



2026 TRENDS

Diagnostics

TREND 1

Continued Growth of Remote Diagnostics

TREND 2

Shifting from Reactive to Proactive Care with Personalized Diagnostics

TREND 3

Fighting Antimicrobial Resistance with Diagnostics

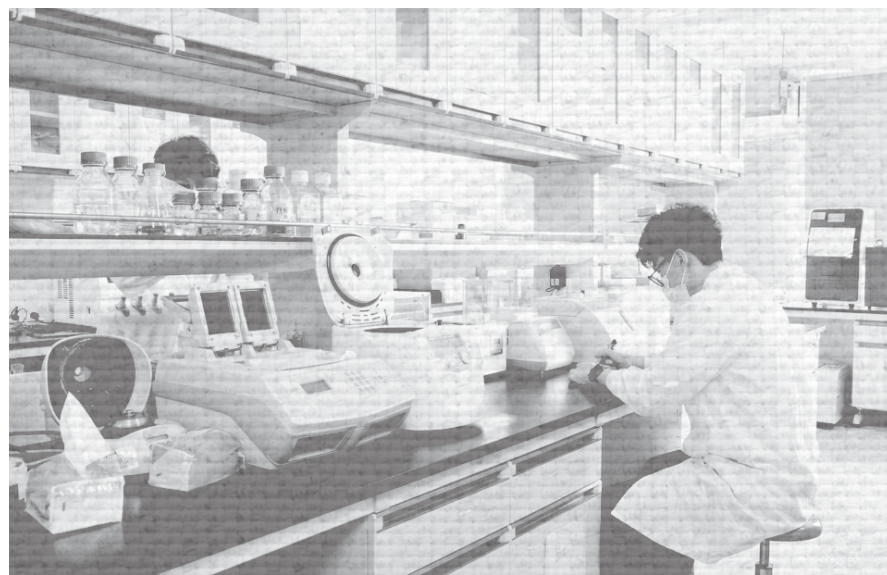
TREND 4

Affordability is a Key Barrier in Molecular Diagnostics Adoption

Diagnostic testing continues to undergo meaningful transformation as the [industry shifts](#) toward personalized models of care and broader adoption of remote delivery channels. Advances in diagnostics and digital technologies are ultimately reshaping how diseases are detected, monitored, and managed. Rather than relying primarily on symptom-driven evaluation, the field is increasingly oriented toward earlier risk identification, enabling intervention before disease progression. This evolution reflects a broader move from reactive treatment to more proactive, [individualized, and research-focused](#) care.

Experts are also looking for new ways to increase the affordability and accessibility of diagnostic treatments to better serve individuals in developing areas, expanding beyond traditional clinical settings. Decentralized testing and virtual care integration are helping to redefine how and where patients engage with diagnostics services.

Moving into 2026, it's vital for industry leaders to recognize and respond to these shifts. Understanding how the following trends are impacting, and will continue to impact, the industry will be essential for organizations seeking to remain competitive and responsive.



TREND 1

Continued Growth of Remote Diagnostics

The [remote diagnostics](#) sector continues to advance in line with the growth of digitization as a whole. Patients and healthcare providers alike appreciate the accessibility and flexibility that telemedicine and virtual care offer, but sustained progress will depend on more than convenience alone. Continued advancements in remote diagnostics are increasingly intertwined with digital infrastructure and data-enabled care models.

We are starting to witness a strong correlation between the [upward trend of](#) personalized medicine and remote diagnostics with [wearable devices](#), such as continuous glucose monitors, blood pressure monitors, and even smart clothing integrated with sensors. These tools can provide real-time notifications regarding the status of a patient's health, offering diagnostic solutions more quickly and cutting out the inconveniences of on-site visits.

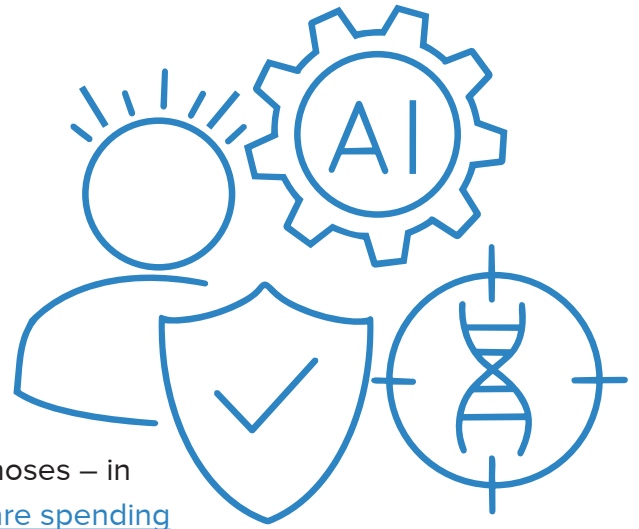
Many individuals are familiar anecdotally, if not from personal experience, with telemedicine. For years, and especially after the Covid-19 outbreak, virtual doctor appointments have been a convenient option to seek clinical advice and diagnoses based on descriptions of symptoms. The world of remote diagnostics continues to evolve as now clinicians aren't only able to rely on phone and video calls to interact with their patients but can also analyze digital images of molecular samples remotely.

One of the most critical challenges and concerns impacting patients in remote diagnostics is [data privacy](#), particularly with the global remote diagnostics market size expected to [reach \\$653.29 billion by 2033](#). Advanced technology in data storage and analysis, such as cloud-based data infrastructure, will play an important role in resolving the data security and privacy concerns associated with remote diagnostics.



TREND 2

Shifting from Reactive to Proactive Care with Personalized Diagnostics



The U.S. healthcare system has long functioned in a reactive manner, identifying illnesses in patients and developing treatment plans based on their symptoms or more detailed diagnoses – in fact, reactive treatment currently consumes [over 75% of healthcare spending](#) in the U.S. As cost pressures intensify, one of the most valuable cost-saving strategies in healthcare is to invest in prevention rather than treatments.

The [rise in proactive healthcare](#) is reshaping expectations for the diagnostics industry. To support earlier intervention, diagnostic tools must deliver insights and results sooner and faster than ever, often before symptoms are even evident. [Personalized or precision medicine](#) plays a pivotal role in this evolution; even as the focus moves upstream toward prevention, the need for diagnostic testing remains strong, particularly as testing becomes more individualized and embedded in long-term disease management and therapeutic research.

With personalized medicine, tools like wearable monitors enable live, real-time tracking of patient data, supporting earlier recognition of potential health concerns. Diagnostic tools such as [Sepsis Watch](#) demonstrate how advanced analytics can be applied to diagnostic data to identify deterioration sooner and guide timely intervention. Similarly, methodologies such as AI-enabled continuous glucose monitoring – which allows proactive forecasting of glucose levels – are proving helpful in enhancing predictive diagnostics and for risk modeling to identify high-risk individuals based on biological markers before symptoms arise.

Incorporating AI-powered analysis and data modeling tools can aid in analyzing trends, developing care plans, detecting abnormal patterns, and providing alerts to enable early intervention. These capabilities are helping shifting the industry from one centered on treating disease to one focused on anticipating and preventing it.



TREND 3

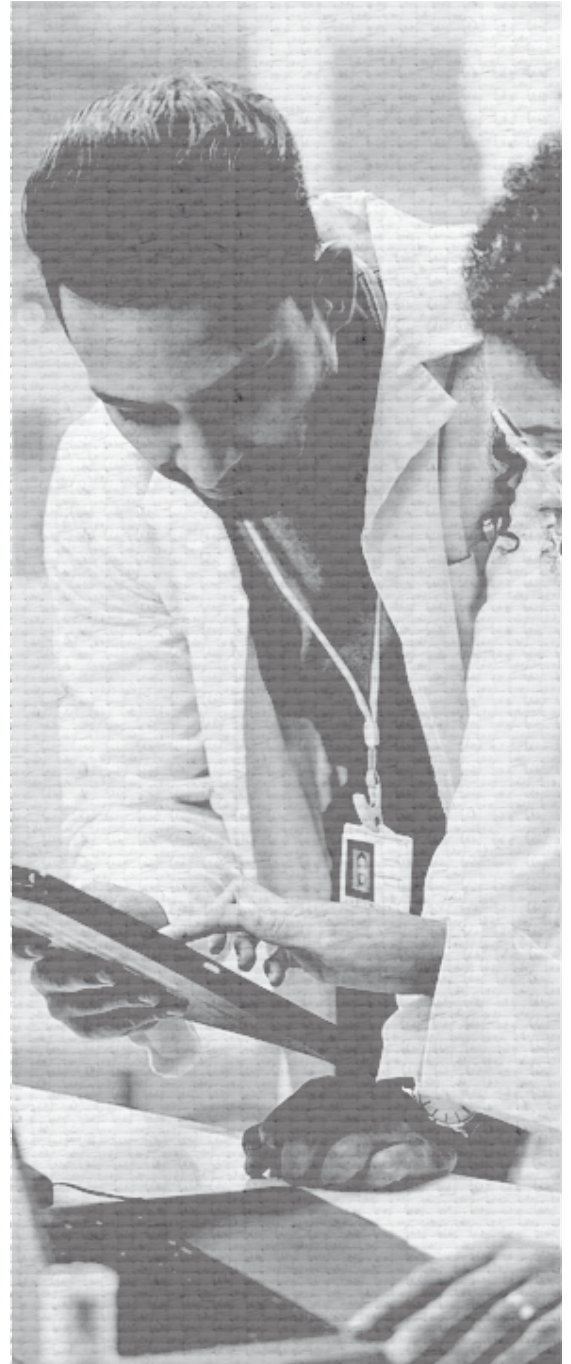
Fighting Antimicrobial Resistance with Diagnostics

Diagnostic testing plays a key role in healthcare providers making accurate diagnoses for patients, enabling them to identify the cause of the illness and decide the correct treatment in a timely manner. Prescribing the wrong antibiotic treatment poses the risk of promoting and further developing [antimicrobial resistance \(AMR\)](#). Although antimicrobial resistant microorganisms develop naturally over time, both overusing and misusing antimicrobials can significantly accelerate this process, so strengthening diagnostic capabilities is critical for reducing this unnecessary overuse and misuse of antibiotics.

With [advancements in diagnostics](#) such as rapid testing and Point-of-Care (POC) tests, diagnoses can happen much faster and with higher accuracy. Clinicians don't have to wait hours or days for cultures to develop to provide definitive results from patient samples; they can use rapid tests that provide results in minutes. As manufacturers continue to advance molecular diagnostics, not only do these tests reduce the time it takes to receive results, but they also increase the accuracy of the results and enable additional detailed analysis to isolate bacteria in samples. Faster, more precise insights equip clinicians to select targeted therapies rather than broad-spectrum antibiotics, directly supporting efforts to curb resistance.

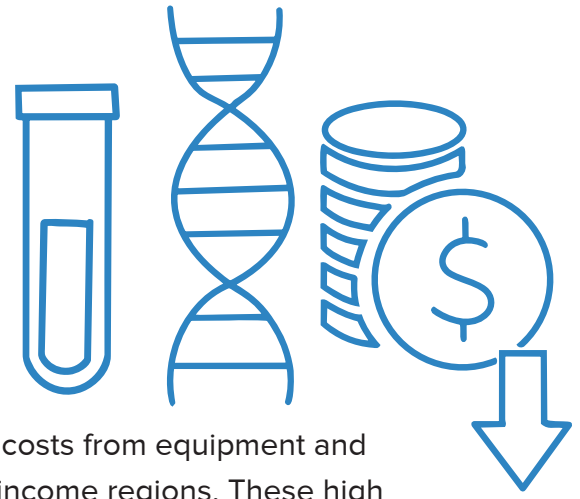
In many developing parts of the world, it remains common practice to prescribe generic, wide-range antibiotics to fight infections, often in the [absence of any diagnostic testing](#). This indicates an area for growth in the world of diagnostics and underscores the necessity to develop more affordable, accessible diagnostic options. Increasing access to reliable testing can reduce inappropriate prescribing patterns and strengthen global antimicrobial stewardship initiatives.

In any industry, faster rate and [higher accuracy](#) data collection necessitates high-quality data storage, management, and analysis tools. As diagnostic tests continue to advance and adapt to serve in roles such as in the [fight against AMR](#), it's vital that organizations prioritize strategic platform upgrades and reliable cloud-based [data management systems](#).



TREND 4

Affordability is a Key Barrier in Molecular Diagnostics Adoption



While increased incidences of infectious diseases globally continue to drive the market for advancements in molecular diagnostics, high costs from equipment and reagents present a barrier to growth, particularly in low- and middle-income regions. These high upfront and continued operational costs of tests make them expensive for patients. Insurance coverage has improved, but it's still complex and doesn't always offer coverage for more advanced tests. To ensure and maintain [equitable access](#) to the latest diagnostics regardless of geography, organizations must address these structural cost constraints.

It can be incredibly challenging to identify and execute cost-saving initiatives, especially for innovative projects like new diagnostic tools that require substantial investments in research, validation, and regulatory compliance. Even so, several manufacturers are finding ways to increase affordability for patients through strategic innovation and optimization of tests and distribution.

One of the highest costs associated with molecular diagnostics is that of the reagents used in testing. The development of reagent-free tests reduces per-test costs – not only by eliminating these substances but also by streamlining the test process. Additionally, advances in [point-of-care platforms](#) offer opportunities to design more streamlined, user-friendly platforms that require less training and infrastructure.

Affordability is also influenced by factors beyond the test itself. It's important to understand and be adaptable to the ever-evolving [supply chain landscape](#), particularly in any life sciences-adjacent industry. Several existing and emerging tools exist to streamline the supply chain; however, it's vital for organizations for first start with a clear and [detailed assessment of their supply chain operations](#) to identify inefficiencies and cost drivers. Emerging digital and [AI tools](#) can help reduce downtime and cut out operational inefficiencies in processes.

As molecular diagnostics become increasingly essential to modern care delivery, balancing innovation with cost management will be critical. Expanding access to these technologies will depend on scientific advancement as well as identifying and implementing strategies to improve affordability without compromising quality.



Looking Ahead

The diagnostics industry is being shaped by the push towards telemedicine and remote solutions, proactive over reactive healthcare, the fight against antimicrobial resistance, and affordability in diagnostic testing. It's imperative that businesses identify ways to incorporate advanced technologies and develop innovative diagnostic testing that allows for faster, more accurate results while addressing data security and cost concerns associated with the new world of diagnostics.

Given our [deep industry knowledge](#), Clarkston is well-suited to help businesses in successfully navigating these changes – whether it's exploring new data storage and analysis options, conducting supply chain landscape assessments, or incorporating AI in your diagnostic research. Reach out to our team to learn more about how these advancements are influencing healthcare in the future and how we can work with you to stay ahead of the curve in this ever-evolving market.

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