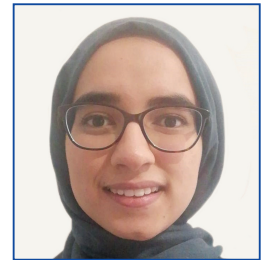


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## Dr Falk/Guts UK Awards 2020

### MEDICAL STUDENT BURSARY WINNER: **Aaminah Mohammed iBSc**



#### PROJECT: **Sex Related Differences in Alcohol-Related Liver Disease**

*Miss Aaminah Mohammed undertook this research at the UCL Institute for Liver and Digestive Health, Royal Free Hospital London whilst completing an iBSc in Clinical Sciences. She is currently completing her 4th year at the University College London Medical School.*

#### **Aaminah Mohammed explains:**

'As a long-standing advocate of equality and diversity within access to healthcare, the opportunity to undertake a project focusing on sex-related differences in the outcome of patients with decompensated alcohol-related cirrhosis had obvious appeal. Additionally, the project aims to evaluate variations in rates of recompensation in relation to drinking behaviour while identifying factors influencing any sex-related differences in survival.'

'Liver disease now constitutes the third most common cause of premature death in the UK with alcohol being the major aetiological factor in 70% of patients with cirrhosis. Traditionally alcohol-related cirrhosis was a disease of middle aged men but since the 1970s the male – female ratio amongst hospital admissions had reduced from 5:1 to 2:1. Although this undoubtedly reflects that more women are regularly consuming alcohol, studies have also shown that they are at greater risk of developing cirrhosis than men at given levels of consumption.'

'Apparent variations in the prevalence, disease manifestation and outcome between men and women are inadequately researched and ill-understood, which may impinge significantly on their care. Furthermore, evidence of conscious and unconscious bias towards women with alcohol-related cirrhosis is concerning. Studies undertaken in the USA show that, despite no difference in transplant survival, women are less likely to be selected for liver transplantation than men and, if listed, are more likely to die on the waiting list or be delisted.'

The misinterpretation of abnormal liver function tests suggesting continued alcohol use among women and perceptions of frailty may influence this.

'A preliminary analysis of 142 patients revealed that women maintaining abstinence from alcohol survive significantly longer than their male counterparts; while there were no sex-related differences in outcome among those continuing to drink.'

'Recently I reviewed a further 150 patients to obtain more detailed information on sex-disparities in the management of alcohol-related cirrhosis. In current clinical practice, there is no difference in the management of alcohol-related cirrhosis by sex: a key issue which clearly needs to be addressed.'

#### **Aaminah Mohammed's Project Supervisor, Consultant Hepatologist and Transplant Physician Dr Jennifer Ryan comments:**

'Aaminah Mohammed is exploring sex related differences in alcohol-related cirrhosis and has already undertaken a significant amount of work with a highly logical and insightful approach. Aaminah has enthusiastically set about structuring her approach to the data collection, and set important clinical questions advanced for her stage of training and this project could ultimately impact positively on clinical management and access to treatments, including liver transplantation.'

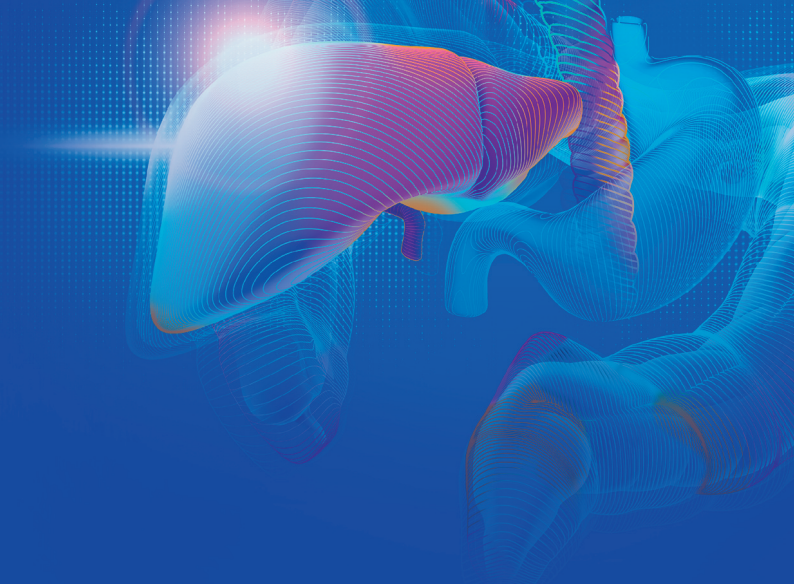
#### **Aaminah Mohammed states:**

'I am incredibly honoured and sincerely grateful for the Dr Falk Medical Student Prize. This project has provided me with an invaluable insight into academic medicine and inspired me to continue in its pursuit alongside my clinical career. I cannot thank my project supervisors Professor Marsha Morgan and Dr Jennifer Ryan enough for providing this opportunity and endless support throughout this difficult year.'

'The award will undoubtedly assist in the further development of this project and will help highlight the issues surrounding sex and alcohol-related liver disease, which may go on to translate into clinical practice.'



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