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RIGHTANSWER.COM AWARDED PHASE II
CDC SMALL BUSINESS INNOVATION GRANT

Midland, Mich. (October 16, 2017) — RightAnswer.com has been awarded a Phase II Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) grant by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The two-year, $999,922 grant will fund the research and development of a mobile application that offers information about the risks of medications during pregnancy.

The application, being developed in partnership with content and technology experts from the University of Washington, will help healthcare providers counsel pregnant patients who have concerns about the possible effects of prescription and over-the-counter drugs on their developing babies.

RightAnswer.com, a software-as-a-service (SaaS) application development company based in Midland, Mich., received a $150,000 grant for the Phase I exploration of the feasibility of the application in October of 2015. The company’s principals, siblings Glenn and Ellen Hallett, say they were extremely excited to receive the Phase II award.

“The grant process becomes more involved at each stage,” says Ellen Hallett, RightAnswer.com’s chief operating officer and VP for business development. “Only a portion of Phase I projects are successful in getting Phase II grants, so we think this is a testament to how valuable this application can be in supporting the CDC’s initiatives.”

Reliable information about teratogens, or substances that can cause malformations of a developing embryo, are typically only offered through subscriptions purchased by large medical institutions and academic libraries for their healthcare providers. “Many healthcare providers don’t have ready access to this information,” says Glen Markham, RightAnswer.com’s corporate business development executive and product director, “especially at the time when they are with their patients. This application would be a major shift, putting teratogenic information about medications at a physician’s fingertips.”

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According to CDC figures, in the past 30 years first-trimester use of prescription medications has increased more than 60 percent. Today, nine out of 10 women take at least one medication during pregnancy.

“This increased usage has high impact, both financially and emotionally,” says Markham. “Each year approximately 40,000 infants are born with birth defects directly attributed to prenatal medication exposure, and birth defects and prematurity alone cost the U.S. about $29 billion a year. This application has the potential to address a huge unmet need.”

Withholding or discontinuing medications, even those with known risks to a developing infant, is not always feasible, Markham says, because many are medically necessary. “This application will help providers and pregnant women weigh the potential risks and benefits of medications immediately. It will also help them consider potential alternative therapies and routes of administration.”

The mobile application is being designed to draw information from the TERIS (Teratogen Information System) database, located in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Washington. “This database provides up-to-date, authoritative information regarding the effects of drugs and chemicals on the developing embryo,” Markham says, “as well as evidence-based information on the developmental toxicity of more than 1,600 agents.” He notes that the database addresses 95 percent of the most frequently prescribed drugs.

“The University of Washington’s TERIS database is really a gold standard of teratogenic information,” says Glenn Hallett, president and chief technology officer. “It’s much better than what many healthcare providers have access to today — if they have access to an applicable database at all. We believe our unique collaboration with the University of Washington supports the CDC’s vision of delivering gold standard information with advanced technology.”

“This application has the potential to enhance the knowledge and awareness of clinical management options for pregnant women in ways that have not been possible before,” says Ellen Hallett, “and the support for this Phase II grant by the CDC provides RightAnswer.com with tremendous momentum to deliver this very important work.”

“The application dovetails nicely with RightAnswer.com’s business plans and product strategies,” says Glenn Hallett. “Our key focus is designing integrated data and technology solutions targeted to specific audiences to support the workflow of experts when and where they need it most.”

SBIR grants help U.S. small businesses complete the often-expensive research and development behind new products and technologies that support health promotion and disease prevention. This grant is funded over two years at $499,961 per year. Year-two funding is subject to the availability of funds and satisfactory progress.

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RightAnswer.com Receives Phase II Grant

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About RightAnswer.com
RightAnswer.com, Inc., established in 1996, is an industry leader in providing Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solutions to meet knowledge and document requirements for the Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) market, including pharmaceutical manufacturers, chemical manufacturers, first responders, research laboratories, and educational institutions. RightAnswer.com’s Knowledge Solutions include perhaps the most comprehensive integrated collection of information supporting the management of reproductive risk available from any single resource, and includes current and continually-updated information from proprietary, licensed and government publications. RightAnswer.com is based in Midland, Michigan, with additional locations in Washington, Colorado, Illinois, and Florida plus over 20 international distributors. Learn more at RightAnswer.com.

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Financial Disclosure Required by Federal Law
1. Percentage of the total costs of the program or project which will be financed with Federal money (100%).
2. Dollar amount of Federal funds for the project or program is $999,922, which is funded annually ($499,961 per year, year two is subject to availability of funds and satisfactory progress).
3. Percentage and dollar amount of the total costs of the project or program that will be financed by non-governmental sources (0% and $0)