

This announcement is embargoed until 10th of August 2021

Flow Neuroscience receives \$9 million in Series A funding to make self-managed medical device available globally

Five global investors back revolutionary depression treatment

10.08.2021 - [Flow Neuroscience](#), creator of Europe's only medically approved transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS) device and behavioural therapy app for depression, has closed its Series A investment round led by Khosla Ventures, CSS group through Swiss Health Ventures and Zühlke Ventures. The funding will advance its existing depression treatment to be more patient-specific and will accelerate the development of non-pharmaceutical self-managed solutions for other mental health disorders, such as anxiety and drive US expansion through clinical trials and FDA approval.

The planned expansion follows Flow's success in treating patients across the UK and EU for the past two years, with its unique headset that delivers gentle stimulation using the tDCS technique to combat depression. The investment round will enable the company to strengthen its offering to the European market, servicing patients in their native language, as well as preparing for US market entry.

From Sweden to the world

The Swedish born med-tech company founded by clinical psychologist Daniel Månsson, and neuroscientist Erik Rehn has grown from humble beginnings to fill the treatment gap between medication and therapy, with its first solution - the Flow headset - being the only drug-free, at-home tDCS depression treatment of its kind to be medically approved.

Global investors have come together to support Flow's endeavour to branch out internationally - a strong endorsement for the cutting edge treatment method. Led by [Khosla Ventures](#), CSS Group through [Swiss Health Ventures](#) and [Zühlke Ventures](#), the round was also joined by Kirin Holdings through Kirin Health Innovation fund led by [Global Brain](#), a top venture capital based in Japan, [SOSV's](#) HAX, as well as the leading San Francisco based patent firm [Schox](#). The cross-continental participants will fuel Flow Neuroscience's core mission to create innovative treatments for mental health disorders that have no side effects, are easily accessible and empower patients and clinicians.

Backing tech for mental health

Michael Rieger, Head Innovation Operations & Portfolio at CSS Group comments: "Flow offers completely new ways of treating clinical depression by applying a technology that has not been available to the general public until now. CSS is investing in Flow so as to grant patients access to this therapy approach and thus to close a gap in the healthcare system."

Dr. Patrick Griss, Executive Partner at Zühlke, adds: "We look for truly disruptive technologies that drive positive change in the world and with Flow we've found that. A treatment that addresses the negative side effects seen with antidepressants and that allows autonomy in how patients can treat their health conditions, is something we are passionate to develop further."

Further to this, the investment from Khosla Ventures, leading US venture capital firm, and Global Brain Corporation together with Kirin holdings, will enable Flow to expand its treatment to the US and APAC, funding clinical trials that will pave the way for market access to patients and clinicians.

Alexander Morgan, MD PhD, Partner at Khosla says: “We are happy to see continued progress with Flow’s medication-free treatment for depression and to reaffirm our commitment to the next stages of global expansion together. Bringing this portable, self-managed treatment to US patients will create a scalable, accessible solution to support the millions of people living with depression. The Flow approach can be adjunctive to other forms of therapy and can be an option for those who have not responded to other forms of treatment. We believe everyone in the world should have access to personalized, data-driven therapies. Flow is also empowering to users, as it provides substantial convenience and privacy; people can use it at home at times of their own choosing.”

Supporting Healthcare Systems and Enabling accessible treatments

Looking to the future, Flow aims to increase its reach and accessibility to ultimately cure and manage mental health disorders. By providing a digital and remote device, Flow is revolutionising scientific research into the effects of tDCS on depression as researchers can recruit more participants and run trials at a much greater pace, without reliance on in-clinic participation. This allows for scalable expansion globally through clinical trial validation and through the development of a similar solution for anxiety.

Daniel Månsson, clinical psychologist and co-founder of Flow Neuroscience, explains: “With accessibility at the forefront, we have a three-fold mission at Flow over the coming years; to advance our current treatment to be more patient-specific and to treat more people suffering from depression; To accelerate our collaboration with healthcare systems to provide alternative options for clinicians to prescribe and a complementary solution to reduce waiting times; And, to work in collaboration with researchers in the field of tDCS to validate further self-managed treatment solutions for a wider range of mental health disorders, such as anxiety.”

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About Flow

Flow is a physical and behavioural at-home treatment for depression that comprises a brain stimulation headset and therapy app. It is the first and only medically approved treatment for depression of its kind in Europe. Classified as a Class IIa medical device, Flow was developed from the fields of clinical psychology, neuroscience and innovative technology. Flow empowers and motivates individuals to take control and self-manage their depression with effective, non-pharmacological, digital alternatives. Based in Malmö, Sweden, Flow was founded in 2016 by clinical psychologist Daniel Mansson and neuroscientist Erik Rehn. Their team consists of prominent researchers in the field of psychiatry and brain stimulation.

About SwissHealth Ventures

SwissHealth Ventures AG is a member of the CSS Group, Switzerland's leading health insurer. SwissHealth Ventures invests in start-ups whose ideas set the course for a high quality, cost-effective healthcare system. Its industry-specific expertise is complemented by the support of experienced venture capital partner Redstone, enabling agile and sustainable growth.

About The CSS Group

The CSS Group was founded in 1899 and has its headquarters in Lucerne. Drawing on its long and proud tradition, the company insures around 1.63 million people and, with a premium volume of around 6.51 billion Swiss francs, is one of Switzerland's leading health and property insurers. It is the market leader in basic insurance, having earned the trust of 1.448 million people in this line of business. With 100 agencies and 2,665 employees, CSS is close to its customers throughout Switzerland. CSS produces information that provides its clients with guidance and support in making decisions regarding health and healthcare.

Notes to editors:

Both clinicians and patients encounter difficulties when it comes to treating and managing depression, with current first-line treatments like antidepressants giving a 50% response rate and leaving patients faced with issues such as tolerance, resistance, withdrawal and discontinuation. Therapy treatments, such as CBT have similar efficacies but can take several months to produce an effect. The stalemate that we've reached has resulted in an increased demand for alternative options, especially for treatment-resistant populations.

Flow treatment typically lasts for 30 minutes per session, with 18 sessions over 6 weeks. Continued treatment is then possible for 1-2 sessions per week.

Flow's headset retails at 459 Euro or can be rented for 45 Euros per month.

Flow Neuroscience's own analysis of over 2000 active patients has shown a 30% recovery rate after 6 weeks of treatment, while 85% of users have reported an improvement in mood.

Quote from Flow user Mike Parsons: "I experience depression as a very personal thing; very intimate, the taboo, the feeling of failure, the late nights wide awake, the anxiety, the fear of making it worse. I managed to grow more resilient and find different ways of coping – a mix of the correct medication helps, talk therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness and exercise were helpful to me. Having tried Flow I found that it encourages a conversation, the last thing you want when depressed. You have to engage with the app via a guided conversation and that gets you used to talking. Talking helps and makes depression about something other than yourself. You are also part of a growing network of users, the Facebook group has lots of voices all of whom have similar issues to you.

Find more user testimonials [here](#).

Watch Flow on the BBC [here](#).

References

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- ⁶ Taquet, M., Geddes, J., Husain, M., Luciano, S. & Harrison, P. (2021). 6-month neurological and psychiatric outcomes in 236 379 survivors of COVID-19: a retrospective cohort study using electronic health records *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 8(5), 416–427. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366\(21\)00084-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(21)00084-5)
- ⁷One in four waiting three months or more for mental health help, says The Royal College of Psychiatrists: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/oct/07/one-in-four-waiting-three-months-or-more-for-mental-health-help>
- ⁸More than 120,000 NHS patients kept on ‘hidden waiting lists’ for mental health appointments, says House of Commons: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/nhs-mental-health-treatment-therapy-waiting-list-appointment-a9079541.html>
- ⁹Lucas Borrione, Izio Klein, Lais B. Razza, Paulo Suen, André R. Brunoni. (2021) Use of app-based psychological interventions in combination with home-use transcranial direct current stimulation for the treatment of major depressive disorder: A case series. *Journal of Affective Disorders* 288, pages 189-190. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17434440.2020.1813565>

About Transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS)

Transcranial direct current stimulation is a form of neuromodulation that uses constant, low direct current delivered via electrodes on the head. It was originally developed to help patients with brain injuries or psychiatric conditions like major depressive disorder.

For further information please visit the [Website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#).

