Public health workers traditionally have had to sift through stacks of paper-based medical records to identify risks to their populations, a process that does not lend itself to rapid identification of public health threats. Informatics is playing a significant role in providing public health officials with the information needed to quickly identify and respond to threats. A new initiative at the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention known as the Public Health Grid will revolutionize access to data and services. Researchers at APL are supporting the development of services for this initiative as described in several articles within this issue. (This figure is an adaptation of the Public Health Grid originated by Dr. Tom Savel from the National Centers for Public Health Informatics of the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.)