



XpresSpa Group and Ginkgo Bioworks Collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Biosurveillance Program Expands to Include Detection of the New Omicron Variant

11/30/21

The current COVID-19 variant surveillance program is offered at John F. Kennedy International Airport, Newark-Liberty International Airport, San Francisco International Airport, and is now expanding to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

NEW YORK, Nov. 30, 2021 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- XpresSpa Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: XSPA) ("XpresSpa" or the "Company"), a health and wellness company, today announced through a joint effort with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Ginkgo Bioworks (NYSE: DNA), the expansion of its current COVID-19 variant surveillance program to detect the new Omicron variant through its XpresCheck subsidiary.

On Saturday, November 27, the White House announced new travel restrictions applicable to eight African countries in response to a new COVID-19 variant of concern, designated as "Omicron" by the World Health Organization.

"Information about the Omicron variant is rapidly evolving," said Dr. Martin Cetron, the Director for the Division of Global Migration and Quarantine (DGMQ) at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). "We are actively working to scale up this collaborative post-arrival airport-based surveillance testing program to monitor for this new variant in arriving travelers."

On Sunday, November 28, XpresCheck expanded its COVID-19 biosurveillance program to test passengers entering the United States from Southern Africa, including passengers making connections through Europe. The initial COVID-19 biosurveillance program launched in September and provided testing for travelers arriving from India at three key United States airports, John F. Kennedy International Airport, Newark-Liberty International Airport, and San Francisco International Airport, and is expanding to include Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

The CDC's program, conducted in collaboration with XpresCheck and Ginkgo Bioworks, offers two types of free testing options. The first is a PCR test done on a pooled sample collected at the airport on arrival. A pooled test means several passengers' samples are combined together and tested as a group. This approach enables efficient large-scale testing of many passengers entering the country. The second option is an at-home specimen collection kit that passengers can take with them and mail back a sample collected three to five days after arrival into the United States for individualized PCR testing. The CDC strongly encourages all international travelers to get tested three to five days after arrival in the United States. Through this program, results are provided to passengers and public health authorities to help interrupt the chain of transmission in US communities, and detect variants of concern entering the United States.

Ginkgo Bioworks' biosecurity and public health effort, Concentric by Ginkgo, will manage the testing program, which includes genetic sequencing of positive tests to detect presence of the new variant of concern or other SARS-CoV-2 variants. The CDC uses these results for ongoing surveillance purposes, in order to inform public health decision-making.

"Over the past three months, we've been accumulating real-world experience in conducting an airport-based COVID-19 surveillance of international arriving passengers, while refining and streamlining our testing processes to maximize program results," said Doug Satzman, XpresSpa Group CEO. "Now that we've got the network built and running smoothly, we believe we can rapidly pivot to adapt to any new variants of concern, including the latest Omicron variant."

"We stand ready to provide the biosecurity tools and expertise needed to give our public health leaders the weather map they need at this point in the pandemic," said Matthew McKnight, Ginkgo Bioworks' Chief Commercial Officer. "This collaboration with the incredible teams at XpresCheck and the CDC will provide critical information for passengers, for communities, and for national pandemic response."

About XpresSpa Group, Inc.

XpresSpa Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: XSPA) is a leading global health and wellness holding company operating three distinct brands: Treat™, XpresCheck™, and XpresSpa™. Treat is a travel health and wellness brand that will be providing on-demand access to healthcare through technology and personalized services. XpresCheck is a leading on-site airport provider of COVID-19 screening and testing with 14 locations in 12 domestic airports. XpresSpa is a leading airport retailer of spa services and related health and wellness products, with 43 locations in 21 airports globally.

To learn more about XpresSpa Group, visit: www.XpresSpaGroup.com.

To learn more about Treat, visit: www.Treat.com.

To learn more about XpresCheck, visit: www.XpresCheck.com.

To learn more about XpresSpa, visit www.XpresSpa.com.

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About Ginkgo Bioworks

Ginkgo is building a platform to enable customers to program cells as easily as we can program computers. The company's platform is enabling biotechnology applications across diverse markets, from food and agriculture to industrial chemicals to pharmaceuticals. Ginkgo has also actively supported a number of COVID-19 response efforts, including K-12 pooled testing, vaccine manufacturing optimization, and therapeutics discovery. For more information, visit www.ginkgobioworks.com.

Forward-Looking Statements of XpresSpa Group, Inc.

This press release may contain "forward-looking" statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These include statements preceded by, followed by or that otherwise include the words "believes," "expects," "anticipates," "estimates," "projects," "intends," "should," "seeks," "future," "continue," or the negative of such terms, or other comparable terminology. Forward-looking statements relating to expectations about future results or events are based upon information available to XpresSpa Group as of today's date and are not guarantees of the future performance of the Company, and actual results may vary materially from the results and expectations discussed. Additional information concerning these and other risks is contained in XpresSpa Group's most recently filed Annual Report on Form 10-K, Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q and Current Reports on Form 8-K, and other Securities and Exchange Commission filings. All subsequent written and oral forward-looking statements concerning XpresSpa Group, or other matters and attributable to XpresSpa Group or any person acting on its behalf are expressly qualified in their entirety by the cautionary statements above. XpresSpa Group does not undertake any obligation to publicly update any of these forward-looking statements to reflect events or circumstances that may arise after the date hereof.

Forward-Looking Statements of Ginkgo Bioworks Holdings, Inc.

This press release contains certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of the federal securities laws, including statements regarding the potential of Ginkgo's biosecurity capabilities and partnership with XpresSpa Group, Inc. These forward-looking statements generally are identified by the words "believe," "project," "potential," "expect," "anticipate," "estimate," "intend," "strategy," "future," "opportunity," "plan," "may," "should," "will," "would," "will be," "will continue," "will likely result," and similar expressions. Forward-looking statements are predictions, projections and other statements about future events that are based on current expectations and assumptions and, as a result, are subject to risks and uncertainties. Many factors could cause actual future events to differ materially from the forward-looking statements in this document, including but not limited to: (i) the effect of the business combination with Soaring Eagle Acquisition Corp. ("Soaring Eagle") on Ginkgo's business relationships, performance, and business generally, (ii) risks that the business combination disrupts current plans of Ginkgo and potential difficulties in Ginkgo's employee retention, (iii) the outcome of any legal proceedings that may be instituted against Ginkgo related to its business combination with Soaring Eagle, (iv) volatility in the price of Ginkgo's securities now that it is a public company due to a variety of factors, including changes in the competitive and highly regulated industries in which Ginkgo plans to operate, variations in performance across competitors, changes in laws and regulations affecting Ginkgo's business and changes in the combined capital structure, (v) the ability to implement business plans, forecasts, and other expectations after the completion of the business combination, and identify and realize additional opportunities, and (vi) the risk of downturns in demand for products using synthetic biology. The foregoing list of factors is not exhaustive. You should carefully consider the foregoing factors and the other risks and uncertainties described in the "Risk Factors" section of Ginkgo's quarterly report on Form 10-Q filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") on November 15, 2021 and other documents filed by Ginkgo from time to time with the SEC. These filings identify and address other important risks and uncertainties that could cause actual events and results to differ materially from those contained in the forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date they are made. Readers are cautioned not to put undue reliance on forward-looking statements, and Ginkgo assumes no obligation and does not intend to update or revise these forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. Ginkgo does not give any assurance that it will achieve its expectations.

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