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Wall Street Journal (03/16/11) Jennifer Valentino-DeVries

A new algorithm contest from the Heritage Provider Network, a California physicians group, is offering a $3 million prize for the algorithm that can best predict when people are likely to be sent to the hospital. Heritage is working with Kaggle Pty. Ltd. to run the contest, which begins on April 4 and will last about two years. The goal is to eventually use the algorithm to identify people who can benefit from additional services, such as visits from a nurse or preventive care, which would reduce the need for hospitalization and save costs, says Heritage's Jonathan Gluck. "We just wanted to spur innovation and different ways of thinking in health care," Gluck says. The Heritage contest is one of many open algorithm-creation contests that Kaggle has helped run, including one by Ford Motor Co. to use vehicle data to determine when a driver is distracted. "We've discovered it's a powerful way to do predictive analytics," says Kaggle CEO Anthony Goldbloom. He says that Kaggle will soon launch similar contests for the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Wikipedia, and others.

Full article: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704662604576202392747278936.html