

The right chemistry

Business ethics and social responsibility are driving forces at Trimega Laboratories

With problems associated with alcohol misuse creating headlines on an almost daily basis in Britain, the need for effective testing has never been greater.

The medical and legal professions, local authorities, other regulatory bodies and private companies are finding that accurate, reliable testing for alcohol dependence is vital for them to make the right decisions in the best interests of public safety, child welfare and corporate responsibility.

One of the difficulties faced until recently has been testing for longer-term dependency, because traditional methods only register consumption within the space of just a few hours or, at best, a few weeks.

Trimega Laboratories has overcome this with its state-of-the-art hair alcohol testing (HAT) procedure that has rapidly become an industry standard. The company was the first organisation in the world to make this highly effective method widely available across all private and public sectors.

HAT provides a historical record of an individual's dependency for a period of up

to one year. Urine, blood and liver function tests are not only more invasive, but usually only relate to recent consumption.

Hair alcohol testing has proved significant in determining the outcome of cases involving the suitability of parents to care for children, or an individual's ability to do a safety-critical job.

Police forces use hair testing in forensic work, while patients have been assessed for transplant surgery using HAT.

Trimega's procedures involve laboratory analysis of hair samples, a patent-pending method that is recognised by the International Society of Hair Testing.

As hair grows, it absorbs into its structure special chemical "markers" from the bloodstream. These markers are only produced when alcohol is present in the blood and the more alcohol consumed, the more they will be evident in a hair sample.

This one-off, cost-effective test carries minimal risk of tampering with samples and no risk of "false positives".

There is a multitude of applications for this technology, but one particularly important example is child welfare.



Testing times: Trimega founder Avi Lasarow

Statistics show that children who are placed in temporary care for long periods are more likely to become involved in crime or drugs. Consequently, responsible local authorities have endeavoured to fast-track the assessment of parents or long-term carers. Trimega's hair alcohol testing has provided a straightforward method of helping to make decisions on suitability.

Family lawyers have also found HAT to be extremely helpful in certain divorce cases, while aviation companies have used it to monitor pilots.

In Germany, HAT is used to determine whether drink-

driving offenders can reapply for their driving licence.

Trimega Laboratories, an ISO 9001 quality assured company, was founded in 2005 by Avi Lasarow, a social entrepreneur with a particular concern for child welfare.

The company places corporate social responsibility (CSR), business ethics, and a duty of care on the public purse high on its agenda. It also provides free professional development courses for the legal profession and sponsors the Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year Awards.

Other Trimega services include roadside Drugalyzer testing for law enforcement purposes; hair steroid testing for athletes; point-of-care abuse testing products for the NHS; and a gold standard complete alcohol-dependency assessment package.

Alcohol dependence and abuse are syndromes that we all wish did not exist. Trimega Laboratories delivers cost-effective assistance that at least help to make difficult decisions more accurate, fair and responsible.