

ENHANCING ACCESS TO SMOKING CESSATION SUPPORT

Use of an Online Booking Platform for Smoking Cessation Specialists in Flanders (Belgium)

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BACKGROUND

Smoking cessation support is highly result- and cost-effective, yet the use of professional cessation services remains suboptimal in Flanders. Both direct usage by smokers and referrals by healthcare professionals remain limited.

In Belgium, certified Smoking Cessation Specialists ("Tabakologen") provide evidence-based, government-financed help to smokers who want to quit.

To improve accessibility, an existing website www.tabakologen.be was redesigned with a geo-location based search tool, an online booking system, useful search filters and referral options for healthcare professionals.

METHODS

The platform was redesigned in the following ways

Inclusion of a geolocation-based search tool



Online Referral system



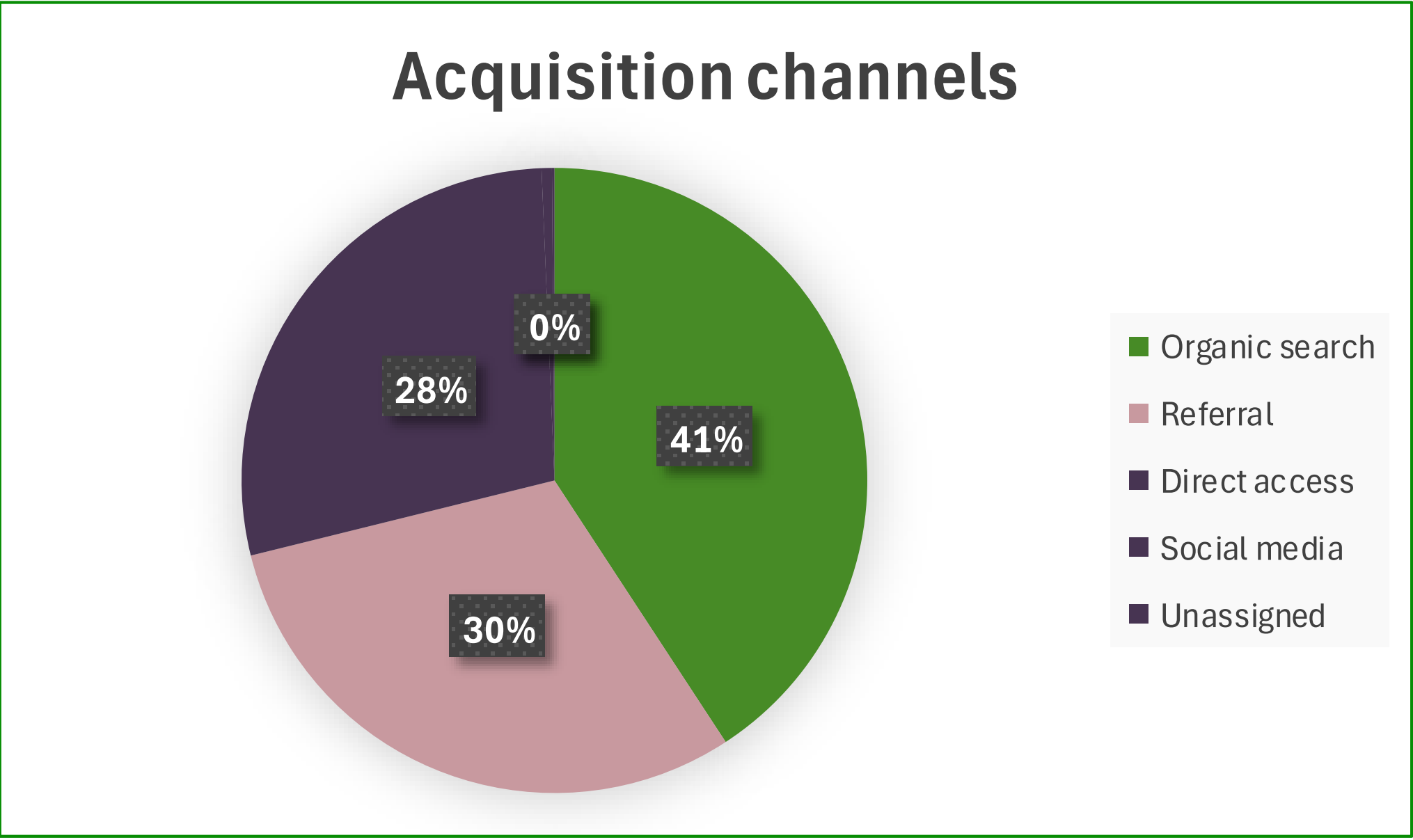
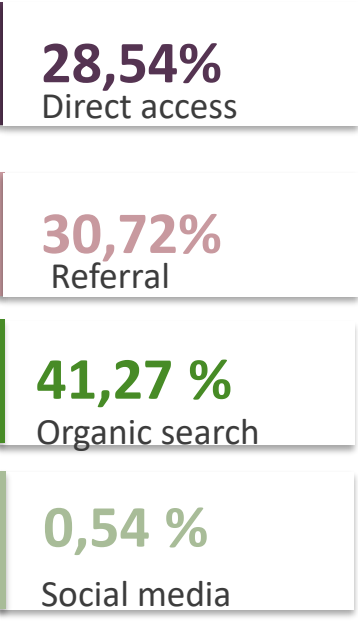
Platform usage was monitored over a one-year period, between 23 May 2025 and 28 April 2026, including website traffic, acquisition channels, and appointment requests

RESULTS

83778 page views

12730 unique visitors

709 appointment requests



Summary table 1-year period	
Total page views	83778
Unique visitors	12730
Organic search	5254 (41,27%)
Referral	3911 (30,72%)
Direct access	3633 (28,54%)
Social media	69 (0,54%)

CONCLUSIONS

- Digital tools such as online booking platforms can facilitate access to smoking cessation support
- Visits are primarily driven by search-based discovery, referrals and direct access.
- The minimal contribution of social media highlights an important opportunity for targeted outreach and increased visibility.
- Only a limited number of appointment request originate from the platform visits.
- The number of health care professional referrals indicates that further integration of the platform into routine clinical practice holds growth potential.

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

An online booking platform with clear specialist profiles and direct appointment request or referral options enhances access to specialised smoking cessation support. Sustained healthcare professional engagement remains essential for maximizing population-level impact. More effort needs to be done to enhance access through social media channels.