

LAB TESTS ONLINE-UK ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Lab Tests Online-UK Mission Statement

'To increase patient understanding of laboratory tests empowering them to become active partners in their own healthcare'

Lab Tests Online-UK (labtestsonline.org.uk (LTO-UK)) is a website designed to provide patients and carers with easy-to-understand information about clinical laboratory tests.

It is patient-centred: Its primary role is to provide patients and the public with easy to understand information on laboratory tests for particular diagnoses, conditions and diseases

It is peer reviewed: LTO-UK is written by experienced and suitably qualified laboratory doctors and scientists. All content is reviewed and approved by the managing editor prior to publication. The managing editor refers all content for review by non-board members who have a particular expertise, but the board has final approval of the content. This includes news items, test and condition articles, feature and screening articles, and glossary terms. Board members are listed on an Editorial Board page on the LTO-UK website, including each person's name, affiliation, and professional role.

It is non-commercial: LTO-UK does not receive nor seek commercial sponsorship. Support is generously provided by the Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (ACB), the Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) and the Royal College of Pathologists (RCPATH).

Management structure

The LTO-UK Board is accountable to the ACB through the Director of Communication and Publications.

Board members 2020

Chair: Dr Danielle B Freedman

Treasurer: Dr Michael Bosomworth

Managing Editor: Dr Sally Stock

Deputy Managing Editor: Dr Kate Shipman

Technical Lead: Stuart Jones

Marketing and Promotion: Rebecca Powney

Marketing and Promotion Deputy: Iain Woodrow

Patient Liaison: Professor Jonathan Kay

Patient Advocate: Dr Patricia Wilkie OBE

IBMS representative: Dr Michelle Brereton

Royal College of Pathologists representative: Professor Louise J Jones

Administration: Dragana Landup-Horgan

An editorial team and managing editor work under direction of the management board and are responsible for the website content. All editorial work is done on a voluntary basis. Due to Covid-19, the editorial activity was significantly reduced in 2020. The full list of contributors can be found on the website.

Historical context

The Lab Tests Online (LTO) concept was developed into a website by the American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC) and launched in 2001.

Following an agreement between the AACC and the Association of Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (ACB) in 2004 the UK website was launched, with initial funding from the Health Foundation. It was launched by the Minister of Health, Rosie Winterton in June 2004.

LTO-UK is part of an international collaboration of fourteen countries reaching patients throughout the world.

International profile

As of early January 2021, the AACC have sold the Lab Tests Online ‘brand’ and the website to a private US company who have developed commercial strategy for the US website which includes direct sale of laboratory tests.

Whilst ACB retains a license for LTO-UK until 31st December 2022, it is proposed that the board uses this opportunity to review and relaunch the UK platform so that it remains aligned to its core purpose to provide an independent, trusted source of information for the public free from commercial bias.

The website

Although the Lab Tests Online-UK primary role is to provide patients and public with information about laboratory tests used in medical care, it also helps the healthcare professionals understand the many clinical laboratory tests that are used in diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of disease.

The LTO-UK team monitor website activity and identify the popular pages, search engines and links that carry visitors to the website. The content of the website continues to grow and evolve and is reviewed and updated at regular intervals by the editorial team. The independent and professional approach of LTO-UK (which has no commercial allegiance) with review of content by NHS professionals in the relevant laboratory speciality is increasingly what separates it from other information websites.

Lab Tests Online-UK website subscribes to the principles of the Health on the Net Foundation, <https://www.healthonnet.org/HONcode/Conduct.html?HONConduct995553>.

The HONcode is not an award system, nor does it intend to rate the quality of the information provided by a website. It only defines a set of rules to:

- hold website developers to basic ethical standards in the presentation of information
- help make sure readers always know the source and the purpose of the data they are reading.

The website exceeded 3.3 million visits during 2020. The hit rate averaged 250,000 sessions per month, a 9% decrease on 2019, which is a small drop in activity despite the Covid-19 pandemic and associated reduction in normal health care activity. 25% of all hits were from other sites of system linking to LTO-UK and 75% of those hits were from GP systems with integrated links to LTO-UK. Referral acquisition continues to increase as shown in *Appendix 1*.

The biggest source of referrals to the LTO-UK website was from the GP system System One-TPP and Evergreen life, the NHS.UK and the NHS Inform Scotland websites, followed by the Patients Know Best

and Cancer Research UK websites. There is also increased activity from personal health records provided by the University Hospital of Southampton and University College London Hospitals. We continue to expand the number of third party systems who use integrated links to LTO-UK. There is significant benefit from integrating links in this way and with the continued roll out of the Patient Online Programme the referrals should continue to increase.

The following GP systems currently have or are developing integrated links to LTO-UK: TPP (SystemOne), HealthFabric, iSOFT, OMNI lab, INPS, Microtest, DrDoctor, i-Patient and Manage your health (app). In addition we continue to promote LTO-UK via: NHS, UCLH OCS, the Welsh National Order Communications Project and Choosing Wisely UK websites.

The LTO-UK team continue to work with the ACB Scientific Committee and the Royal College of Pathologists to push for new mandatory standards in GP Information Systems that display results directly to patients.

The year has seen an exponential growth in interest in laboratory tests from the media and public and the ongoing monitoring of infection levels and antibody testing are going to be critical to future management of the COVID-19.

2020 website statistics

Total tests: 306	Sessions: 3,380,053	Page views: 5,962,676
Total conditions: 119	Users: 2,545,978	

Publications featuring LTO-UK in 2020

LTO-UK featured in ACB News, *What is new on Lab Tests Online-UK?*, Issue 666, August 2020

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwi8wOeQwY_vAhX5aRUIHTffBL8QFjADegQICxAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.acb.org.uk%2Fstatic%2F4b6bbaa3-60d6-4f65-b0dad6622978e58f%2FAugust-2020-ACB-News.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2bzGNXSSzIQa9wMbIiZOew

and in ACB News, Issue 667, October 2020

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjHhIa4wo_vAhUoTxUIHXyFAJ8QFjAAegQIARAD&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.acb.org.uk%2Fresource%2Foctober-2020-acb-news.html&usg=AOvVaw0wNPdYIsfzx10rq9FQ4y1T

News articles published on the LTO-UK website during 2020:

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/should-younger-adults-be-screened-raised-cholesterol>, *Should younger adults be screened for raised cholesterol?*, 20 January 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/how-well-can-hormone-test-predict-menopause>, *How well can a hormone test predict the menopause?*, 25 February 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/role-nhs-laboratories-covid-19-testing>, *The role of NHS laboratories in COVID-19 testing*, 11 May 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/expert-briefing-antibody-tests-and-viral-detection>, *Expert briefing on antibody tests and viral detection*, 15 May 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/covid-19-and-vitamin-d>, *COVID-19 and vitamin D*, 15 May 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/cholesterol-concentrations-have-been-falling-west-and-rising-asia>,

Cholesterol concentrations have been falling in the West and rising in Asia, 10 July 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/c-reactive-protein-crp-results-could-help-decide-whether-treat-covid-19-steroid-therapy>, *C-reactive protein (CRP) results could help decide whether to treat Covid-19 with steroid therapy*, 3 November 2020

<https://labtestsonline.org.uk/news/nhs-evaluate-new-blood-test-detects-more-50-cancers>, *NHS to evaluate a new blood test that detects more than 50 cancers*, 17 December 2020

Conferences and events

The conference events such as

- 'BSH Annual Scientific Meeting'
- 'ACB FOCUS'
- 'The Annual Conference for the National Association of Patient Participation'
- 'IBMS Congress'
- 'RCGP Conference'
- 'National Pathology Week'

are invaluable for promotion of LTO-UK. Due to Covid-19 most events were rescheduled for 2021.

Social Media

The @LabTestsUK twitter account grows steadily with currently over 1,693 followers. It provides the public with a direct route for engagement with our team and a social media platform for us to promote the website and actively engage with the public and key healthcare and laboratory peers.

The LTO-UK Facebook page has 1550 followers.

The future

LTO-UK objectives:

- patient health advocacy
- make and implement new plans for development and evolution of LTO-UK
- to implement sustainable financial model and 5 year business plan
- to increase annual traffic by at least 10% year on year
- to ensure that GPs have direct links from their surgery to LTO-UK website
- to monitor and assess LTO-UK impact in primary care setting
- to increase links with other public facing websites, e.g. national health related charities and others
- to secure permanent funding to support these activities
- to work with GP and patient record system suppliers to further integrate LTO-UK into patient facing applications.
- to work with the ACB, RCPATH and RCGP to push for mandatory standards for systems that display test results directly to patients.

Financial details

LTO-UK has not searched for nor received commercial sponsorship. This is considered to be important to assure all users of our independence.

LTO-UK is administered through the Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine and does not publish separate accounts. These are included within the Association's audited accounts. It

had a nominal balance at the beginning of the year of £51,399. Total expenditure (excluding VAT) was £27,173. The major items of expenditure are the salary of the part-time administrator and the license fee payable to the American Association for Clinical Chemistry. Total income was £30,000. The ACB contributes to the project both financially and through the provision of additional administrative support as required, and by providing accommodation for meetings, to a total of £10,000; grants of £10,000 each were made by the Institute of Biomedical Science and the Royal College of Pathologists. The closing balance (31 December 2020) was £54,226. We continue to have discussions with patient groups and other professional organisations with a view to securing long term funding. These figures are provisional end of year figures, pending audit.

Lab Tests Online-UK

c/o Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine

130–132 Tooley St, London SE1 2TU

Email: labtestsonlineuk@acb.org.uk

Website: labtestsonline.org.uk/

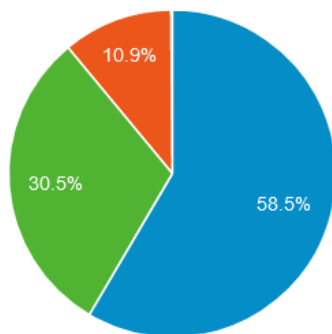
Twitter: [@LabTestsUK](https://twitter.com/LabTestsUK)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/labtestsonlineuk

Appendix 1

Google Analytics Acquisition

2019



2020

