



GrowthWorks and Business Development Bank of Canada Invest in Virtual Expert Clinics' Innovation for Autism

New Brunswick software company making a difference for families of children with autism receives financial support from leading venture capital organizations in Atlantic Canada.

Fredericton, NB (PRWEB) February 27, 2007 -- Virtual Expert Clinics (VEC), a leader in online software for guiding special needs programs announced today that GrowthWorks Atlantic Venture Fund and BDC's Technology Seed Investment Group have invested a total of \$1.5 million in a third round of venture capital financing. The proceeds will be used to accelerate the company's global sales and marketing efforts.

"With this funding, VEC is poised to grow and broaden AutismPro's positive impact," said Cynthia Howroyd, President & CEO of VEC. Dr. Jeanette Holden of ASD - CARC (Autism Spectrum Disorder - Canadian American Research Consortium) out of Queen's University is conducting a research study on 52 children aged 2 to 9 and their families using AutismPro. "AutismPro research," said Dr. Holden, "has shown that this software program is making a real difference for families."

VEC, founded in collaboration with autism experts from around the world, will use the funds to meet the growing demand for its first product suite, AutismPro, launched in October 2006. VEC is responding to a global need from educators, professionals, and parents of children with autism for expert guidance, training, and resources.

"I am relieved to have found AutismPro," said April Ennis, a mother of two children with autism. "Wait times for therapy services range from nine months to two years in my experience, but AutismPro has empowered our family to help our son Benjamin now, when he really needs it."

"The latest research shows that 1 in every 150 children are diagnosed with autism and that number seems to be continually increasing," said Thomas J. Hayes, President and CEO of GrowthWorks Atlantic Venture Fund. "We are pleased to be investing in a local company whose work has such significant effect not only locally, but internationally as well."

"VEC has developed an online software expert system that empowers parents to be proactive in treating their child with autism in a way that complements existing therapies and works in collaboration with teachers and therapists. BDC is proud to be supporting this very important opportunity," added Steven Abrams, Director, BDC Venture Capital.

About Virtual Expert Clinics

Virtual Expert Clinics (VEC) Inc. develops Web-based software tools for guiding programs for children with special needs. The company's first product, AutismPro Home (www.autismpro.com), is a nine-step subscription-based online software program that allows parents to design, manage and deliver customized therapeutic programs for their children with autism. Other versions meet the needs of teachers (AutismPro Educator) and therapists (AutismPro Professional). Created in conjunction with world-class autism experts utilizing a range of treatment methods, AutismPro offers relief to parents and professionals of children with autism by delivering affordable and easy access to professional tools for program guidance and management.

About GrowthWorks Atlantic

GrowthWorks Atlantic Venture Fund is an Atlantic Canadian venture capital fund that provides tax savings for investors and investment capital for Atlantic Canadian businesses. GrowthWorks* (www.growthworks.ca) is a recognized leader in venture capital fund management with proven experience in the raising, investing and managing of capital. managed funds, including GrowthWorks Atlantic Venture GrowthWorks Fund, the Working Opportunity Fund, GrowthWorks Canadian Fund, and GrowthWorks Commercialization Fund, have approximately \$800 million in combined assets.

About Business Development Bank of Canada

BDC Venture Capital is a major venture capital investor in Canada, active at every stage of the company's development cycle, from seed through expansion, with a focus on technology-based businesses that have high growth potential and are positioned to become dominant players in their markets. BDC Venture Capital has been involved in venture capital since 1975 and has to date invested in more than 400 different companies. It currently manages approximately \$750 million in venture capital assets invested in the areas of Life Sciences, Telecommunications, Information Technology, Advanced Technologies and Funds Investments.

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*GrowthWorks refers to affiliates of GrowthWorks Ltd. and includes GrowthWorks Capital Ltd., manager of the Working Opportunity Fund (EVCC) Ltd., GrowthWorks WV Management Ltd., manager of GrowthWorks Canadian Fund Ltd. and GrowthWorks Commercialization Fund Ltd., and GrowthWorks Atlantic Ltd., manager of GrowthWorks Atlantic Venture Fund Ltd.

The Fund offers Balanced and Commercialization series of shares. Net assets of the Fund, including venture investments, are allocated to a series based on the series' investment program. On December 16, 2005, the Fund completed a merger by purchasing

the assets of Workers Investment Fund Inc. for its Balanced series shares in exchange for Balanced series shares distributed to former shareholders of that fund. Commissions, trailing commissions, management fees and expenses all may be associated with investment fund purchases. Please read the prospectus of the Fund before investing. Investment funds are not guaranteed, their values change frequently and past performance may not be repeated.

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