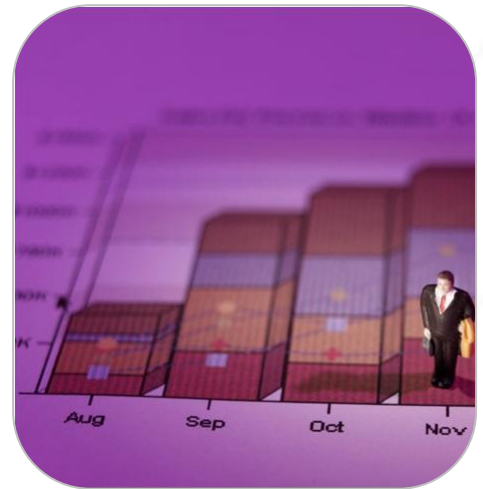


## Feature Article

### Consulting Room™ 2013 Website Traffic Statistics

2013 saw the publication of the *Review into the Regulation of Cosmetic Interventions*, headed up by NHS Director, Professor Sir Bruce Keogh. One of the observations raised in the final report was that; “*in general, there is a concerning lack of data in this sector*”. It went on to say; “*We do not know how many cosmetic procedures are carried out each year, by whom, or with what outcomes*”.

As is well known, the UK does not have a central body tracking the UK aesthetic and cosmetic industries, but instead relies on data auditing and reporting from the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (BAAPS) and the larger cosmetic surgery chains such as The Hospital Group and Transform who regularly report on their numbers, along with market research gatherers such as Mintel who tend to produce a trend report every 3 to 5 years. BAAPS themselves estimate that their data only represents 30-40% of the total cosmetic surgical procedures performed each year in this country. This also means that analysis of the non-surgical marketplace is most definitely lacking, leading to guesstimates from various sources and extrapolations from publicly surveyed data.



Statistics that we have derived from analysing pages viewed and searches made within The Consulting Room™ provide a unique view of what the average consumer is researching, the effect the media and new product/device/procedure introduction has on this and also which products/treatments they may actually be seeking to undertake by finding a local provider offering the service.

From January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> 2013 just under 800,000 unique visitors came to [www.consultingroom.com](http://www.consultingroom.com). Although this is a slight drop on our 2012 data, perhaps due to a number of factors including economic issues and the PIP breast implant scandal; this figure shows the consist levels of web traffic being received by the site as we enter our eleventh year online. In general, our ten year traffic performance continues to show a healthy long term trend for the site and of course demonstrates the growth since our launch in May 2003 when the aesthetic and cosmetic industries were just starting to become part of mainstream awareness.



I think we can safely say that our visitor data for the last five or six years has had some minor ups and downs, whilst remaining relatively stable.

Some of this can be attributed to widespread economic concerns which has affected general consumer spending as we find ourselves in a period of austerity since the banking crisis of 2008.

Add to this some health scandals such as the fraudulent PIP breast implants debacle, which have, and continue to plague the cosmetic industry and affect consumer confidence in medical professionals and regulators. Concern over will dermal fillers be the next 'crisis waiting to happen' hit the tabloids and our TV screens during 2013 with shocking story after shocking story being paraded in the likes of The Sun and The Daily Mail.

Television programmes such as Botched up Bodies which depict 'repair' jobs on those individuals for whom an inexperienced practitioner or a trip abroad caused life changing complications, could no doubt have put a sour note into the minds of some previously considering cosmetic treatments and procedures.

However, with a consistent number of visitors to The Consulting Room™ during the last twelve months, fewer than in 2012, but up on the dip seen in 2010, we can only conclude that the public appetite for and desire to spend money on cosmetic enhancements is perhaps ready for a bounce back.

Continued positive (depending on your opinion) media focus, including celebrity and reality TV star endorsements, the likes of the television series *The Only Way is Essex* (TOWIE) springs to mind, plus weekly write-ups on 'new' treatments in glossy magazines and daily newspapers, alongside more social acceptance, is perhaps maintaining some public confidence and desire to spend on luxuries such as anti-ageing treatments as well as more expensive elective cosmetic surgery, despite the apparent scandals and financial woes.

## What Treatments Are People Researching

As statistics concerning the UK market place are lacking, we believe that our breakdown of statistics is one of the most authoritative in terms of reflecting the UK consumer's interest in different cosmetic procedures marketed in this country. We have delved deeper into our 2013 website statistics to give you a broader idea of what a Consulting Room™ user is actually looking for on the website.

We wanted to find out which treatments/procedures visitors are looking at most often, in terms of researching treatment options available to them by looking at page views from our [Treatment FAQs](#) section; this helps us see which procedures are most popularly researched by our visitors.

In total, just over 650,000 of our total annual site visitors viewed our various Treatment and Product FAQ information during 2013.

We compared the results with last year's figures in order to note any changes in line with observed trends. Interestingly we noticed some new entrants to the charts, particularly with new product brands which were heavily marketed during 2013, as well as rises in popularity for some treatments or procedures which have been widely talked about this year, such as labiaplasty. Radiofrequency procedures, both for facial skin tightening and the managements of cellulite and fat seemed to be favourites to research during last year.

The top fifteen most popular Treatment/Procedure FAQs to research in 2013 were as follows:

1. Radiofrequency for Facial Rejuvenation (*up 1 place*)
2. Laser & IPL Hair Removal (*down 1 place*)
3. Penile Augmentation Surgery (*non-mover*)
4. Vaginal Surgery (Labiaplasty) (*up 3 places*)
5. Laser Tattoo Removal (*down 1 place*)
6. Dermal Fillers (*down 1 place*)
7. Specialist Skin Cream (*up 3 places*)
8. Microdermabrasion (*non-mover*)
9. Radiofrequency for Cellulite & Fat (*up 4 places*)
10. Fractional Laser Skin Resurfacing (*down 3 places*)
11. Laser & IPL Skin Rejuvenation (*non-mover*)
12. Chemical Peels (*non-mover*)
13. Umbilicoplasty (Belly Button Surgery) (*up 2 places*)
14. Ultrasonic Body Contouring (*down 5 places*)
15. Carboxytherapy (***new entrant***)

The top ten most popular Product FAQs to research in 2013 were as follows:

1. Pixel (*non-mover*)
2. Teosyal (*non-mover*)
3. Restylane Vital (*non-mover*)
4. Dermaceutic Peels (*up 2 places*)
5. Accent RF (*non-mover*)
6. Hydrafacial (***new entrant***)
7. Tripollar RF (***new entrant***)
8. Thermage CPT (*down 1 place*)
9. Cryolipolysis (CoolSculpting) (***new entrant***)
10. Revanesse and Redexis (***new entrant***)

## Clinic Searches

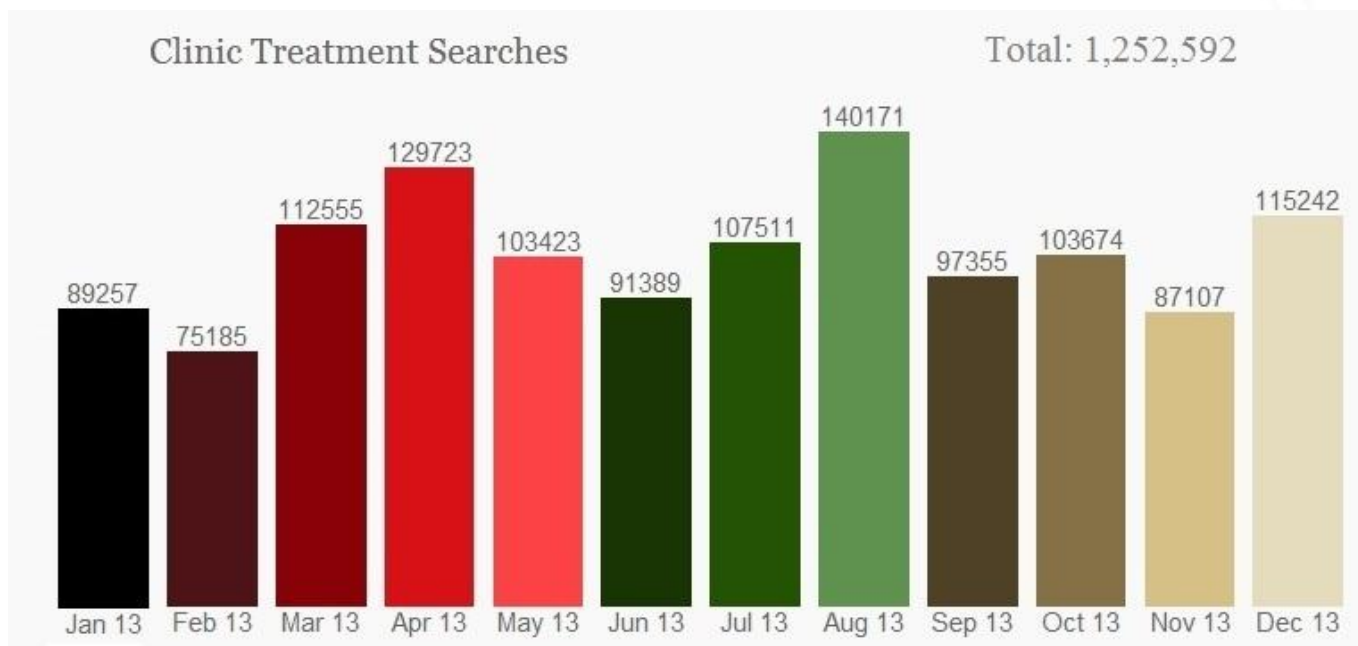
Those taking the final step and searching our database for a clinic or practitioner providing a specific treatment, procedure or product in a geographical location (within the UK & Ireland) were significantly higher than ever before in 2013.

With our search directory allowing visitors to find clinics by a variety of methods, including clinic and practitioner names, products, treatments (see chart below), towns, which treatment areas and counties; 2013 saw a total of just under 2.7 million searches for clinics and practitioners in the UK & Ireland using these various parameters (figures for 2010 were approximately 300,000, 500,000 in 2011 and over 1.13 million in 2012).

This means that the number of clinic searches performed on The Consulting Room™ has more than doubled in a year, again! You will no doubt have seen this reflected in the number of referrals generated by us for your business as our clinic search pages have improved and consumers truly shop around and get comparative quotes and information from various service providers in their area.

With many changes having taken place in the wider Internet during recent years, particularly in the way that Google™ (the world's largest search engine) ranks web content and the value which is places on the information that it finds on an individual site, we have upgraded some areas of the site to adapt to the newer optimisation requirements to create faster and better search engine optimised service for those looking for (and finding) providers of aesthetic treatments and products.

The uplift in our traffic statistics following this roll out during the latter end of 2012 and throughout 2013 shows the significant affect that recent upgrades and SEO changes to the [Clinic Search](#) pages is having to our organically generated website traffic. We continue to monitor our performance and seek to make changes to the site where appropriate to improve traffic flows.



Breaking this data down even further we are able to see which are the most popular treatments/procedures and products that visitors are searching The Consulting Room™ database to find service providers for.

This is a useful comparison with the data on popularly researched Treatment and Product FAQs featured above as, although many people will be interested and motivated to read about and research options which may be suitable for them, we all know that many others will simply visit the site and immediately search for a clinic based on what they 'want', without embarking on any research first. This is borne out in the differences in the most popular clinic searches by treatment and product search selections.

The top fifteen most popular clinic searches by treatment or procedure during 2013 were as follows:

1. Laser & IPL Hair Removal (*non-mover*)
2. Botulinum Toxin (*up 2 places*)
3. Dermal Fillers (*non-mover*)
4. Chemical Peels (*up 7 places*)
5. Microdermabrasion (*down 3 places*)
6. Laser and IPL Skin Rejuvenation (*up 6 places*)
7. Laser / IPL Treatment Pigmented/Vascular Problems (*down 1 place*)
8. Sclerotherapy and Microsclerotherapy (*up 2 places*)
9. Specialist Skin Creams (***new entrant***)
10. Medical Skin Needling (*up 5 places*)
11. Laser Tattoo Removal (*up 2 places*)
12. Micropigmentation (Semi-Permanent Make-up) (***new entrant***)
13. Radiofrequency for Facial Rejuvenation (***new entrant***)
14. Mesotherapy (***new entrant***)
15. Cellulite Treatment (Mechanical Massage) (***new entrant***)

Those dropping out of the top fifteen most popular clinic searches by treatment, when compared to 2012, included vaginal surgery, liposuction, breast implants, abdominoplasty and penile augmentation surgery, highlighting a move away from more invasive, surgical treatment options.

The top fifteen most popular clinic searches by product during 2012 were as follows:

1. Botox® (*non-mover*)
2. Juvéderm® ULTRA (*non-mover*)
3. Restylane® (Perlane, Lip Volume & SubQ) (*non-mover*)
4. Restylane Skinboosters (Vital & Lip Refreash) (*up 2 places*)
5. Genuine Dermaroller™ (*up 2 places*)
6. Juvéderm® VOLUMA (*up 4 places*)
7. Sculptra® (*up 2 places*)
8. Radiesse™ (*non-mover*)
9. Dysport® (*down 5 places*)
10. Obagi Blue Peel (*up 2 places*)
11. Teosyal® (*up 3 places*)
12. Azzalure® (*down 1 place*)
13. Vistabel® (***new entrant***)
14. Belotero® (*up 1 place*)
15. Teosyal® Meso (***new entrant***)

Those dropping out of the top fifteen most popular clinic searches by product, when compared to 2012, included VelaSmooth™ & VelaShape™ and VASER® Lipo.

For those of you offering the traditional range of non-surgical medical aesthetic treatments such as facial injectables and laser/light treatments, this is great news and truly highlights that the public is indeed seeking out providers for these treatments and products, and is doing so via The Consulting Room™.

During 2013, just under 85,000 visitors searched our directory specifically for a provider of Botox® for example, that's a 272% rise on 2012; along with over 33,500 for Juvéderm ULTRA (up 185% on 2012) and just under 33,000 for Restylane® (up 138% on 2012). Similarly over 46,500 (double that of 2012) looked for a clinic providing laser or IPL hair removal, while just under 45,000 were looking for a botulinum toxin clinic in 2013.

This again shows the level of potential client referrals which our site is able to generate and the significant effect our website upgrades have had in the last twelve months.

Another useful measure within our clinic search data is to take a look at regional breakdowns. In the past we have used Yellow Pages™ defined areas, counties (which returned to our searches last year) and town and city level to enable site visitors to really hone in on their local area when searching for a clinic or practitioner.

Although, the results used to be somewhat predictable, based on traditional proliferations of clinics and people in and around the larger cities in the UK & Ireland, it is a useful indicator of regional trends for interest in the services which our members provide as this year sees some of the larger cities (Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Belfast) fall out of the top fifteen in favour of more regional locations where clinics are now more widely available to the public. Of course the top 5 is dominated by larger cities as one would expect.

Anyone wishing to see statistics for their town and how it ranks nationally can email [lorna@consultingroom.com](mailto:lorna@consultingroom.com) for information.

The top fifteen most searched for towns or cities as locations for clinics in 2013 were as follows:

1. London (non-mover)
2. Manchester (up 1 place)
3. Birmingham (down 1 place)
4. Glasgow (up 1 place)
5. Leeds (up 5 places)
6. Liverpool (non-mover)
7. Altrincham (**new entrant**)
8. Sheffield (**new entrant**)
9. Nottingham (**new entrant**)
10. South Kensington (**new entrant**)
11. Aberdeen (down 7 places)
12. Rotherham (**new entrant**)
13. Bournemouth (**new entrant**)
14. Watford (**new entrant**)
15. Cambridge (**new entrant**)

All our top level statistics (site visitors and site searches) show that there are a significant number of people visiting The Consulting Room™ seriously looking for information with an intention to actually visit a clinic for treatment and it is all the reason you should need to make your profile stand out from your competition! If you haven't recently reviewed your clinic profile listing, may we recommend it as an urgent note on your 2014 'to do list'; as we predict that we will continue to grow our traffic numbers further during the next year, as optimisation of the website is an ongoing project.

Overall, we believe that these figures reinforce our position as the UK's No.1 specialist aesthetic information website - even though there are now many more information and clinic directory websites competing for traffic than there were when we started the site over a decade ago, such as myfacemybody.com, goodsurgeonguide.com, whatclinic.com, cliniccompare.co.uk, treatmentsaver.com and treatmentadviser.com. We offer the consumer and our members much more quality content than any of our competitors which can only be a benefit for all parties.

Further in-depth data highlights the way in which The Consulting Room™ can generate client referrals for clinics through a number of mechanisms. Over 370,000 clinic profiles were viewed on the site during 2013; that works out at an average of 710 views per Consulting Room Member.

When we upgraded the site we implemented a new mechanism to track the number of telephone referrals generated for our Members. Visitors to a clinic profile must click on a button to display the telephone number for a clinic. Since going live this has generated an average traffic result of just over 1,000 clicks a month across our membership, making an average of 2 calls per clinic per month (regional variations will apply).

Alongside this a general 'Contact Clinic' button was also rolled out. On clicking this within the profile pages of each member, the visitor is taken to a page featuring links to all the various direct contact methods for communicating with a clinic, including the telephone number, your own website, social media links (Twitter, Facebook and Blog), along with an email form. During 2013 we tracked that an average of over 14,700 clicks are being made per month to directly

Home | Clinic Search | Treatments | Blog | News | Newsletters | Classified

## Clinic Search

Home > Clinic Search > Town Search > Rugby > Consulting Room Test Clinic

**Contact Clinic**

Consulting Room Test Clinic, Rugby, Wigan, Chester, Liverpool

Profile | Treatments | Products | Staff

### Clinic Address

Unit 21, Sir Frank Whittle  
Business Centre  
Great Central Way  
Rugby  
Warwickshire  
CV21 3XH

\*\*\*\*\* THIS IS A TEST CLINIC \*\*\*\*\*

\*\* We use it to test new upgrades on www.consultingroom

get in touch with a clinic for referral, averaging 28 per clinic (regional variations will apply).

Finally during the whole of 2013, 6,065 direct emails were sent to clinics from interested members of the public looking for treatment, making an average of 505 per month, and 12 emails a year per clinic generated by us (regional variations will apply).

We have always maintained that you really only require a single, paying client per year to cover the cost of subscribing to The Consulting Room™. With data showing the potential averages for both email and telephone contacts (and not taking into account those who contact you via your own website or social media pages) we hope you can see the true return on investment that your clinic listing with The Consulting Room™ is generating for you. Why not take a look at the statistics for your own website too and see how much direct traffic is being referred through your Consulting Room profile page.

Additionally, for more bespoke statistics you can log into our [Member's Area](#) and see the statistics which apply directly to your clinic profile alone. Just go to the 'Clinic Update' section once logged in and a menu of statistics is available on the left hand side.

## Conclusion

We are always continuing to develop the website and look at ways that we can continue to optimise our website traffic. Alongside this we continue to work with the press and increasing our social media profile to continually increase the number and quality of the traffic visiting our site. We do however wish to remind members that client referrals is of course only a small part of the benefits of overall membership to The Consulting Room™.

2014 brings yet more challenges which include the government response to the Keogh report which was published last April. Although many of the key recommendations affecting the non-surgical sector are unlikely to be followed through, issues surrounding the ways in which clinics advertise surgical and non-surgical cosmetic interventions, particularly in relation to offers and deals, could have an impact on the sector, however the format and professional nature of The Consulting Room™ website will provide a platform for those clinics who value their patients, their reputation, and best practice.

We hope you will stick with us on this journey as we continue to strive to maintain our status as the UK's largest, and dare we say most comprehensive aesthetic information website well into the next decade!

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### Lorna Jackson



Lorna has been Editor of The Consulting Room™, the UK's largest aesthetic information website, for over a decade, since 2003. She has become an industry commentator on a number of different areas related to the aesthetic industry, collating and evaluating statistics and writing feature articles, blogs, newsletters and reports for The Consulting Room™ and various consumer and trade publications, including *Cosmetic News*, *Journal of Aesthetic Nursing*, *Aesthetic Medicine* and *Aesthetic Dentistry Today*. Lorna has also been asked to present at various industry events, including Smart Ideas, BACN and Merz Aesthetics Business Workshops, the FACE Conference and the Clinical, Cosmetic & Reconstructive Expo.

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