

F1/F2 RESEARCH GRANT WINNER:
DR GRACE HATTON



PROJECT: The role of faecal microbial transplantation (FMT) in treatment of chronic liver disease.

'On a personal as well as professional level, winning this award reinforces the validity of my work impacting and hopefully benefiting a wide patient cohort as well as supporting my career aspirations to pursue a career in academic clinical hepatology. I am immensely grateful to the Dr Falk/Guts UK committee for the award and the recognition that it brings to myself and the research group that I work in at KCH.'

Dr Grace Hatton is an F2 doctor currently working in research and based at King's College Hospital, London.

'There is an increasing focus in the scientific world on the bacteria which reside in the gut, known as the microbiota. My project focuses on the use of faecal microbial transplantation (FMT), which is a novel therapeutic strategy undergoing randomised controlled trial (RCT) evaluation in patients with cirrhosis of the liver.

'By replacing an unhealthy gut microbiota with a healthy one, we are trying to understand how the gut microbiota and microbiome communicates with the immune system, and whether FMT may improve the immune dysfunction we typically see in patients with chronic liver disease which makes them highly susceptible to infections.

'FMT has already demonstrated efficacy in the treatment of gut disorders including *Clostridium Difficile* infection. Our work will continue hopefully into subsequent trials with wider cohorts if we are able to demonstrate a positive effect on disease outcome, including cirrhosis progression and subjective patient quality of life assessments'.

Dr Hatton's Supervisor Dr Debbie Shawcross comments:

'Grace is an incredible young academic who has demonstrated great skill and tenacity in her research career to date. She is working with our team on a novel clinical trial which is examining the role of faecal microbiota transplantation (FMT) in improving outcomes in patients with advanced chronic liver disease on the cusp of requiring liver transplantation.

'With her pharmaceutical background, she is also central to a parallel project we are undertaking trying to encapsulate FMT to make it easier to administer to patients on an outpatient basis and facilitate undertaking a further clinical trial'.

