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## **Truehope Drags Health Canada into Federal Court**

**Raymond Alberta, February 26, 2007**

On the heels of a Provincial court win, beating back criminal charges brought against them by Health Canada, Truehope founders David Hardy and Anthony Stephan are seeking a permanent injunction against Health Canada in the federal courts. "Health Canada breached constitutional rights, causing deaths and hospitalizations. Canadians deserve protection from an unaccountable bureaucracy," Stephan says.

Truehope was charged with selling its vitamin-mineral formula (EMPowerplus) without a drug identification number (DIN) in 2003. In spite of having the Minister of Health's approval and complying fully with new 2004 regulations, under which Truehope no longer required a DIN, Health Canada proceeded with criminal charges in 2006.

In a decision handed down on July 28, 2006, The Honorable Judge Gerald Meagher pointed out that there was no real health risk in taking the supplement and that ". . . to protect the participants in the Truehope Program from harm, there was no reasonable legal alternative but to disobey the DIN regulation." The judge went further to say that expert evidence showed "It would have been impossible for the defendants to obtain a DIN for the supplement . . . and representatives of Health Canada knew it and were not forthcoming in telling (Truehope)."

In spite of the judge's determination that Truehope must be allowed to continue its program, some divisions of Health Canada seem determined to undermine the Truehope discovery. In 2005, the Canadian Standing Committee on Health determined that the advisories placed on the Health Canada website against the use of Truehope EMPowerplus are erroneous and unsubstantiated, yet Health Canada agents refuse to remove them.

Stephan and Hardy want an investigation into Health Canada's response to their discovery. "Why the negative response to such positive findings?" Hardy asks. "Over ten years, thousands of Canadians have sought our help because typical drug treatments have not worked for them. In an environment where suicide is common and where some medications are now known to increase the likelihood of suicide, we are ecstatic with our success rate."

Pioneering any mental health treatment is not without significant risk, but Hardy and Stephan don't have a choice. "The court has ruled that we would be found negligent if we did not continue to offer our breakthrough treatment and support to Canadians who need it so desperately," Stephan says.

According to Health Canada's CADRMP database, over 17,000 adverse reactions to popular depression treatments have been reported. PAXIL alone had 2,164. "Almost all participants have been successful in making the transition from medication to EMPowerplus," says Hardy. According to Health Canada, many of these medications are very difficult to withdraw from.

Some have criticized Truehope for using non-medical staff to counsel and assist their program participants. However, renowned Harvard psychopharmacologist Dr. Charles Popper testified in court that he learned from Truehope founders how to manage the transition from medications. "They are the experts," he said.

Hardy says, "It is the desire of Truehope to train and appropriately involve physicians, allowing them to implement the use of EMPowerplus into their practices, but proper training and acceptance in the medical system takes time, and we need the Federal Court's protection until such options are available to Canadians."

Federal Court proceedings begin April 10, 2007 in Calgary.

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