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SaferMe announces new wearable contact tracing solution in US

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SaferMe, the business focused contact tracing provider that was funded and adopted by the New Zealand government, announced that its new wearable contact tracing solution – including a contact tracing card the size of a credit card – is now available in the US for sale to commercial customers, after successful initial trials with medium-sized and large businesses as well as schools and universities.

Initially contracted to provide its contact tracing solution to New Zealand businesses, the company now has a growing portfolio of US customers, including Parsley Energy, Walter P Moore and Walla Walla University.

Clint Van Marrewijk, CEO, SaferMe said, “Our standard contact tracing app automatically logs when people are in contact via a technology called Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE). This data is used to produce a simple contact tracing table, which allows a business to rapidly protect employees when positive cases of a virus, such as the one that causes COVID-19, occur.”

The SaferMe contact tracing card is worn by employees on a lanyard or a clip on the shirt, just as current building access cards are worn. The card is a Bluetooth transmitting device about the size of a credit card and weighing only 18 g. The cards are purchased by businesses in batches of 250 or more.

As an employee goes about their day, the card records whenever the wearer comes close to another cardholder and saves this information on the card. Once a day, or whenever a business chooses, the cardholder can press a button on the card at a syncing station or next to a phone. This uploads the contact logs to SaferMe’s contact tables, and a company’s HR leaders can access these tables in the event that a contact trace is required.

“Where a wearable contact tracing solution really shines is when employees may not have smartphones, or where the use of a phone may not be appropriate, like on a manufacturing floor, warehouse or clean environment,” said Van Marrewijk. “We now have a solution designed specifically for those situations.”

SaferMe received funding earlier this year from the New Zealand Ministry of Business Innovation & Employment (MBIE COVID-19 Innovation Fund) to develop business-specific contact tracing for New Zealand companies, and has partnered with the New Zealand Ministry of Health.