

TRUSTEES REPORT

2021

The board of Trustees, who are also directors of the Charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report and financial statements of Fungal Infection Trust for the year ended 30 April 2021. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies as set out on page 10 and comply with the charity's trust deed, the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2011.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Fungal Infection Trust (“The Charity” or “The Trust” or “FIT”) is a company limited by guarantee and governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

DIRECTORS AND TRUSTEES

The directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the Trustees.

The Trustees serving during the year were as follows:

Mr P G Oxnam **Chairman**

Mr J C Morgan **Secretary**

Professor J Cooke

Professor P J Folkman

Professor R Hay

Dr C L Pankhurst

New trustees are interviewed and appointed by the existing trustees. Before taking up their positions, new trustees are sent on externally run training courses where appropriate.

Risk Management

The Trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks.

Organisational Structure and Governance

The Trust is managed by the Trustees. The Trust has no paid or voluntary employees. Accounts are prepared by the Secretary on a regular basis and presented to the Trustees at their meetings. The financial status of the Trust is reviewed by a Trustee sub-committee prior to each Trustees' meeting and its recommendations presented to the meeting. A minimum of three Trustees meetings are held each year.

Responsibilities of Trustees

Law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the incoming resources and application of the resources of the charity during the year and of its state of affairs at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ascertain its financial position and to ensure that the

financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities 2005 and the Trust Deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

1. To promote research in all aspects of mycology, mycotic diseases, fungal toxicology and microbial disease (of all living things) and to publish the useful results thereof.
2. To advance education particularly among physicians and scientists about mycology, mycotic diseases, fungal toxicology and microbial diseases in general.
3. To generally support basic research into fungi and fungal disease, train scientists in mycology and related disciplines.
4. To provide information to patients suffering from fungal diseases, in particular aspergillosis.
5. To raise awareness of fungal pathogens and fungal diseases amongst the general public in the UK and internationally.

Review of Activities

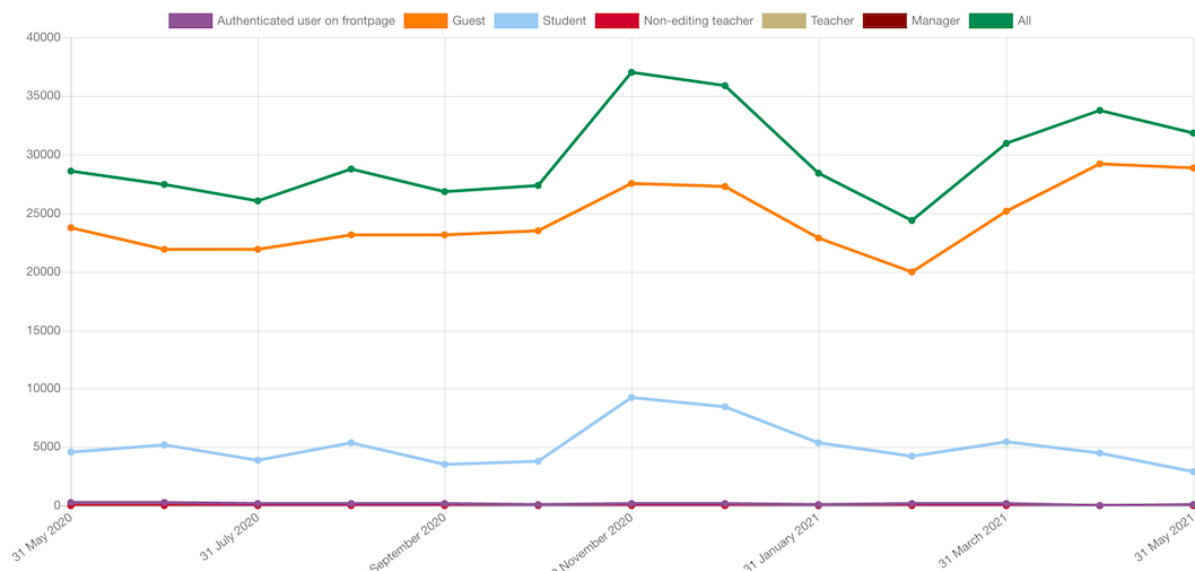
In 2020, the FIT redesigned its website to further support health professional education, public outreach and research. The FIT website (www.fungalinfectiontrust.org) averaged 1000 unique visitors per month in early 2020 (Google analytics), which is a lower number than previously, probably partly reflecting a different mode of data collection.

Online education in fungal microscopy and histology (www.microfungi.net/)

The FIT continues to support the world's first online Microscopy and Histology course (www.microfungi.net/). There are now 1849 users from 132 countries. Typically 2 – 10 users login each day. The top countries are: UK (177 users), Mexico, Brazil, US, India, Nigeria, Argentina, Colombia, Spain, and Ghana (30 users). 1520 users work in English, 186 in Spanish, 82 in French, 55 in Portuguese and 4 in China.

Usage over the last year is shown here.

microfungi.net - All activity (all roles)



[The Aspergillus Website \(www.aspergillus.org.uk\)](http://www.aspergillus.org.uk)

The Aspergillus Website @ www.aspergillus.org.uk

The Aspergillus Website (1998 -) remains the world's most comprehensive resource for the pathogenic and allergenic fungi Aspergillus and the diseases that they cause. It is completely free to all users. It is supported by

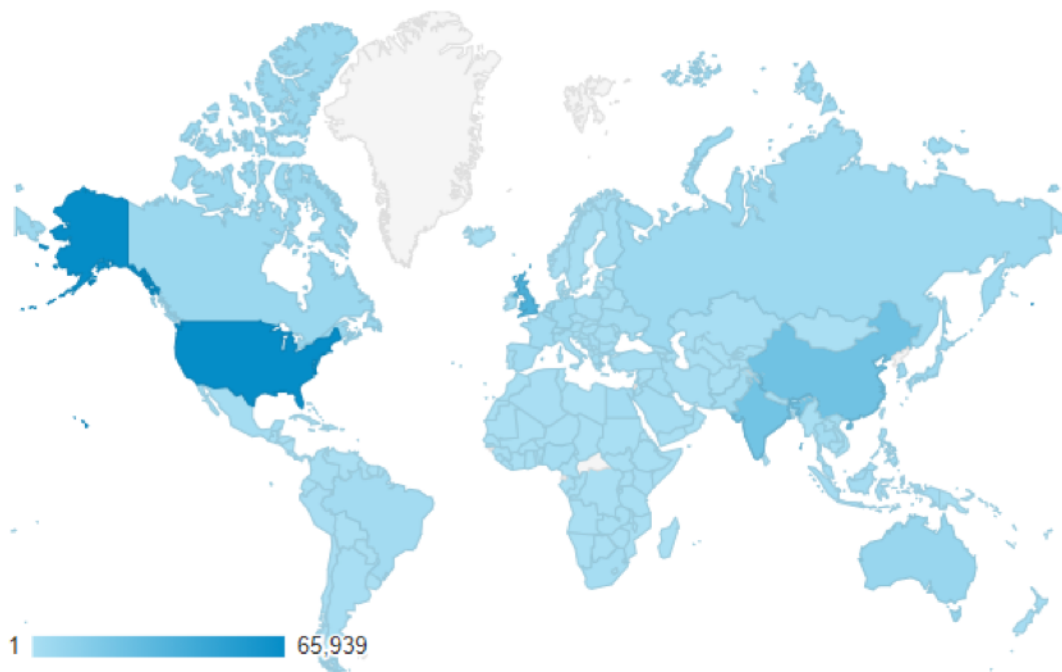
the UK National Health Service and unrestricted educational grants from various corporate donors, notably Mayne Pharma, Pfizer, Dynamiker, Gilead and Zambon.

The Aspergillus Website provides free easy access to >74,000 pages, over 14,000 scientific articles (including a unique collection of 831 historical articles) and over 16,500 conference abstracts from 1974 onwards. Users access the website using their mobile phone in 56% of cases and 42% use their desktop.

The comprehensive list of drugs and drug interactions with antifungals is continually updated. The drug interaction database (including the antifungal drug interaction app for apple and android phones) is popular and well used.

The Aspergillus Website received over 750,000 users in the 12 months to the end of March 2021, viewing on average 2.4 pages each. Externally there are over 23,000 active links to www.aspergillus.org.uk and www.aspergillosis.org. The Website was re-configured into Wordpress 9 from Drupal) in 2020 and this saw a temporary fall in usage.

Mapping of www.aspergillus.org.uk (see figure below for 1 April 2020- 30 March 2021, darker shading = more users) shows that the website reaches people in over 170 countries. USA is the country with the most visitors (24.6%) with UK (13.9%) and China (8.7%) in the next 2 places. India (8.2%), Australia (2.7%), Canada (2.2%), Netherlands (2.2%), Russia (1.9%), Japan (1.8%) and South Korea (1.7%) are all substantial users. .



Website for patients and carers (www.aspergillosis.org)

The Patients Website was transferred to the National Aspergillosis Centre in Manchester, UK and is run independently. This successful transfer has allowed a greater focus on patient needs than was possible previously and relieved the FIT of the burden of supervising and supporting it.

Leading International Fungal Education (LIFE) (www.LIFE-Worldwide.org)

The LIFE worldwide website received on average ~45,000 unique page views each month. These figures do not include the popular videos on YouTube, which include the following selection from >60 videos online:

Fluconazole >65,000 views

Itraconazole: >25,000 views

Voriconazole: >17,000 views

Amphotericin B: > 7,000 views

Antifungals and pregnancy/breastfeeding: >5,800 views

Flucytosine: >800 views

Invasive candidiasis: >2,000 views

Oesophageal candidiasis: >2,800 views

Intra-abdominal candidiasis: >3,800 views

Radiology of chronic pulmonary aspergillosis: >500 views

Radiology of ABPA: >750 views

Galactomannan testing interpretation: >1,400 views

Surgical treatment of chronic pulmonary aspergillosis: >700 views

ABPA management: >2,400 views

Antifungal management of cryptococcal meningitis: >5000 views

Immune reconstitution syndrome of cryptococcal meningitis in AIDS: >1,800 views

On the main website, English searches accounted for 56% of usage, Spanish for 30%, and the remainder not specified.

The US accounts for 24% of all users followed by Mexico (12.4%), India (9.9%), the UK (4.9%), Colombia (4.4%), Spain (3.5%), Argentina (2.3%), Peru (2.3%), Chile (2.2%) and Philippines (2.1%). The majority of users (54%) use a mobile device to access LIFE worldwide.

A component of the LIFE effort was to boost public awareness of fungal infections generally. This has involved estimating the burden of serious fungal disease in over 100 countries, to highlight the seriousness of a range of primary and secondary fungal diseases. Additions since last year's report are underlined.

- Published in journals (x72): Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo (Republic of), Cote d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. Published burden papers are available at <https://www.gaffi.org/media/academic-papers/>.
- Presented in abstract/poster form at conferences but not yet published (x20): Azerbaijan, Australia, Belarus, Benin, Iraq, Indonesia, Japan, Madagascar, Mongolia, Morocco, New Zealand, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Togo, Venezuela, Zambia (copies are available on the LIFE website in the news section <http://www.life-worldwide.org/media-centre/news>).

The FIT also supported a number of interesting and significant findings. There were 11 peer-reviewed publications in calendar year 2020 as a direct consequence of FIT grants and collaborations. Burden of fungal disease estimates (as above) and infrastructure support in prior years are shown in Appendix 1. The notable outputs include:

- A new mechanism of azole resistance in *Aspergillus* (negative cofactor 2), published in the prestigious journal Nature Communications,
- Country burden of disease estimates for 5 countries including China,
- A review of the Russian space programme developed antiseptic miramistin, in clinical use in Soviet Bloc countries,
- Risk factors for relapse in chronic pulmonary aspergillosis.

During the year support was given to research projects at the University of Manchester, the Gulu University Medical School, Uganda, the University of Buea, Yaoundé, Cameroon and to St George's University Hospitals Trust, London. Travel and Living Allowance Grants for attendance and presentation at scientific conferences totalling Nil (2020 £2,517) were made during the year as part of the Trust's policy to support scientists in the early stages of their careers in mycology. No grant requests were received in the year because of the restrictions placed on global travel by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who benefited from the Trust's Activities?

Research workers in mycology, respiratory medicine and infectious diseases from all over the world

Medical doctors, especially through the Drug Interactions database
Patients and their carers.
Students of medicine, pharmacy, biology and microbiology
The public – school children, their teachers and parents.

How do the Trust's Activities Benefit the Public?

Awareness of fungal disease remains low among the general public. The FIT website enables the public to access reliable information quickly on this topic, augmented by the more specialised web resources at LIFE-Worldwide and the Aspergillus Website. The rebranded FIT website also re-posts press and general stories and explanatory articles for easy access for all.

Future plans

The LIFE-Worldwide website and resource has been rebranded and will be relaunched in Q3 2021. The educational videos section of this website is gradually being expanded with additional material. Social media efforts are also being expanded. The Aspergillus Website continues to provide a valuable resource internationally. The FIT will respond to grant requests as it has done previously.

FINANCIAL REVIEW,

The results for the period are set out on page 8. There was a surplus of Income over Expenditure for the year of £-36,150, (2020 - £76,951). Corporate Governance expenditure represented 14.50% of total income (2020 2.20%).

During the period the Fungal Infection Trust Website was re-designed at a cost of £15,383. As a result of the restrictions placed upon us because of the COVID-19 Pandemic all Trustees meetings were held using Zoom as a consequence no Trustees Expenses or Meeting Costs were incurred.

During the year a donation was received in memory of the late Mrs Stella Huskisson, who had suffered from ABPA. This money has been used to create a Designated Fund to support research in the United Kingdom into *Aspergillosis* (see Note 10).

Investment Policy

The trustees do not consider that they have sufficient free reserves to invest surplus funds for any medium to long term. Consequently, funds are maintained in a bank deposit account

Reserves Policy

The charity have established a policy to maintain unrestricted funds not committed or invested in fixed assets i.e. 'free reserves' at a level of between one and two years of unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient levels of funds to be able to continue the current activities of the charity and to provide sufficient time to consider and replace existing funding sources should there be a significant change in present funding arrangements. The reserves policy is reviewed annually.

Secretariat

The Trustees wish to express their appreciation of the work undertaken by Mr J Morgan in running the secretariat and administrative functions of the Trust during the past year.

Independent Examiner

In accordance with the Trust Deed, a proposal to re-appoint Company Solutions Limited for the forthcoming year will be put to the general meeting.

On behalf of the Trustees

Phillip Oxnam

22 September 2021