

Point-of-Care diagnostics: poised for growth

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According to a number of thought-leaders from across the global diagnostics industry, who attended Cambridge Consultants' diagnostics industry workshop in May 2006, the number of patients being tested at the Point-of-Care (POC) will increase in the near future. These new tests will supplement testing carried out by the large centralised labs and will enable patients and their doctors to get results more quickly.

This industry-wide shift is being driven by the increasing numbers of tests expected to be carried out in labs, as well as the advent of portable diagnostic technology and the opportunity for close integration with drug delivery. It was concluded that traditional laboratory testing is changing and that the diagnostics industry will arrive at a 'hub and spoke' model, where certain tests would be carried out by doctors, pharmacists or even consumers in their own home. This will leave labs to carry out high-throughput screening for conditions and diseases that are more complicated to analyse.

The group also felt that for the POC market to reach its full potential, the industry needs to address key technological obstacles in the short to medium term, such as standardising the way in which results are communicated, and how each national health service manages the results of multiple tests from hospitals, labs, doctors' surgeries, pharmacies and the home.

The report, titled 'Point-of-Care: the demise of high throughput screening?' is available free of charge and can be requested from our website – www.CambridgeConsultants.com/POC
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The value of **expert** opinion

On July 1st 2005 the UK's Financial Services Authority (FSA) introduced a new prospectus and listing regime for the London Stock Exchange (LSE) and the Alternative Investment Market (AIM) which, taking findings from the Committee of European Securities Regulators (CESR), removed the mandatory requirement for start-up companies to include a third party expert report in their listing prospectus.

Up until this point all start-up companies wanting to list on the UK markets had to include a third party view of the company, its product portfolio and its potential market impact. This valuable information provided investors with a detailed view on the company – one that wasn't written by the company itself.

In the twelve months since quite a fundamental change to the way companies are able to list, we've seen

no downturn in demand for this extra due diligence when a company is working at the cutting edge of technology. This is because those involved with taking companies to the stock market recognise that an independent expert perspective adds weight to their prospectus and that the end result is more informed investors, who can effectively balance up the risks and rewards.

We've been carrying out due diligence and expert analysis for a wide range of technology-rich start-up companies since 1999. This year alone we've seen three

companies list that have used our services: 3D x-ray imaging technologist X-Counter; scar prevention pioneer Renovo; and sanitation specialist Puricore. From what we've seen over the last 12 months, the desire for expert opinion looks set to continue.

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