

Survey of ELHT *UpToDate* use, March to May 2016

1. Background

Following trials of three clinical decision support tools (*BMJ Best Practice*, *Dynamed* and *UpToDate*) in 2013, *UpToDate* was adopted as the Trust's preferred tool, with a subscription commencing from Sept 2013. We are now into the third annual subscription period, with use being generally steady; a significant increase in usage has been observed in recent months, which may be related to an awareness session for Education Leads and to FY2s attending an ICG induction. Cost per access is favourable compared to other subscription resources.

Subscription year	Annual cost incl. VAT	Topic hits	Mean hits p.m.	Cost per hit
9/13-8/14	£24665.92	16972	1414.33	£1.45
9/14-8/15	£27388.00	16929	1410.75	£1.61
9/15-8/16 (8 mths to date)	£31911.66	16448 (to 30.4.16)	2056.00	£1.29

2. Top specialties

With content within *UpToDate* grouped into over 20 specialties, hits are recorded against these each month. The specialties recording the highest number of hits have been as follows:

Sub. year	Specialty	No. of hits
2013/14	Gastroenterology & Hepatology	1684
	Neurology	1296
	Infectious Diseases	1293
	Nephrology & Hypertension	1193
	Cardiovascular Medicine	1132
	Pediatrics	1073
2014/15	Nephrology & Hypertension	1618
	Gastroenterology & Hepatology	1524
	Endocrinology & Diabetes	1433
	Pediatrics	1409
	Infectious Diseases	1373
	Neurology	1369
2015/16 (8 months to Apr 16)	Gastroenterology & Hepatology	1057
	Nephrology & Hypertension	928
	Infectious Diseases	662
	General Surgery	652
	Neurology	631
	Endocrinology & Diabetes	619

There is definitely scope for raising awareness and developing use in other specialties, with e.g. Geriatrics, Palliative Care and Anesthesiology among the lowest recorded specialty areas for topic hits each year.

3. Key survey findings

- A survey of *UpToDate* usage was conducted between 3 March and 3 May 2016, with the survey advertised through the monthly *Library @lert*, emails to specific user groups, and further emails through e.g. the Foundation Programme Director
- 75 respondents commenced the survey, with 57 indicating use of *UpToDate* and completing most questions
- There was a particularly good response to the survey from FY1 and FY2 trainees, following a push on the survey from the Foundation Programme Director (Qu 2)
- *UpToDate* is primarily accessed via the ELHT network, but also via home computers and mobile devices (Qu 3)
- Over 84% of respondents reported using *UpToDate* for patient diagnosis and management (Qu 4)
- *UpToDate* helped to change practice (significantly or 'to some extent', see Qu 5) for:
 - Overall patient management/care = 94.55% of respondents
 - Diagnostic testing = 87.50%
 - Medical procedures = 54.81%
 - Admission or discharge = 54.55%
 - Surgical procedures = 48.08%
- 82.4% said that *UpToDate* helped them to locate information they would not find so easily elsewhere (Qu 6) , and 87.7% said it saved them time in identifying evidence-based information (Qu 7)
- The majority of respondents were users of *UpToDate*, but it is clear from Questions 8 and 12 that there could be greater awareness of some features, e.g. What's New, Practice Changing Updates, CPD credits and remote access via Athens (despite all of these regularly being promoted by the library service)
- *UpToDate* is used once a week or more frequently by 64.9% of respondents (Qu 9)
- 71.9% are very satisfied with *UpToDate* and a further 24.6% satisfied (Qu 10)
- The free text responses in Questions 11 and 12 indicate the range of benefits of *UpToDate* to clinical practice and patient care, e.g. for staff working in areas not familiar to them and for saving unnecessary diagnostic tests (the cost implications/savings of this need to be considered when assessing subscription renewal, for which there were several direct expressions of support).

4. Question responses in detail

Q1 Which ELHT Division do you belong to?		
Division	N	%
Diagnostics & Clinical Support	14	18.67%
Family Care	14	18.67%
Integrated Care Group (ICG)	30	40.00%
Surgery & Anaesthetics	10	13.33%
Corporate Directorates	5	6.67%
Student on placement	0	0.00%
Other (please specify)	2	2.67%
Total	75	100.00%

Q2 To which staff group do you belong?		
Group	N	%
Doctor – FY1 or FY2 trainee	28	38.36%
Doctor – other trainee grade	6	8.22%
Doctor – consultant	14	19.18%
Doctor – other grades	6	8.22%
Student – doctor	0	0.00%
Student – other professions	0	0.00%
Nurse/midwife/health visitor	9	12.33%
Allied health professional	3	4.11%
Scientific & technical	2	2.74%
Other (please specify)	5	6.85%
Total	73	100.00%

Q3 How do you access <i>UpToDate</i>? (please select all that apply)		
Access	N	%
I don't use UpToDate	12	17.39%
My own personal subscription	2	2.90%
ELHT subscription via a networked computer	49	71.01%
ELHT subscription via my home computer	24	34.78%
ELHT subscription via an ipad/tablet or other mobile device	14	20.29%
If you have any comments to make about access, please add them here	1	1.45%
<i>Comment: UpToDate is by far my most used resource on a day to day basis</i>		
Total	69	
Total indicating usage of UpToDate	57	

Q4 For what purposes do you use <i>UpToDate</i>? (select as many as are appropriate)		
<i>Responses have been re-sorted into order of highest scoring purpose</i>		
Purpose	N	%
Patient care – management	51	89.47%
Patient care – diagnosis	48	84.21%
As part of a literature search on a topic	41	71.93%
Continuing professional development	34	59.65%
Information for delivering teaching/training	31	54.39%
Drug information	26	45.61%

Patient safety	20	35.09%
Reviewing local policies and procedures	20	35.09%
Graphics/images	14	24.56%
Patient information	14	24.56%
Calculations	8	14.04%
Other (please specify)	1	1.75%
<i>Comment: To see up to date clinical information and to read through clinical conditions/diseases</i>		
Total	57	

Q5 Has <i>UpToDate</i> helped you to change your practice with regard to the following (select one answer for each line) (Responses have been re-sorted into highest relevance)				
Area of practice	Yes	To some extent	No	Not applic.
Overall patient management/care	72.73%	21.82%	0.00%	5.45%
Diagnostic testing	53.57%	33.93%	1.79%	10.71%
Medical procedures	21.48%	33.33%	20.37%	14.81%
Admission or discharge	30.91%	23.64%	25.45%	20.00%
Surgical procedures	30.77%	17.31%	21.15%	30.77%
<p>It would be helpful if you could expand your answer, e.g. with an example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Learning about the monitoring of immunosuppressant therapy. Advances in smoking cessation.</i> • <i>Help to find in simple way all the information really useful, no lost time.</i> • <i>Guidelines access e.g. during orthopaedic on-call to look at management guidelines to decide if a patient needs to be admitted.</i> • <i>Management of difficult raynauds</i> • <i>If I am unsure how to interpret a test result or am less knowledgeable about a condition I might look up UTD.</i> • <i>I have found it particularly helpful when treating unfamiliar conditions, or needing specific guidelines. E.g. treating electrolyte imbalance.</i> • <i>Uptodate is incredibly useful at providing succinct summaries on topics. A quick read can usually give you a reasonable understanding of any condition – in order to better prepare you for a clinical encounter (counselling patients, discussions with seniors, etc).</i> • <i>Additional tests which may be useful when trying to narrow down a differential diagnosis. Explanations to patients and family about a particular disease – easier when you know more about the disease to start with and more importantly current management/treatment options.</i> • <i>Uptodate is most helpful to me when I am initially assessing and ordering investigations for patient – the breadth of the clinical knowledge available helps me make faster and safer decisions.</i> • <i>Very good to look up guidelines I am unsure of.</i> • <i>On managing a GI bleed when on Medicine.</i> • <i>Most up to date test for a specific condition.</i> • <i>Areas of medicine that I do not regularly deal with but arise e.g. patients for surgery with concurrent illness.</i> • <i>Assisted my learning as I am a university student and work part time evenings and is a fantastic tool to assist my knowledge as I aim to progress.</i> • <i>As a pharmacist, I use it to check unlicensed doses or treatment of rare diseases where does are not in the BNF.</i> 				

Q6 Does using *UpToDate* help you to locate information that you would not find so easily elsewhere? (please select one)

Responses	Yes	To some extent	No	Further comment
N	47	7	1	2
%	82.46%	12.28%	1.75%	3.51%

Further comments:

- *Trustworthy reference source*
- *I know I'll get better information from here than in a Google search*

Q7 Does *UpToDate* save you time in identifying appropriate, evidence-based information?

Responses	Yes	To some extent	No	Further comment
N	50	5	1	1
%	87.72%	8.77%	1.75%	1.75%

Further comment:

- *Takes longer to trawl through all information*

Q8 Which of the following features in *UpToDate* are you aware of? (Re-sorted in descending order of awareness levels)

Responses	Use this already	Aware but don't use	Was not aware
Patient Information (e.g. The Basics series)	39.62%	28.30%	32.08%
Graphics	50.00%	12.96%	37.04%
What's new in ... (specialties)*	35.85%	13.21%	50.94%
Calculators	26.42%	20.75%	52.83%
Practice Changing Updates (PCUs)	32.69%	11.54%	55.77%
CPD credits (Athens login required)	9.09%	30.91%	60.00%

*NB This is despite links to 'What's new in...' speciality content within *UpToDate* being included in speciality Knowledge Centres within *ELHT Evidence Hub*.

Q9 How often would you say that you consulted *UpToDate*? (select one answer)

Responses	Most days	At least once a week	At least once a month	Irregularly	Other (please specify)
N	16	21	14	5	1
%	28.07%	36.84%	24.56%	8.77%	1.75%

Other comment:

- *Frequently when on call (general medicine), more than once a week. When in my own specialty (respiratory) rarely use (probably once a month).*

Q10 Overall, how satisfied are you with *UpToDate* as a clinical resource? (select one answer)

Responses	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
N	41	14	2	0	0
%	71.93%	24.56%	3.51%	0.00%	0.00%

Some further reasons for your choice would be appreciated:

- *Great resource, easy access to almost all info you may need to treat patients safely.*
- *Great range of topics. Well laid out and easy to digest. Just a fantastic resource.*

- *Sometimes it's too much information to read quickly, often very complicated and not easy to assimilate quickly.*
- *Easy to use.*

Q11 What do you consider to be the biggest benefits (or disadvantages) of UpToDate to ELHT staff and patients? [38 responses, analysed into broad themes]

Current, evidence-based information, easily accessible

- *Easy access to the up to date medical information*
- *Easy access to evidence based literature*
- *Easy access*
- *Easy access to relevant information*
- *Easy access to evidence based management guidelines*
- *Easy to access on the computers at work as a resource*
- *Easy access and all the information in one place*
- *Easily accessible evidence based resource. Instant information in a clear and clinically relevant format*
- *Easy to use. Lots of useful information consolidated into one place*
- *Easy to access evidence based information at our finger tips to support patient care. Ease of access to evidenced information for best practice*
- *Evidence based information*
- *Evidence based, detailed information*
- *Very informative and evidence based*
- *Excellent source of accurate evidence based medicine – in fact I think as part of departmental teaching up to date evidence should be reviewed to ensure all clinicians are updated.*
- *It's very up to date, and evidence-based*
- *It is a well respected resource used by my medical colleagues frequently, which gives me confidence in the information it presents. It is easy to navigate, and patient information is also included.*
- *Having the most current information all in one place with good references to go to if I need more detailed information*
- *Often the clinical information on OLI is not so comprehensive and covers only a few topics. UpToDate is always my next go to location for clinical information.*
- *Summarizes literature into thorough guidelines*
- *Relevant concise user-friendly*
- *Reliable information quickly*
- *Immediate availability, respected resource. If I quote UpToDate I feel it is recent review material.*
- *Used as a reference source when the usual references have no info.*
- *Very good*

Useful in clinical practice

- *It is in a very readable format with information available quickly in the middle of clinic or ward round*
- *I find that UpToDate is a detailed, regularly updated and evidence based source of information about the diagnosis and management of my patient. It is an easily accessible online tool, rather useful in decision making, in the everyday practise.*
- *Reliable evidence based information available quickly, to inform investigation/management*
- *Helpful in remembering/keeping up to date with specific guidelines, e.g. treating DKA*
- *Very reliable and extensive resource. Useful in clinical practise.*
- *Information on rare conditions when faced on the ward.*

Safe practice, e.g. in non-specialist areas

- *Finding out information when on-call to help in an area of limited knowledge*
- *Achieved safe practice. When unsupported, provides a reliable and easy to navigate system to research previously encountered topics.*
- *Safer decision-making & it avoids ordering unnecessary tests if you know what conditions you're likely to be testing for. Also helps when explaining outcomes & prognosis to patients.*

Patient information

- *Provides good statistical information that can be relayed to patients to give them more specific idea of risks/benefits or seriousness of condition*
- *Patient information isn't as succinct and user friendly as patient.co.uk.*

Disadvantages

- *Improved management, but time consuming*
- *Only disadvantage is that it's American so some of the drugs mentioned are not really used here etc.*

Other comments

- *Do not use*
- *No idea*
- *Do not know about UpToDate*

Q12 Do you have any other comments to make about UpToDate?

[30 responses, analysed into broad themes]

Subscription renewal

- *Please continue the service*
- *Renew the licence!*
- *I hope our Trust will continue to provide access to this - very useful in our patient management - online medical information source*
- *Please continue providing access*
- *Highly recommend continuing ELHT's UpToDate subscription*
- *It is invaluable – please continue the subscription*
- *It's a fantastic resource ... please don't stop the subscription!*
- *It would certainly help if the Trust continues to subscribe to it*

General positive comments

- *Having easy access without needing a password is very helpful*
- *An excellent resource which is utilised far too little considering its potential application*
- *Great tool for quick detailed information on majority of topics*
- *I think it's the best resource*
- *Indispensable*
- *Very good*
- *Very good resource*
- *Very good source*
- *Very helpful*
- *Very useful*
- *Very useful, is an invaluable resource for a junior doctor*
- *Very valuable resource*

Awareness

- *Did not know it was even available for free! Perhaps could advertise more.*
[Do they read any of the library's alerts and other promotional material?!]
- *Would like to be able to access at home without having to pay for personal subscription*
[NB ELHT staff can through Athens password]

Alternatives

- *Is it better than BMJ Best Practice? American website, perhaps BMJ Best Practice more relevant for clinical care in the UK?*
- *Slightly US orientated but no problem*

Other responses

- *-, /, No (x3), Not yet*

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