

Tackling testosterone deficiency with Ted's Health

As part of our quick fire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to James Hurley, Cofounder at Ted's Health about driving the conversation around testosterone deficiency, empowering men to overcome barriers and the challenges of tackling a silent epidemic.

The catalyst for launching Ted's Health was our motivation to combat the clear unmet need in men's health and empower men to tackle testosterone deficiency.

Alongside my Co-Founder, Harry James, we noticed a lack of conversation and action around testosterone deficiency in the UK. This is an issue close to our hearts with family members impacted yet unable to receive the medical support and treatment that they desperately needed.

This sparked us to delve further into the issue, and like many, we were shocked to learn that testosterone deficiency is a marker for early death in men, with links to diabetes and cardiovascular disease, yet fewer than 10% of men with testosterone deficiency currently receive medical treatment.

We launched Ted's Health to change this and empower men to overcome barriers to accessing safe, online, medically backed support and treatment.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

At Ted's Health, we are providing a first-of-its-kind digital healthcare service in the UK, offering clinically effective and regulated consultation, diagnosis, treatment and monitoring for testosterone deficiency that can be accessed completely online.

We are here to complement and support the NHS, ensuring more men than ever before have access to potentially life-changing diagnosis and treatment with the support of medical experts, as an affordable alternative to traditionally privatised healthcare options, such as Harley Street clinics

Something that is important to mention is that all men will experience a natural decline in their testosterone levels as they age, however some men will lose their levels much more rapidly and drop to a level which impacts their overall health – this is when it is known as testosterone deficiency. Symptoms for men to look out for are erectile dysfunction, low libido, brain fog, increased body fat and depression.

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

Ted's Health launched in the UK in November 2022. Our business is constantly evolving, with new team members joining us on our mission, and more men accessing our digital healthcare service.

Our team of specialists continues to go from strength to strength, bringing a range of medical experience and insights to ensure that we are providing the best possible care and support for men across the UK. Our team includes leading expert Professor Geoffrey Hackett, as our Senior Medical Advisor, to support men throughout their journey. Professor Hackett is Chair of the Ethics Committee for the International Society for Sexual Medicine and Consultant in Urology & Sexual Medicine.

Tell us about the working culture at Ted's Health

We are on an exciting trajectory, with a rapidly expanding team across all areas – particularly on the medical side. We have recently welcomed Dr Oli Maunsell as our Medical Director who oversees all clinical aspects of the business, as well as playing an integral role in the senior commercial and strategy teams. Dr Maunsell brings a wealth of experience as an active GP in the UK for over 10 years and a keen interest in men's health, mental health and digital transformation in healthcare.

Based in our central London office, we are all driven by the same mission to transform men's health and tackle the silent epidemic of men suffering from testosterone deficiency. Our culture is made up of passion, determination, and excitement at the prospect of helping men overcome testosterone deficiency and access the medical help that they need.

How are you funded?

Our initial investment round closed in June 2022 and enabled us to propel Ted's Health to new heights ahead of launch and reach thousands of men that are suffering from the symptoms of testosterone deficiency.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

Our biggest challenge so far has been to increase awareness of testosterone deficiency and the need for testosterone replacement therapy (TRT). Compared to other markets, such as the US, where the rate of testosterone replacement therapy prescription has tripled in the last 10 years, awareness levels in the UK are much lower.

To overcome this, we have worked to grow our team of leading medical advisers and achieved Care Quality Commission (CQC) backing to build trust and understanding of the need in the UK and offer a holistic digital healthcare service for men.

How does Ted's Health answer an unmet need?

Up to 40% of men over 45 could be experiencing testosterone deficiency, yet a survey we conducted found that almost half of men are not aware at all of the condition.

This lack of awareness could be detrimental to men's health as testosterone deficiency can drastically increase men's risk of type 2 diabetes, as well as other health risks. Fortunately, testosterone replacement therapy can prevent progression to diabetes during prediabetes, reverse early-stage type II diabetes and reduce body mass index (BMI), total cholesterol and obesity.

By providing our healthcare service completely online and raising awareness of testosterone deficiency and its wide-ranging symptoms, we hope that more men will feel empowered to seek out the medical care they need.

What's in store for the future?

Something which became clear from the very start was that the stigma linked to testosterone deficiency and its symptoms is preventing men from seeking help to improve their health. We are in the process of building an online community that will change this, committed to providing guidance, services and support that men have previously lacked to tackle the mental health implications of testosterone deficiency.

Further into the future, our ambition is to reach and support as many men as possible, and we are hoping to do this by expanding across different markets to further increase access to medical support and treatment for this important men's health issue.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

My best piece of advice would be to gain a deep understanding of the people you are trying to reach, and base this understanding on strong data and insights to ensure that the service you want to provide delivers for your target demographic, and you are constantly evolving to meet their needs.

You also need resilience and tenacity when taking the plunge and starting your own business. You will have to become familiar with and be a part of all aspects

of the business, meaning that you have to be prepared to do work that is out of your comfort zone.

No task too small – everyone in a startup has to roll their sleeves up and take on work that may be out of their comfort zone

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

I always like to get to the office early and prepare myself for the day ahead, whether that is responding to emails or preparing for meetings.

I have also learnt since setting up Ted's Health, that no two working days are the same as a startup. Embracing the unexpected and accepting that there are some things that I cannot control has been an important lesson.

Life as a cofounder can be time-consuming, so for my own mental health and wellbeing, I always ensure that I have time in the evening to switch off from technology and unwind.

James Hurley is the cofounder of *Ted's Health*.

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