WANTED:

Innovators Who Can Develop the Health Surveillance Strategies of Tomorrow

Attention companies, startups, academics, government agencies, and individuals interested in health surveillance. Take note of this new challenge that was just announced at the 2017 Health Datapalooza.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Public Health Agency of Canada, announced the launch of **The Healthy Behavior Data Challenge,** a competition seeking innovative ways to collect precise wellness data from people's daily activities and to help public health experts make more-informed health policy recommendations. The organizers have particular interest in finding new ways to link data sources and use potential technologies such as wearable devices, social media, and mobile applications. The goal is to find the future strategies that can monitor health and health-related behavior accurately and in real-time, so public health experts and decision makers have the reliable information they need to keep chronic disease under control, prevent injury, and help everyone stay as healthy as they can be.

Traditionally, population health surveillance has needed large numbers of participants to report about their health and behavior through in-person interviews, telephone surveys, or online questionnaires. These methods have had great value; however, over the years, participation has been declining, and the information is only as good as what the participants know about themselves, can remember, or are willing to share directly with an interviewer. New approaches that can overcome these difficulties may provide the next generation of surveillance strategies and data processing. **The Healthy Behavior Data Challenge** will harness this potential and identify feasible alternative options for collecting health-related behaviors in new ways.

The challenge has the following two phases:

Phase I/Prototype Development: Participants will compete for a $30,000 prize, which will be awarded to 6 participants ($5,000 each).

Phase 2/Prototype Plan: Up to 3 teams with the most-promising concepts will be invited to test their proposed approaches for ongoing public health surveillance and compete for a $70,000 prize and CDC recognition.

Parallel data challenges will run in both the United States and Canada, enabling the two countries to learn from their respective challenges, share information, and even maximize efficiency. Starting April 27, 2017, all residents, survey-data experts, as well as innovators in health and technology from both the public and private

sectors, may enter the **Healthy Behavior Data Challenges**.

When it comes to our health, understanding the factors that influence our choices and behaviors are key to creating responsive programs and policies that improve health and well-being. Public health surveillance is crucial in supporting researchers, policy makers, and public health professionals as they advise patients that will help to tailor prevention programs to specific populations, encourage positive behavior change, and identify emerging areas that require public health attention. Please see the official challenge announcement for **The Healthy Behavior Data Challenge** for full details of the contest requirements—including eligibility rules, how to enter the challenge, and scoring.