Reviewer's report

Title: Accounting for Seasonal Patterns in Syndromic Surveillance Data for Outbreak Detection

Version: 3 Date: 11 November 2006

Reviewer: Kenneth Mandl

Reviewer's report:

General
Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

It would strengthen the paper if they mention the following in the discussion:
- reiterate that some previous publications have based performance claims solely on simulated data
- sometimes insufficient data are available to use actual data to evaluate performances
- differences that arise in performances on simulated versus real data can lead to improvements to the simulation model.

These points are mentioned in the cover letter, but could be included in the paper.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:
none