

Issue 13
July 2019

NPEX NEWSLETTER



- 1 NPEX User Group 2019**
Our annual national event is back and better than ever.
- 2 NPEX Cork Roadshow**
The NPEX team present to a new audience overseas.
- 3 NPEX and UK NEQAS IIA: Quality Assured**
We have a new connection for easier EQA.
- 4 NPEX New Connections**
Check out our new Go Lives and labs in deployment.
- 5 THIS Spotlight: Mandy Griffin, Managing Director of The Health Informatics Service**
Understanding one half of the NPEX partnership.
- 6 NPEX at the API Summit**
Steve Box travels to Pittsburgh, USA to understand a new market.
- 7 Tech Update - Test Export/Import**
See how we are adapting our solution towards your needs.
- 8 NPEX New Features**
You asked, we listened: new features for improved usability.
- 9 X-Lab Office Renovation**
Making room for new staff and greater productivity.
- 10 The Team**
Read about the new starters and leavers in our growing team.

Are you on our mailing list?
If you didn't receive this newsletter from the THIS Service Desk, please let us know via npex@x-labsystems.co.uk so we can add you to our list.



1 - NPEX User Group 2019



The National NPEX User Group 2019 is shaping up to be our biggest and most thought-provoking event to date. With over 120 attendees, 2018 was our most well-attended User Group and we are hoping to see even more delegates from over 100 NHS laboratories and other organisations. For the first time the event will be held at the Royal College of Pathologists where NHS clinical, operational and informatics professionals can come together to learn about our national, regional and local level developments.

We are tailoring the day to all our users regardless of Laboratory Information System supplier, profession, or affiliation. The day will present opportunities for everyone in attendance to learn, share knowledge and spark discussion at a national hub of laboratory medicine. With talks on the importance of technology, specifically NPEX, to laboratory medicine, users can expect presentations from Jo Martin, the President of the Royal College of Pathologists, and industry experts. Discussions will cover the challenges surrounding histopathology, microbiology, genomics and technology in laboratory medicine alongside NPEX's technical and strategic advances to tackle these and improve our solution.



Split across three streams, which will allow users to tailor the day to their own priorities, the day will explore a range of topics. From updating you on how we are managing complex reporting and national rollouts to supporting accreditation and the latest with the NPEX service.

Would you like to attend the National NPEX User Group 2019?
Sign up through Eventbrite to secure your place.

Wednesday 18th September 2019

Royal College of Pathologists, 6 Alie Street, London, E1 8QT

2 - NPEX Cork Roadshow



On Monday 20th May the NPEX team travelled to Cork University Hospital to host the NPEX Cork Roadshow 2019. Biomedical scientists from across the Republic of Ireland gathered to hear about how NPEX could benefit their labs.

Mandy Griffin, The Health Informatics Service's (THIS) Managing Director, greeted the delegates and explained the importance of sharing our solution and making connections across borders. There were talks from Debbie Hunter, the NPEX Head of Service at THIS, and Steve Box, the Business Development Director at X-Lab, who explained the solution to the new audience. They were supported by Hayley Milsom, X-Lab's Account Manager, who explained how NPEX could be delivered to the Irish market and Karim Premji, a Pathology IT Systems Manager from Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, who gave his experience as a long-term user of NPEX. Sam Gair, X-Lab's Business Services Team Leader, gave a service demonstration of NPEX to allow the delegates to understand how it works practically and how the NPEX team will support them using the solution.

The team also received input from two of Cork University Hospital's own laboratory staff. Sean Costello, a Locum Consultant Clinical Biochemist, spoke on the challenges of referral testing in Cork and Caroline Joyce, the lab's Principal Biochemist, chaired a panel discussion. Their input made it clear how NPEX could benefit this new community of laboratories.

Hayley Milsom commented: 'It's always exciting presenting NPEX to a new audience but even more so when we can offer them the solution they've been looking for. The day was filled with insightful discussion and important questions about how NPEX could work for the Republic of Ireland – with the support of Caroline and Sean, the NPEX team were able to present solutions to the challenges faced by all healthcare providers to a new audience'.

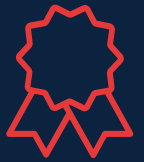
Thank you to all who attended and spoke at the event – this is an exciting time of growth for NPEX and we hope that, soon, more labs will benefit from cross-border connections.



Left to right: Sam Gair (Business Services Team Leader), Karim Prenyi (Pathology IT Systems manager, Nottingham University), Debbie Hunter (Head of Service, THIS), Hayley Milsom (Account Manager), Mandy Griffin (Managing Director, THIS), Steve Box (Business Development Director), Owen Johnson (Director)



3 - NPEX and UK NEQAS IIA: Quality Assured



NPEX is continuing to enable consistent and optimised patient care through its newest collaboration with UK NEQAS Immunology, Immunochemistry and Allergy (UK NEQAS IIA). Based at Northern General Hospital in Sheffield, this new NPEX connection offers clinical and business opportunities to UK NEQAS IIA which, according to Dina Patel, their Scientific Director, allows them to 'provide participants within our External Quality Assurance (EQA) schemes with the highest quality in terms of data transfer and the continuous improvement of that data's quality'.

Dina, whose role is to provide the strategic and scientific direction for this UK NEQAS centre, explained that NPEX's existing connection with UK NEQAS Birmingham Quality has laid the foundations for this project to be a success. **(Read more here.)** 'The project with Birmingham Quality was of great interest to us but was a challenge for us to set-up here because UK NEQAS IIA operates outside of the NHS Health and Social Care Network. Recently, NPEX has overcome that', through its ICS project and with the help of Remote Ethernet Device technology, 'so this project has become much more viable'.

I think NPEX is something that all UK NEQAS disciplines need to cover.



Left to right: Debbie Hunter (Head of Service, THIS), Dina Patel (Scientific Director, UK NEQAS IIA), Steve Box (Business Development Director, X-Lab), Abigail Marsay (Software Developer, X-Lab).

'UK NEQAS IIA is primarily an educational provider for NHS and non-NHS laboratories on a global basis. Our main function is to ensure that testing in labs results in optimal patient care. We provide participants within our EQA schemes with checks on their testing practice, but this must extend to ensuring high-quality data transfer and high-quality data. Working with NPEX will provide our participants with greater confidence that the results they are issuing to clinicians are accurate because their EQA results will accurately reflect their testing quality. This will allow us to consistently produce comparable results that are clinically useful to the patient no matter where or when EQA tests are performed.'



NPEX will also:

Reduce pre- and post-analytical errors which will decrease the possibility of incorrect test results entering UK NEQAS data-sets

Ensure participants test EQA samples in an identical way to patient samples which ensures quality is present from the beginning to the end of the testing process

UK NEQAS IIA are on track to have this project up and running later in 2019 and are looking for laboratories operating under a variety of Laboratory Information Systems to take part in the pre-pilot phase. Do you want to be part of the testing phase for UK NEQAS IIA through NPEX? **Express your interest to npex@x-labsystems.co.uk.**



4 - NPEX Go Live

Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

NHS Borders

NHS Fife

The Christie NHS Foundation Trust

NPEX New Connections

Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board

Path Links

Spire Healthcare

North East Essex and Suffolk Pathology Services

UK NEQAS Immunology, Immunochemistry and Allergy

5 - THIS Spotlight: Mandy Griffin, Managing Director of The Health Informatics Service



Mandy Griffin, Managing Director of The Health Informatics Service (THIS), Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust, steps into the spotlight this quarter. As part of NPEX's Senior Management Team, she acts as the Senior Responsible Officer who makes decisions on behalf of THIS to ensure all decisions comply with the Trust's statutory obligations.

Mandy explained that her 'role is to support the partnership of X-Lab and THIS to deliver the agreed annual business plan for NPEX and its future business strategy and, at the same time, ensure the appropriate resources are available to do so. I make sure the right investments are made to keep the solution futureproof and marketable'.

Mandy plays a key role in supporting the X-Lab and THIS partnership that forms NPEX. She expressed how her presence in frequent conversations is crucial to ensure the progress of NPEX: 'We recently met as a senior team to develop a 5-year strategy. Within that strategy we talked about UK/ NHS business and the opportunities and threats that surround this. There is still more mileage to do for the NHS across other specialities. Part of our 5-year strategy was to also look at how we may want to develop our international business.

We have already started to push the boundaries around where we take the product such as recently deploying in Scotland, developing links in the Republic of Ireland, and deploying in Jersey and France. We need to ensure we work within the boundaries of the NHS rules but believe there are some exciting opportunities to expand going forward.'



Mandy began working in the NHS ten years ago and found herself heavily involved in THIS. She has been able to watch NPEX grow from strength to strength 'from a simple idea to a unique product in its own right'. Furthermore, Mandy told us 'the team, has grown in both knowledge and size. I have worked alongside Owen Johnson, one of X-Lab's directors, during most of this time and feel that the team is more like a family than something we define as a partnership. I am amazed by the enthusiasm I see from all of the team, from the longstanding staff to the newly appointed students; long may it continue'.

Mandy is present outside of the boardroom too. Speaking at NPEX User Groups and Roadshows she keeps users, prospective customers and industry professionals informed about NPEX capabilities and breakthroughs. 'I think we don't celebrate our success enough' she explained, 'I want to spend more time this year keeping the NPEX team themselves up-to-date through face-to-face communication to involve them in the 5-year strategy as, ultimately, they will be responsible for taking it forward as NPEX continues to grow'.

6 - NPEX at the API Summit



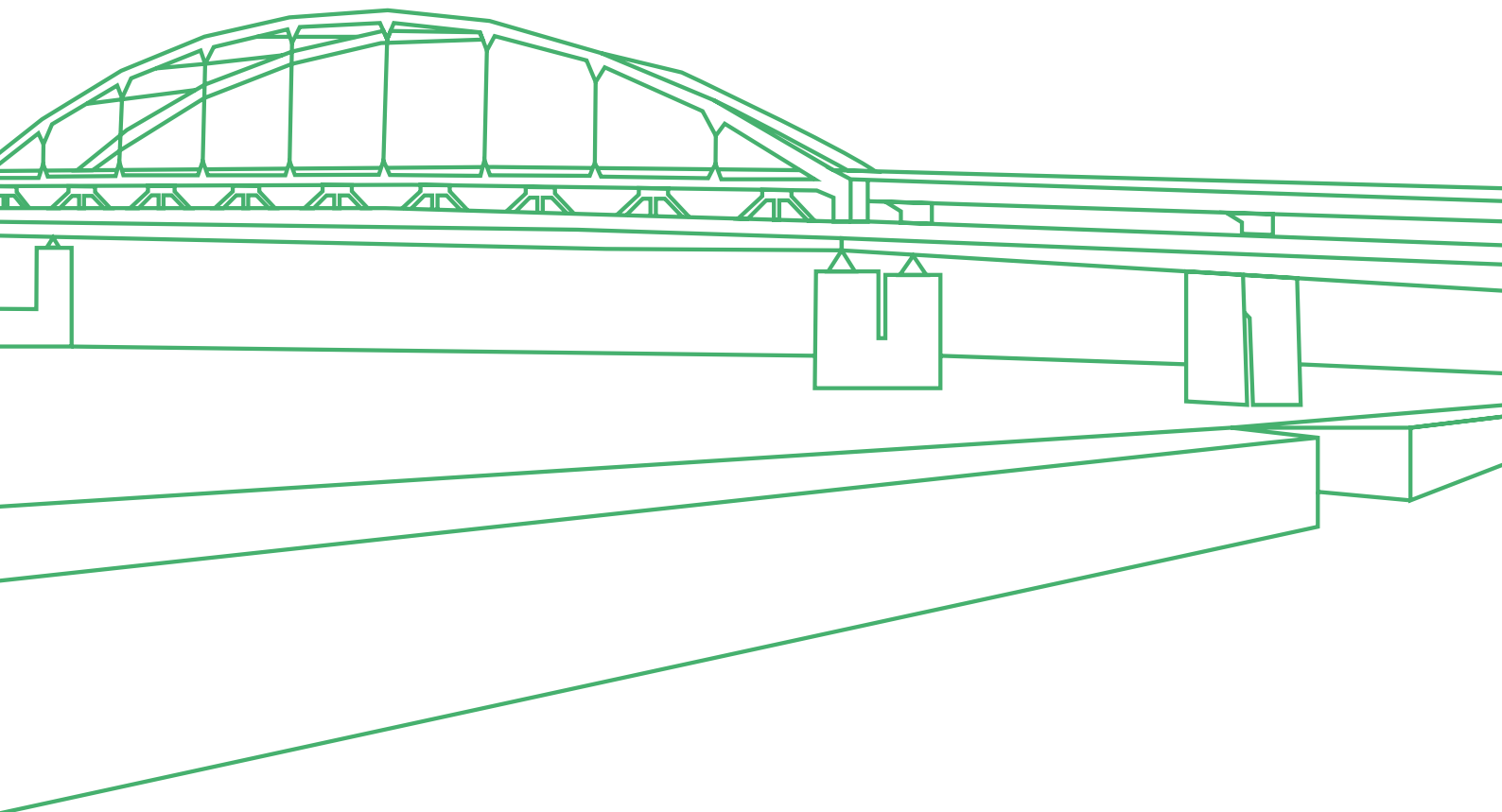
Steve Box, Business Development Director at X-Lab is extending the reputation of NPEX globally through his attendance at the **Association of Pathology Informatics (API) Summit** hosted in Pittsburgh, USA in May.

The conference was well attended with many US laboratory services, physicians, researchers, developers, engineers and company representatives in attendance. Presentations were offered to delegates, which were given about both Pathology and Clinical Laboratory Informatics.

Steve commented: “this visit was about driving awareness of what has been achieved

in the UK to an international audience and to exploring the difference between the US and UK laboratory markets. It was eye opening to see that, despite the differences of private versus public healthcare provision, the informatics challenges are all the same and there is knowledge to exchange.”

As a result of the conference, discussions have been opened with US laboratories and Steve has joined the **TRUU-Lab initiative** (a collective of healthcare providers, professional societies and industry groups who are seeking to address problems caused by ambiguous, incomplete, and non-standard laboratory test names) as a member.



7 - Tech Update - Test Export/Import



A commonly requested feature in NPEX has been the ability to move test configurations between NPEX instances. The prime use-case for exporting/importing test configurations are laboratories going through the deployment process. Often, many tests have been configured with the TEST NPEX instance during the deployment process and once the laboratory is comfortable to move over to the LIVE NPEX instance they are required to re-configure these tests within the live system.

In the last few quarters the team has worked on refining the test configuration section of NPEX which includes adding test export and import functionality. We now allow users to export tests through the UI on the test's configuration page. The export functionality will include any orderable, reportable or specimen codes associated with configured tests and any information entered in the methodology, transport procedure and additional information text fields.

Users are then able to import the exported test configuration allowing for the easy migration of test configuration between NPEX instances. The current support for Test Import/Export is in its infancy and we will continue to increase the usability and functionality in the coming months.

If you are interested in learning more about 'Test Export/Import' and giving feedback on what we have done so far let us know on the NPEX Forum.

[Test List](#) » [Import Test](#)

Import Test

To **import** a test you must choose a valid export file.

To **export** a test, click the "Export Test" button on an existing orderable in any NPEX environment.

Import Test

8 - NPEX New Features



We are always working on new features to improve our service and ensure it serves all our users' needs. Join our quarterly WebEx sessions and the NPEX User Forum to have your say.

New features deployed:

The latest posts in the NPEX forum are now visible in an activity feed on the NPEX Dashboard.

You can now change and update the email address attached to your NPEX account.

When searching through order lists, users can now select multiple options at once for each filter category.

When a performing lab changes a specimen ID through the user interface, the user who performs the action will be listed in the order audit trail.

If a shipment is edited after assembly, NPEX will now store the date and time this was edited.

NPEX will now display the time a shipment was either packaged or dispatched.

We have fixed the slow loading of the Test List.

Lab List page has been replaced by Lab Directory, making it easier to search for other labs on NPEX.

It is now possible to search the Test List by Orderable Code which allows labs to see if they have a code already configured.

9 - X-Lab Office Renovation



X-Lab is in the midst of an office renovation to accommodate the volume of new staff who are joining the NPEX team. We are creating spaces for creative and collaborative thinking, more areas to meet customers and relaxation environments to increase productivity. We can't wait for future progress of NPEX and are pleased to have the space to do this.



10 - The Team



NPEX is constantly growing and our team is no different. We are welcoming lots of new members across X-Lab and THIS who will play a crucial role in the progression of NPEX throughout the next year and beyond.

June saw Penny Hindle, our former Deployments Coordinator, complete her degree in Computer Science and return to X-Lab as a Software Developer. Joining her in that role is Dan Gibbons, who has also just completed his Master's degree in Electronic Engineering.

We also welcome another graduate to the team as Scott Vardy joins us as a Business Analyst after finishing his Mathematics degree.

Additionally, Jay Pluckrose is joining the business team as a Junior Business Analyst. He will be taking a year out of his Computer Science with Artificial Intelligence degree to pursue a placement with X-Lab.

Accompanying Jay on a placement year are Reece Dudley and Sean Parker who are both taking years out from their Computer Science degrees to pursue Technical Project Manager roles and will be leading NPEX deployments.

Nathan Jordan has joined THIS as a Network Analyst and will be working to enable the networking components of the NPEX Disaster Recovery project as well as working with the X-Lab deployment team to get new laboratories connected to the service.

We say goodbye this quarter to a number of the NPEX team. Della Sabu, a Business Analyst, leaves us to take a placement year out of her Computer Science degree and Xander Kitchener, our Deployment Support

Coordinator, is pursuing a Master's degree in Computer Science.

Leaving too is Toby Scorah, a Graphic Designer, as he pursues a placement year as part of his degree. Replacing him is Dan Woodward, a second year Graphic Design student.

Congratulations to all our new starters and new graduates – we welcome you to the NPEX team and look forward to seeing the contributions you bring. Goodbye to the staff that are leaving us, we have loved working with you and know you will do NPEX proud with whatever you pursue in the future.



Left to right: Penny Hindle (Software Developer), Dan Gibbons (Software Developer), Sean Parker (Technical Project Manager), Jay Pluckrose (Junior Business Analyst), Dan Woodward (Graphic Designer).