

FUNGAL INFECTION TRUST

TRUSTEES REPORT

30 APRIL 2023

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TRUSTEES' REPORT

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 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies as set out on page 11 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 (resigned 5 October 2022)

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 recognise they 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;

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- 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 Review of Activities

The FIT website (www.fungalinfectiontrust.org) averaged ~660 (range 359 – 856) unique visitors per month over the years 2022 and 2023. The most popular pages after the home page are What we do, Research grants, Fungal Diseases - Skin, hair and nail infection and Fungal Disease Awareness week.

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

The FIT supports the world's first online Microscopy and Histology course. To date this course has hosted nearly 3,000 distinct users from over 130 countries, a 27% increase in users over the year 2022-2023. This can be attributed to the targeted marketing that has taken place to promote the new updated resources in Modules 2 and 3. In 2023 alone, almost 5,000 individual sessions were recorded on the platform.

Analytics has shown that the majority of traffic is coming to this platform using direct links. This indicates that people are typing in the web address (rather than using a Search Engine). This can be attributed to leaflet distribution at major international events during 2022-2023. The Mycology Reference Centre Manchester is also providing a significant percentage of new traffic. Microfungi has a global reach. In the last year we saw users registering from 110 different countries. The main audiences are shown below.

Country	Percentage of audience
United Kingdom	25%
China	16%
United States	13%
India	4%
Columbia	2%
Spain	2%

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Brazil	2%
Malaysia	2%
Saudi Arabia	2%
Netherlands	2%

Table 1: Audience breakdown by country Jun 2022- May 23

All those registered on the course can re-enter the course at any time to refresh their knowledge. This makes microfungi an invaluable life-long learning tool for all healthcare practitioners.

The Aspergillus Website (www.aspergillus.org.uk)

The Aspergillus Website celebrates its 25th year in 2023. The Aspergillus Website is the world's most comprehensive resource for the pathogenic and allergenic fungi Aspergillus and all the diseases this group of fungi cause. It is completely free to all users.

The Aspergillus Website is still read very widely across the world, with China, USA UK, India, Australia, Germany Canada, Philippines, France and Russia the most frequent users. The prominence of two non-English speaking countries in the top 6 (and 4 more in the top 10) may reflect our decision to add in automatic language translation of the entire website when the website was moved to WordPress. It has about 10,000 unique visitors monthly.

The Aspergillus Website provides free easy access to >74,000 pages, over 15,800 scientific articles (including a unique collection of 836 historical articles) and over 17,200 conference abstracts from 1974 onwards. The Aspergillus Website is primarily viewed on desktop computers compared to mobile phones (33%), possibly reflecting the professional nature of its users and most of the rest of the world use mobile phones to browse websites.

The Aspergillus Website hosts a comprehensive list of drug-drug interactions with antifungals which is continually updated. This drug interaction database (www.aspergillus.org.uk/antifungal-drug-interactions/) (including the antifungal drug interaction app for android phones) is popular and well used. Links from other websites to this specific part of the website have been added.

In 2022, 38 newly registered drugs were added into the database, with new entries reflecting the interactions that exist with the antifungal agents. In addition 32 entries were updated with new information. The new antifungal ibrexafungerp was added. A new administration section for the website has been added with enhanced functionality allowing multiple sections to be updated without the need to jump back and forth between pages.

Leading International Fungal Education (LIFE) (www.fungaleducation.org)

Education of healthcare professionals is a key need to improve diagnosis and therapy. The LIFE website has been operating since 2012 with the objective of providing education on this highly specialised topic for clinicians (www.LIFE-worldwide.org.uk). The English language version is predominantly viewed from USA, UK, India, Philippines and China, with over 4,000 new users monthly. The whole LIFE website is also available in Spanish. The Spanish language version receives about 2000 users monthly from USA, UK, Mexico, Spain and Colombia.

The most popular pages on the English version are the Guidelines page, Trichophyton, prevalence of fungal infections, fact sheets, seborrheic dermatitis and tinea.

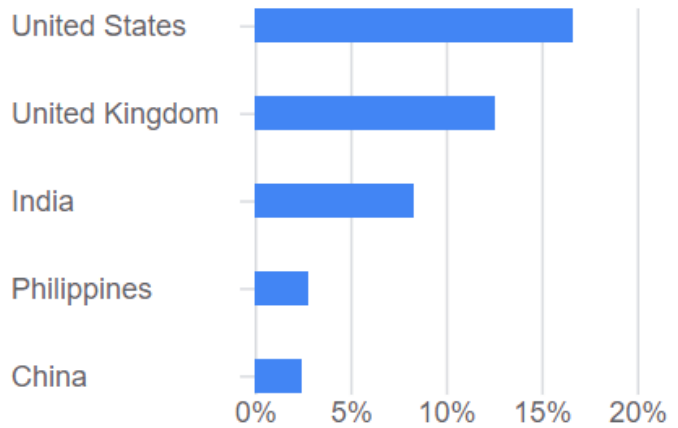
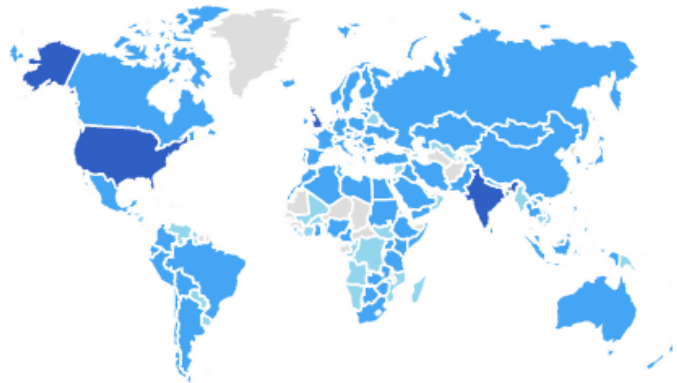
On the Spanish version, the most popular pages are jobs and careers, tinea imbricata, dimorphic fungi, microscopy, antigen testing and Candida.

LIFE's YouTube channel was setup in 2017 and has 3,900 subscribers

(www.youtube.com/channel/UCMbjRZb4EofRTkKK9yHU8qQ). It continues to be a very important component of the LIFE Worldwide educational offering. It hosts 111 videos which have been watched >450,000 times and almost 90,000 views in the last year. Our top 5 countries by audience are India (36%), United States (11%), Bangladesh (5%), Pakistan (2%), Philippines, UK, Zambia, Indonesia, Kenya and Iraq.

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Content	Views ↓	Watch time (hours)
<input type="checkbox"/> Total	89,687	3,318.5
<input type="checkbox"/>  Fluconazole	31,955 35.6%	681.3 20.5%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Itraconazole	6,335 7.1%	156.6 4.7%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Voriconazole	5,886 6.6%	179.2 5.4%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Cryptococcal meningitis: pathogenesis and host respo...	3,361 3.8%	141.4 4.3%
<input type="checkbox"/>  Tinea capitis (part 1/2)	2,390 2.7%	80.5 2.4%

LIFE manages a separate twitter account which has grown its followers over the last year by 12% to ~2,400. During 2022/23 our Tweets received over 110,000 impressions. The Tweet with the biggest impact was promoting the Center For Disease Control’s Fungal Disease Awareness Week – linking into this campaign has historically been advantageous for us. This year our introductory tweet for this campaign garnered 8,000 impressions. We continue to

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align ourselves with WHO and CDC campaigns, as well as other high-profile social media awareness days, such as International Women's Day, British Science Week and World Aspergillosis Awareness Day.



LIFE Worldwide @LIFEworldwide · Sep 13
Antimicrobial resistance is a global threat. This timely paper looks at how fungal infection research needs enhanced visibility to have access to funding and development.

Next week is @CDCgov Fungal Infection Awareness week. Time to shout about fungal infections!
#ThinkFungus [twitter.com/neil_gow/statu...](https://twitter.com/neil_gow/status/1234567890)

[View Tweet activity](#)

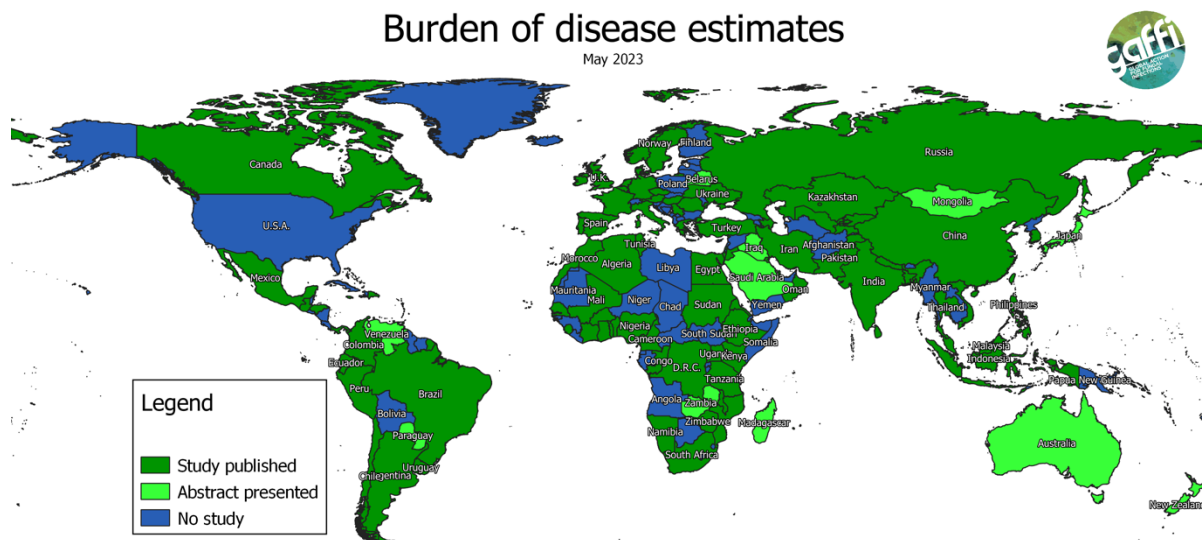
Burden of fungal disease estimates

A component of the LIFE effort has been to boost awareness of fungal infections generally, by quantifying the problem better. 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. Repeat estimations were done for Algeria and Kenya and published in the last year. Additions since last year's report are underlined.

- Published in journals (x82): Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo (Republic of), Cote d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uganda, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vietnam and Zimbabwe. Published burden papers are available at <https://www.gaffi.org/media/academic-papers/>.
- Presented in abstract/poster form at conferences but not yet published (x13): Australia, Belarus, Benin, Iraq, Japan, Madagascar, Mongolia, New Zealand, Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Venezuela, Zambia (detail is available on the LIFE website in the news section <http://www.life-worldwide.org/media-centre/news>).

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The FIT also supported several important research publications and reviews (see Appendix 1). There were 10 peer-reviewed publications in calendar year 2022 consequent to FIT grants and collaborations. The notable outputs include:

- Documentation of gamma interferon deficiency in patients with chronic pulmonary aspergillosis (CPA).
- First country burden of disease estimates for 5 countries in 2022, including India.
- A new model of the incidence and prevalence of CPA in India, the country with the most TB cases in the world. The findings deserve attention: an annual incidence of CPA arising in lung TB patients in 2019 was estimated to be 363,601 cases with 42,766 deaths— 10.5% of lung TB deaths. The total number of CPA patients in India was estimated at 1,575,716, with an additional 100,000 deaths annually.

During the year support was given to research projects at the University of Manchester, the All India Medical Institute, New Delhi, India, Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, Malawi and The Medical Research Foundation of Trinidad & Tobago. Travel and Living Allowance Grants for attendance and presentation at scientific conferences are 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 continuing restrictions placed on global travel by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who benefited from the Trust's Activities?

Researchers in the study of fungi (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

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the Aspergillus Website. The FIT website also re-posts press and general stories and explanatory articles for easy access for all.

Future plans

In 2022, an update and overhaul of the Microfungi educational website is planned. Efforts to promote the FIT resources internationally are planned at major conferences in Europe, USA, Asia and Africa. The Aspergillus Website continues to provide a valuable resource internationally, with some additional content. The FIT will respond to grant requests as it has done previously.

FINANCIAL REVIEW,

The results for the period are set out on page 9. There was a deficit of Income over Expenditure for the year of £23,008 (2022 £70,200). Corporate Governance expenditure represented 10.48% of total income (2022 20.70%). A grant of £29,000 was received from the charity Advance Against Aspergillosis. During the year the Trustees recommenced having face to face meetings as the pandemic restrictions reduced.

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

16 October 2023