

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February is awareness month for the disease Cholangiocarcinoma (CC) **New guidelines for diagnosis and treatment**

There's a disease that claims more lives in Britain than cervical cancer, but most people have never heard of it. The UK's only cholangiocarcinoma charity, AMMF, is seeking to change this with its February Awareness Campaign.

Cholangiocarcinoma, 'CC' for short, is the second most common liver cancer worldwide. CC affects approximately 1500 people in the UK every year and is increasing at an alarming rate.

For the first time since 2002 the clinical guidelines have been updated; consolidating the very latest knowledge about CC from the UK's leading experts. The guidelines have been compiled with the support of The British Liver Trust and the UK's Cholangiocarcinoma Charity, AMMF.

Dr Shahid A Khan from Imperial College London, who led the review, comments 'Despite treatment advances in many other types of cancer, with CC only 5% are likely to survive beyond a year. The updated guidelines further our understanding into why the cancer arises, how it can be better diagnosed and reviews the latest treatments available.'

Report Headlines

- CC kills approximately 1500 people annually in the UK, with approximately equal numbers of men and women.
- Incidence and mortality rates for CC have risen steeply and steadily over the past few decades. The cause of the rise is unknown and is not explained simply by improvements in diagnosis.
- Most cases of CC are sporadic. The established risk factors, linked to certain health conditions, account for less than 30% of all cases. Newly discovered likely risk factors include obesity, diabetes and fatty liver disease.
- Recognised symptoms of CC, which are not exclusive to this disease, are jaundice, pale stools, dark urine, pruritus (irritation of the skin), malaise, fatigue and weight loss.

- Surgery is the only potentially curative treatment for patients with CC. However, at diagnosis currently only one third of patients are well enough to take this option, and fewer than half of these will survive 5 years after surgery.
- There have been some recent advances in chemotherapy for CC, but although chemotherapy may improve survival, it is not curative.
- Historically liver transplantation was associated with rapid recurrence of CC and poor survival rates. However recent studies in the US have shown that, amongst rigorously selected patients, survival rates have improved with over 70% surviving more than 5 years

AMMF is the UK's only CC charity and for every day of the month of February will post a message on Facebook from a survivor or a friend or relative of someone who has died from this terrible disease.

AMMF funds research into the disease at Imperial College, London. The research continues to do further work into the causes and diagnosis of CC. Please visit AMMF's website if you would like to find out about ways to raise money or how to make a donation.

Visit the AMMF website at: <http://www.ammf.org.uk>

Follow AMMF on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/AMMF/347407223911>

For further information or to arrange an interview with Dr Shahid Khan or a case study, please contact Sarah Eden at sarah@ammf.org.uk or on 07814 453151

A full copy of the guidelines can be viewed at

<http://www.ammf.org.uk/cholangiocarcinoma/guidelines-for-diagnosis-and-treatment-uk>

Specialists involved in the updated guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of cholangiocarcinoma **Hepatology and Gastroenterology Section** (S.A. Khan, S.D Taylor-Robinson, A. Thillainayagam, H.C. Thomas), **Department of Medicine and Department of Histopathology** (R. Goldin), **Imperial College London, St Mary's Hospital Campus, South Wharf Road, London W2 1NY, United Kingdom;** **Department of Oncology** (H. Wasan), **Imperial College London Hammersmith Hospital Campus, Du Cane Road, London W12 OHS;** **Department of Hepatobiliary Surgery** (B.R. Davidson) and **University College London Centre for Hepatology** (S.P. Pereira, W.M.C. Rosenberg), **Division of Medicine, University College London, Royal Free and University College Medical School, Pond Street, London, London, NW3 2QG;** **Department of Hepatobiliary and Pancreatic Surgery** (N. Heaton, P. Karani), **King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 9RS.**