

TEST TALK TOOLS

This study looked at a wide range of existing research to find out what kinds of tools can help doctors and nurses do a better job of sharing and explaining blood test information to patients in everyday healthcare settings like GP clinics.

Why is this research needed?

Blood tests are a routine part of general practice, but many patients don't fully understand what tests they've had or why they were done.

Often, they struggle to access their results or aren't given clear explanations about what those results mean, which can lead to confusion, anxiety, and frustration.



This not only impacts patients' wellbeing but also increases the workload for GPs and healthcare staff.

While the NHS is working to make test results available online for all patients, the system is not always user-friendly or tailored to patients' needs. Also, it risks leaving behind those without internet access.

How were public members involved

Six public contributors helped with the Test Talk Tool project, including two who were project collaborators and involved the whole way through. The team met three times.



Public involvement meetings timeline



The public contributors who were also project collaborators attended alternate monthly team meetings and are co-authors on the publication about this research.

One of them attended the final presentation at an academic conference in July 2024 and wrote a blog about the experience. You can read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/3rm6ce84> (or scan the qr code)



How public members shaped the study

Thanks to feedback from our public members, we made some big changes to our study. They helped us focus more clearly on what matters most to patients.

They helped us spot how little research there is on people who might struggle with digital tools, like older adults or those who don't speak English as their first language.

Also, they pointed out that no one seems to be looking at how carers get blood test results, even though it's a really common situation.

What happened next?



Thanks to the feedback from our public contributors, we got funding for a new project called **Accessible Results**. The goal of this project is to work together and create simple but helpful tools that make it easier for people to understand their blood test results online.

Both co-applicant public contributors played an active role in developing the follow-up grant application and are co-applicants on this study.

Reflections from the lead researcher

“I would strongly encourage researchers to engage with public contributors. They made critical contributions, helping to shape the review objectives and crucially helping to shape the review objectives and crucially helping to understand the results and the important limitations of the existing literature. This helped us to identify important priorities for future research. I would also encourage researchers to invite public contributors to attend academic conferences which has really helped us to build strong collaboration and teamwork in the ongoing research to improve test communication”.

- Dr Jessica Watson (principal researcher)

