

Liver Community session: 16 October, 2024

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Background

The National Institute for Health and Social Care Research (NIHR) currently funds 20 Biomedical Research Centres (BRCs) across England. These are collaborations between world-leading universities and NHS organisations that bring together academics and clinicians to translate lab-based scientific breakthroughs into potential new treatments, diagnostics, and medical technologies. The Imperial BRC is a collaboration between Imperial College, London and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (ICHT) and is currently funded until November 2027. It has 14 research themes, four of which are cross cutting.

The Imperial Patient Experience Research Centre (PERC) is a core facility of the Imperial BRC undertaking research on research and supporting Imperial BRC researchers to undertake public involvement and engagement in research. PERC recognises that involving a diverse range of patients and members of the public in research is essential for ensuring that research is relevant, meaningful, and useful for improving healthcare experiences and outcomes for all. PERC is seeking to establish relationships with under-represented and under-served communities in North West London to engage a more diverse range of patients and members of the public in research. By working closely with these communities, PERC seeks to ensure that research is tailored to their specific needs and priorities, and that their voices are heard in healthcare decision-making.

Approach and purpose

Al-Manaar, The Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, is a thriving community hub in North Kensington, London, with a mission to promote belonging, unity, and pride among both Muslims and the wider community. Its goal is to empower and inspire individuals to play an active role in creating sustainable communities through its six service areas: Social & Leisure, Cultural, Spiritual, Economic, Educational, and Training.

A cornerstone of Al-Manaar's efforts is its focus on women's empowerment and engagement. One of its standout initiatives is **The Hubb Community Kitchen**, established after the Grenfell Tower tragedy. This project brings women together to prepare meals, share recipes, and foster resilience and mutual support. Al-Manaar also offers programs such as the **Elderly Wellbeing Project**, which encourages women to connect, learn, and engage through cooking classes and Qur'an lessons, creating a welcoming space for personal growth and community connection.

Through discussions with community leader Intalk, liver health was identified as a key topic of interest for a health information session. To address this need, two featured experts were invited to share their expertise:

Dr. Sandhi Wynn Nyunt: PhD candidate and specialist trainee in Endocrinology and Diabetes. Her research focuses on reproductive health and fatty liver disease, providing valuable insights into these critical areas of health.

Dr. Chioma Izzi-Engbeaya: Consultant Endocrinologist and Clinical Academic at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust. Her research explores hormonal interactions

between metabolic and reproductive systems, with a particular focus on obesity-related conditions.

Session Overview

On Wednesday, 16th October 2024, a session was held at the Al-Manaar Mosque from 11 am to 1 pm, led by Dr. Wynn Nyunt and Dr. Izzi-Engbeaya. Hashemi. The session provided a comprehensive overview of liver health and its relevance to the community, focusing on fatty liver disease also known as Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD).

Liver Functions:

Understanding the liver's critical role in the body, including filtering blood and regulating metabolism.

Common Liver Conditions:

Diseases such as alcohol-related liver disease, hepatitis, liver cancer, autoimmune conditions, and MASLD.

Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) Key Insights:

Causes and risk factors of MASLD, including weight, diet, inactivity, Type 2 Diabetes, and menopause. The session highlighted the relationship between MASLD and Type 2 Diabetes, with over 50% of diabetic adults affected by the condition. Current treatment strategies were discussed, emphasising lifestyle changes such as adopting a healthier diet, increasing physical activity, and managing weight effectively.

Research in MASLD:

Community members were introduced to an ongoing research study exploring the use of kisspeptin, a natural hormone, to reduce liver fat and inflammation in postmenopausal women. The study aims to identify alternative treatments for MASLD, given the limitations of current therapies like Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). To gather community insights, attendees were provided with feedback forms. For community members to share their thoughts on MASLD research, methods of participation, and preferences for treatment approaches.

This interactive session successfully combined expert knowledge, research updates, and community engagement. It empowered community members with practical knowledge about liver health while offering researchers valuable input to shape future studies and enhance community involvement.

Attendee recruitment

The community's regular workshops and events provided an excellent platform for engagement. The health information session was shared through WhatsApp and word

of mouth, ensuring effective communication and broad participation among existing community members.

Outcome of session

Attendee numbers

25 members of the public, primarily from the West London area and part of the Al-Manar community, attended the session. 12 attendees completed (N=12/25) a handwritten feedback form, see **Appendix 1**. For a detailed demographic breakdown of the attendee who provided these details voluntarily please see **Appendix 3**. Photos from the event are available in **Appendix 4**.

Feedback on the session

The responses from the completed feedback forms have been compiled in **Appendix 2**. In summary: 58% (n=7/12) of attendees rated the event as "Excellent," 33% (n=4/12) rated it as "Good," and 8% (n=1/12) rated it as "Average." Key highlights from the session included a deeper understanding of fatty liver disease, its causes, implications, and preventive measures, as well as the importance of the liver, focusing on its critical role in metabolism, cholesterol regulation, and overall health. Attendees enjoyed the clear explanations of liver function, gaining actionable insights into the progression of liver disease and the role of a healthy diet and lifestyle in prevention. Increased awareness of liver health was also noted, with practical steps like improved diet and exercise being emphasised.

Future topics of interest included diabetes, particularly its connection to heart disease and overall health, and cholesterol and hypertension, with attendees keen to understand their impact on health. There was also notable interest in stomach and colon health, reflecting curiosity about digestive health, and asthma, focusing on the management of respiratory conditions.

Appendix 1: Feedback Form

Imperial College
London

FEEDBACK FORM - Liver health information session - 16th October 2024

1. How would you rate your experience at this event? (please circle)



Very bad



Bad



Average



Good



Excellent

2. What was the key highlight from this session?

3. What other healthcare topics would you like to hear about at future sessions?

I am also happy to share my...

age...

No, thanks ☐

Sure, it's:

ethnicity...

No, thanks ☐

Sure, it's:

gender...

No, thanks ☐

Sure, it's:

postcode...
(first section
only)

No, thanks ☐

Sure, it's:

Interested in hearing about future opportunities to
hear about healthcare topics? Ask us how!

**Imperial College
London**

Session on Fatty liver disease

1. Do you think research about fatty liver disease in women is important?

Yes/ No

If no, please specify the reason _____

2. Would you be comfortable with injecting yourself at home?

3. How often would you prefer to inject yourself if you took part in the study?

☐ Twice a day for 12 weeks

☐ Once a day for 12 weeks

☐ Don't mind

4. Please give us your ideas of how we can encourage women to take part in the research about fatty liver research.

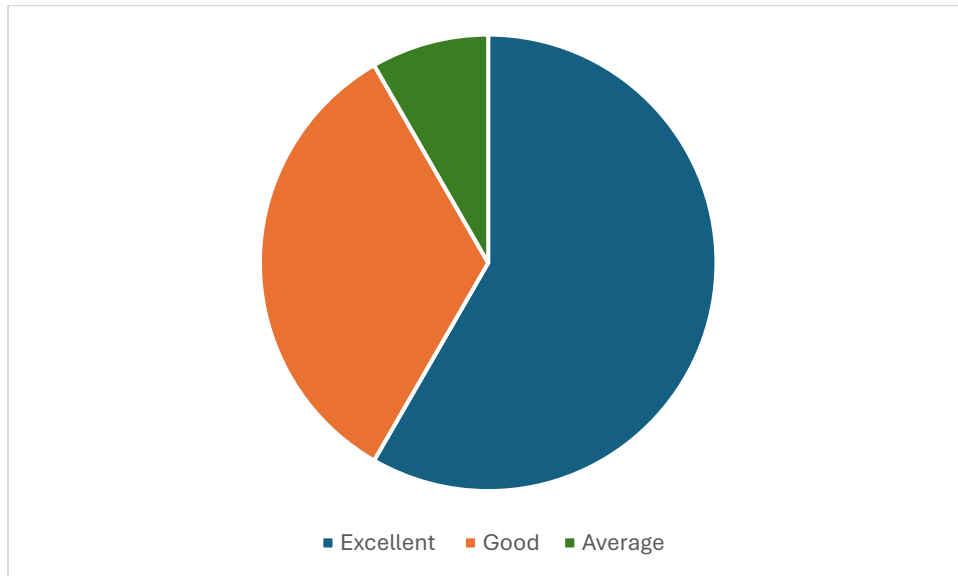
5. Please give your email address if you are happy for us to contact you for more detailed feedback about MASLD research:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

Appendix 2: Attendee feedback

How would you rate your experience at this event?

Out of the 12 feedback forms returned, 58% (n=7/12) rated the event as "Excellent," 33% (n=4/12) rated it as "Good," and 8% (n=1/12) rated it as "Average."



What was the key highlight from this session?

Fatty liver disease: A deeper understanding of its causes, implications, and preventive measures.

Importance of the liver: Learning about its critical role in metabolism, cholesterol regulation, and overall health.

Well-explained liver function: Clear explanations about how the liver works and its significance.

Diet and health management: Insights into the progression of liver disease and the role of a healthy diet and lifestyle in prevention.

Awareness of liver health: Increased awareness and actionable knowledge to maintain liver health through practical steps like improved diet and exercise.

What other healthcare topics would you like to hear about at future sessions?

Heart disease: A highly requested topic, with attendees highlighting interest in understanding its causes, prevention, and management.

Diabetes: Several attendees expressed interest in learning about its connection to heart disease and general health.

Cholesterol and hypertension: Suggestions focused on understanding cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and their impact on overall health.

Stomach and colon health: Topics like stomach health and colon disease were mentioned, reflecting interest in digestive health.

Asthma: Some attendees wanted to explore respiratory conditions and their management.

These suggestions provide valuable insights for planning future sessions tailored to the community's health priorities.

Do you think research about fatty liver disease in women is important?

92% attendees (n=12/13) responded that research about fatty liver disease in women is important.

Would you be comfortable with injecting yourself at home?

When asked if they would be comfortable injecting themselves at home, 67% of attendees (n=8/12) responded yes. Meanwhile, 25% (n=3/12) stated they would not be comfortable, and 8% (n=1/12) were unsure. This feedback highlights a majority openness to self-administration while underscoring the need for adequate training and support to address concerns among hesitant individuals.

How often would you prefer to inject yourself if you took part in the study?

78% (n=7/9) indicated a preference for injecting once a day for 12 weeks. A smaller group (22%, n=2/9) stated they "don't mind" the frequency.

Please give us your idea of how we can encourage more women to take part in the research about fatty liver research.

Community Engagement: Talking directly to the community and organizing workshops and events to discuss liver health.

Health Promotion: Encouraging healthy behaviours such as exercise, walking, and eating nutritious food.

Involvement of Healthcare Professionals: Hosting more talks with GPs and emphasizing the benefits of community discussions.

Clarity and Awareness: Explaining the importance of the research and why it needs to be discussed.

Increased Accessibility: Offering more health information sessions like the one held.

Appendix 3: Attendee demographics

Table 1: Demographic characteristics provided in feedback forms (N=10)

Characteristics	N (10)
Mean age (in years)	64
Age groups (in years)	
50-54	1
55-59	1
60-64	3
65-69	2
70-74	1
Not provided	2
Gender	
Female	10
Male	0
Not provided	0
Ethnic group	
Arab	1
African	1
Gambian	1
Indian	1
Moroccan	2
Not provided	4
Postcode (first section only)	
W10	4
W11	2
W8	1
W6	1
Not provided	2

Appendix 4: Photos

These photos were taken at the Liver Health information session, on the 16th of October 2024.



