NEW HAVEN, Conn., May 1, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Prometheus Research, a leading provider of technology and services for clinical research and healthcare, announced today that it has been working with Florida State University to design, build, and deploy a Web-based application of the Early Screener for Autism and Communication Disorders (the "Smart" ESAC) for use in a multi-state pilot of the improved screening instrument. The Smart ESAC is a sophisticated caregiver-completed clinical survey that is capable of (1) presenting intuitive screening questions to a parent or caregiver; (2) dynamically tailoring the total number of questions needed to assess a toddler's risk for developing an autism spectrum or communication disorder; (3) automatically scoring the caregiver's responses; and (4) providing a calculated risk assessment for review by appropriate health providers. Caregivers can conveniently access the application from home or in their provider's office, using a PC, Mac, or tablet computer.

"We wanted our methods to really be usable in the community, so that families can actually benefit from advances in science," said Dr. Amy Wetherby, Principal Investigator for the project, which was funded by the National Institutes of Health. "Autism can get worse as children get older because the autism symptoms themselves interfere with learning and development. If we can catch it early, we can treat it early. Our goal is that all, or most, children with autism can go to regular kindergarten, if we catch it early."

Prometheus Research's deep domain expertise in autism and related disorders made it an ideal partner for the FSU team. "We're proud to be working with Dr. Wetherby on this important initiative," said David Voccola, Chief Operating Officer at Prometheus. "Early screening and intervention are key to improving the outcomes of children at risk for developing autism, and the Smart ESAC seeks to make effective screening more accessible to both families and providers."

About Prometheus Research

Prometheus Research is a leading provider of data integration services and Web-based technologies for clinical research, healthcare, and nonprofits. Their mission is to help dedicated and "accidental" research organizations turn disparate data into repurposable, value-generating resources. Prometheus has earned recognition for its technology and achievements at the state and national levels, including highly competitive awards from the NSF and NIH for small business innovation.