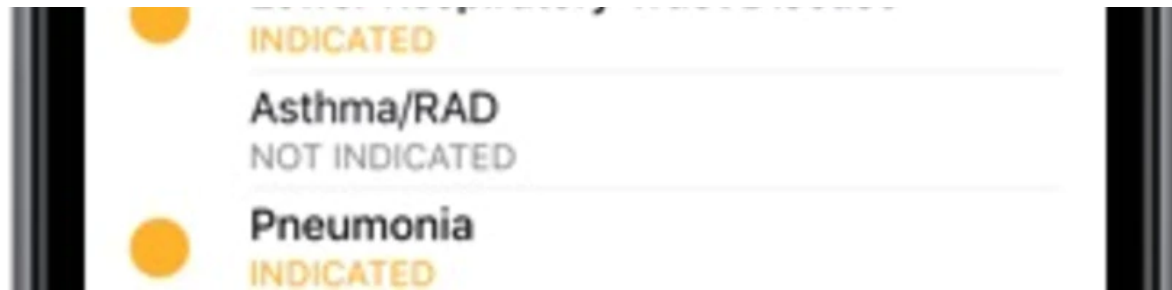


However, Tony Keating told [The Australian](#) that the app cannot entirely replace chemical tests.

“Basically the way we’ve designed the test is that if it says ‘No’ and you don’t have Covid, you don’t have to do a RAT or a PCR test.

“But if it says ‘Yes’ then you go down the normal path of testing.”





The analysis report you receive through the app.

Pfizer Holdings has agreed to purchase every ResApp share at \$0.115 per stock. The \$100 million deal is still contingent on both court and shareholder approval.

Investors pushed up the price of the company's stock by 22 per cent after the announcement.

The CEO of ResApp Tony Keating gave endorsement of the agreement to shareholders.

“We are excited by the prospect of this acquisition by Pfizer, a leading biopharmaceutical company that shares our vision and belief that technology can help transform healthcare and improve patients' lives,” he said.



ResApp CEO Tony Keating. Picture: Supplied

Pfizer and ResApp also announced they would be entering into a research and development licence

agreement into Covid-19.

“This proposed acquisition and research collaboration add to our growing digital capabilities and bolster our efforts to pave a new era for digital health,” said Lidia Fonseca, Pfizer’s chief digital and technology officer.

ResApp says that its app can detect Covid accurately in 92 per cent of infected people, which puts its accuracy above that of many rapid antigen tests.

A Covid-19 diagnosis through an app would not only dramatically reduce costs otherwise spent on chemical tests, it would also expand options for telehealth and increase access to medical care.

ResApp was founded in 2014 based on research by University of Queensland Associate Professor Udantha Abeyratne. The research was funded in part by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The Covid-19 vaccine Pfizer developed in conjunction with BioNTech is the most used of the Covid vaccines in Australia.

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