Lab Tests Online Vision

A public resource on clinical lab testing from the professionals who do the testing

– inform the public about clinical laboratory testing
– increase the visibility of the lab among
  • Policymakers
  • Medical professionals
  • Students
Early History

- **1999-** AACC’s HI5 patient education program launched—paper based patient education on 5 common laboratory tests (glucose, cholesterol, TSH, PSA, hemoglobin)
- **Early 2000-** Industry group recommends expanding HI5 to the web
- **Fall 2000-** Initial editorial group selected with members from five partners (AACC, ACLA, ASCLS, ASM, CLMA), industry supporter agreements reached
- **Jan 2001-** Project formally launched with hire of executive producer
Growing and Maturing

- US site now has over 300 test descriptions, over 100 condition descriptions, and adds a new news article about every 2 weeks
- Is updating about 100 articles/year; all updates are reviewed for substantive edits and these are made available to editors in all countries
- Editorial board continues to meet by conference call every 2 weeks, and performs a number of reviews of updated pages and news articles “off-line”
Globalizing Lab Tests Online

- 2004: UK version
- 2007: Spain, Germany, Poland, Australia, Hungary, Italy
- 2008: Greece, Czech Republic
- 2009: France, China
- 2010: Portugal, Brazil
- 2011: Turkey
- 2012: Korea, Romania (November 1)

By end 2012: 14 languages, 17 countries
World-Wide Traffic

• 2009, 10 sites, total 23.2 million, average 1.93 million/month
• 2010, 12 sites, total 31.5 million, average 2.6 million/month
• 2011, 15 sites, total 30.6 million, average 2.5 million/month (switched analytic tool, reports about 20% less; corrected, 20% up from 2010)
• 2012, 16 sites, projected total 33.4 million, average 2.8 million/month
IS NEEDED?
Health Literacy on Lab Tests

The ability to read, understand, and act on health information

Little research specifically related to Lab testing

This despite the fact that laboratory tests are commonly performed on patients, and that they make up 60-70% of the objective information in physician’s notes.
Health Literacy

The ability to read, understand, and act on health information

Most patients need help interpreting health information

Most health care materials are written at 10\textsuperscript{th} grade reading level

Average American reads at 8\textsuperscript{th}-9\textsuperscript{th} grade level, and 20\% at 5\textsuperscript{th} grade or below
Health Literacy

Consequences of Impaired Health Literacy

In studies, literacy skills are a stronger predictor of health status than age, income, employment status, education level, or racial/ethnic group.

In US, almost 1/3 of population estimated to have problems understanding and acting on health care information.
Health Literacy on Lab Tests

• Laboratory tests are the most difficult part of the medical record for patients to evaluate, as numeracy skills are often lacking

• In one study, only 5-15% of US public are science literate (able to read scientific terminology, understand scientific concepts)
Health Literacy on Lab Tests

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors/Ortho Clinical Diagnostics

- Did survey of over 1000 healthcare users in US; 79% had blood work done in past year
- Only 52% of those recently tested knew cholesterol level, only 35% knew glucose level (<10% of those not recently tested knew these)
- 88% would like results discussed during doctor visits, yet this happened with <40%
Health Literacy

Consequences of Impaired Health Literacy

In studies, health literacy problems are associated with:

• Mismanagement of medications
• Failure to perform necessary follow-up visits and procedures
• Increased rates of hospitalization
• Increased morbidity and mortality
Health Literacy

Institute of Medicine Report 2004

“Prescription to End Confusion”

Described other issues in health literacy besides reading, including numeracy (ability to interpret numbers) and conceptual knowledge – both critical for laboratory tests
Health Literacy

Institute of Medicine Report 2004

Points out that more than reading skills needed; requires:

• Background health knowledge
• Familiarity with health language
• Communication skills
Patient Feedback

“I have never seen a website that explains things as plainly and simple and yet rich in information...keep up your excellent job.”

Provider Feedback

“Excellent, Excellent, Excellent!!! I also appreciate the clear and concise summaries on medical conditions. Its often better explained than my medical text books.”

Media Endorsement

... a masterfully simple page ...

--Washington Post

One of the best medical sites online

--NBC TV
Thank You!