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Recently patented technology promotes early warning of pandemics, bioterrorism, public health issues

Rapid analysis and response in the very early stages of a pandemic or bioterrorism event can sharply limit its deadly impact. Surprisingly, a key early warning sensor for biologically-related illnesses may be the human body itself and Americans self-medicating with over the counter (OTC) treatments for "cold and flu" symptoms. Bracken Foster & Associates, LLC (d/b/a BioSentinel Solutions) has recently been granted a United States Patent for their groundbreaking efforts in the area of retail data biosurveillance. The company may now play a major role in America's pandemic influenza and bioterrorism preparedness efforts.

Current public health monitoring efforts focus largely on analyzing admissions activity at local Emergency Rooms and doctor offices. While these efforts are important they may not provide adequate early warning. Research confirms that consumers self-medicate with OTC products long before seeing a doctor. By the time enough data is accumulated through traditional means, the pandemic or bioterrorism event may have already taken hold. This delay means that critical time for detection and intervention is thereby lost, threatening thousands of lives.

"Trends in OTC product sales provide the very earliest indications of emerging threats to public health from viral or bacterial pathogens," said Todd Bracken, CEO BioSentinel Solutions. "OTC retailers, including pharmacies, grocery stores and mass merchandisers

therefore play an important role in our country's preparedness efforts to combat pandemic influenza or bioterrorism."

Developed in cooperation with major retail chains, BioSentinel equips retailers to fill this important role while fully addressing and alleviating their concerns about the disclosure of otherwise sensitive product sales data and the potential overhead burden of program support.

The recent patent award confirms BioSentinel Solutions' position as the pioneering leader and now positions BioSentinel's superior methodology as the only choice for the collection and processing of retail sales data for biosurveillance purposes.

A division of Indianapolis-based Bracken Foster & Associates, LLC, BioSentinel Solutions is not a typical for-profit operation. The division was formed in the public interest in the wake of 9/11/01 by technology and product development expert Todd Bracken and others to address the lack of effective bio-event early warning in the event of pandemic influenza or bio-terrorist attack. Committed to cross-sector collaboration from inception, BioSentinel Solutions has grown to include a collaborative mix of not-for-profit organizations, public sector agencies, several prominent universities, and other private sector companies.

For more information, please visit www.biosentinel.net.

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