

LAB TESTS ONLINE-UK ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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 diagnosis, monitoring and treatment of disease.

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, or deputy managing editor, prior to publication. The managing and deputy managing editors refer all content for review by non-board members who have relevant expertise in a particular laboratory discipline, but have final approval of the content. This includes news items, test and condition content, and glossary terms. The Editorial Team page on the LTO-UK website lists the non-board members who undertake editing.

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 represented on the Communication and Publication Committee which reports to ACB Council

Board members 2022

Chair: Dr Danielle B Freedman

Treasurer: Ben Nicholson

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: Dr Lance Sandle

Royal College of Pathologists Lay Advisor: Anomika Bedi

Administration: Dragana Landup-Horgan

An editorial team, led by the managing editor, work under the direction of the LTO-UK board, and are responsible for editing and producing the website content. All editorial work is done on a voluntary basis. The editors are invited to claim CPD points via the Royal College of Pathologists or the IBMS CPD scheme. 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.

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

In 2022 the licence for the website transferred from OneCare Media to the ACB, opening up a wealth of opportunities for future developments.

The board will use this opportunity with their new partner, Goldstone, to review and develop 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 ambition is to have the platform fully interoperative with NHS systems to inform patients and healthcare professionals to make better informed choices and decisions around testing.

The website

The primary role of Lab Tests Online-UK, is to provide patients and public with information about laboratory tests. 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 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.

The website exceeded 4 million visits during 2022, an 8.1% increase on the previous year. 27% of all hits were from were from GP systems with integrated links to LTO-UK. Referral acquisition continue to increase as shown in *Appendix 1*.

The biggest source of referrals to the LTO-UK website continues to be the GP system, SystemOne-TPP (59%), and the NHS.UK (19%). Followed by Patients Know Best and NHS Inform Scotland. 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 NHS England Patient Online programme referrals are expected to 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, Evergreen Life, Orbis Health, My Care Centric 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, the Institute of Biomedical Science and the Royal College of Pathologists to push for new mandatory standards in GP Information Systems that display results directly to patients.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 interest in laboratory tests, from the media and general public, has increased exponentially.

2022 website statistics

Total tests: 306	Sessions: 4,034,882	Page views: 7,732,401
Total conditions: 119	Users: 3,016,073	

Publications featuring LTO-UK in 2022

LTO-UK is featured in ACB News, <https://www.acb.org.uk/our-resources/news.html> under the headline 'What is new on Lab Tests Online-UK?'

Issue 675, February 2022

Issue 676, April 2022

Issue 677, June 2022

Issue 678, August 2022

Issue 679, October 2022

Issue 680, December 2022

Conferences and events attended in 2022

- 'BSH Annual Scientific Meeting'
- 'IBMS Congress'
- 'UKMedLab (FNA ACB Focus)'
- 'Primary Care and Public Health'
- 'RCGP Conference'
- 'Best Practice Show'

These conferences and events are invaluable for promotion of LTO-UK. Events targeted are aimed at the public as well as healthcare workers.

Social Media

The @LabTestsUK twitter account grows steadily with currently over 1,919 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 future

LTO-UK objectives:

- produce and implement a new business 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, IBMS, 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 licenced to the Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (ACB) 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 **£57,285**. Total expenditure (excluding VAT) was **£37,621**. The major items of expenditure are the salary of the part-time administrator, marketing and the licence fees. From 2023 onwards hosting and support costs will also be added. The ACB contributes to the project both financially and through the provision of additional management and administrative support as required. Grants of £10,000 each were made by the Institute of Biomedical Science and the Royal College of Pathologists towards annual running costs. The closing balance (31 December 2022) was **£49,664.00**.

In addition, IBMS & RCPATH made one off £10,000 donations and ACB a £20,000 donation in kind of management time during 2022 to support the transition of the licence and site content to the UK, the delivery of a fundraising and development strategy and preparation of funding bids to Innovate UK. This work will be ongoing during 2023.

Lab Tests Online-UK

c/o Association for Clinical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine

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Website: labtestsonline.org.uk/

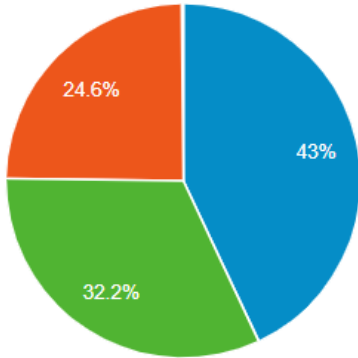
Twitter: [@LabTestsUK](https://twitter.com/LabTestsUK)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/labtestsonlineuk

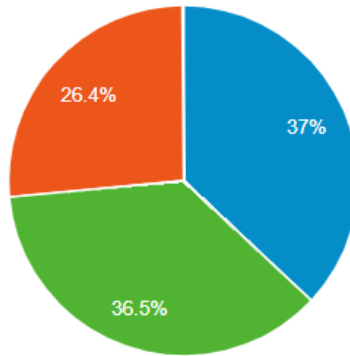
Appendix 1

Google Analytics Acquisition

2021



2022



- Organic Search
- Direct
- Referral
- Social
- (Other)