

Press release

GRIPonMASH received significant EU funding to improve prevention and care of Metabolic dysfunction-Associated SteatoHepatitis (MASH)

New European project aims to improve tools and advice to prevent chronic liver illnesses.

Utrecht, The Netherlands, 05-02-2024: GRIPonMASH, a newly founded consortium consisting of 27 European institutions and companies, has bundled resources to bring about a transformational change in the detection and treatment of Metabolic Dysfunction-Associated Steatotic Liver Disease (MASLD). Supported by the Innovative Health Initiative Joint Undertaking (IHI JU), the consortium will focus on developing the GRIPonMASH Diagnostic Platform which will allow early detection of patients with MASH, better patient stratification and personalized lifestyle advice.

Thirty percent of the world population suffers from Steatotic Liver Disease of which MASLD is one of the clinical presentations. Of these patients, about one in five will develop MASH, an advanced stage of MASLD in which liver inflammation occurs and the liver becomes severely damaged. Moreover, five percent will develop fibrotic MASH (liver scarring). Whilst MASLD is reversible, MASH and especially fibrotic MASH lead to irreversible complications and could even lead to liver decompensation or liver cancer. It is expected that by 2030, MASH will be the leading cause of liver transplants worldwide. Early detection of the disease is vital to ensure that the burden of care is lowered, and that patients can recover from MASH before it becomes chronic or even fatal.

The consortium

The consortium consists of 27 parties from all over Europe. They will be working closely together for the next four years to ensure the success of GRIPonMASH. The research was initiated by Julius Clinical, a spin-out of the University Medical Center Utrecht (UMCU) in the Netherlands. Together with UMCU and Echosens, they will be coordinating the project.

The GRIPonMASH diagnostic platform

The 26-million-euro project will address the unmet public health need of reducing disease burden and comorbidities associated with MASLD by designing and optimizing a sustainable and scalable GRIPonMASH diagnostic platform.

The platform will provide:

- Screening, diagnosis, management and long-term follow-up of MASH high-risk patients to ensure early detection
- Development of decision support tools and testing of existing and novel biomarkers for the detection of MASH patients through artificial intelligence-based decision support tools
- Development of non-invasive alternatives to diagnostic liver biopsies
- Assessment and personalization of lifestyle advice based on factors like physical activity, diet, sleep, smoking, alcohol consumption, and perception of stress.

“We believe that by creating early detection and diagnosis of MASH, we can improve many lives. Not just patients that go undiagnosed and only find out when it’s too late, but also help healthcare

professionals who can now focus on early treatment through proven lifestyle interventions”, said Prof. Dr. Manuel Castro Cabezas, scientific director and (together with Prof. Dr. D.E. (Rick) Grobbee) co-founder of GRIPonMASH.

“To be able to early detect and diagnose MASH, we need clear tools to diagnose and solid information for primary and secondary healthcare providers but also for patients. MASH is a disease caused by lifestyle and can luckily be reversed by changing habits. If we make sure this happens sooner, we can prevent a lot of unnecessary harm”, said Prof Oscar H. Franco, MD Principal Investigator of GRIPonMASH.

NOTE FOR THE EDITOR, NOT FOR PUBLICATION

About GRIPonMASH

GRIPonMASH is a consortium founded by Julius Clinical (CRO, Zeist, NL) and UMCU (University Medical Center Utrecht) consisting of 27 involved parties dedicated to bring about a transformational change in the detection and diagnosis of MASH patients. The aim is to achieve better information, diagnosis and lifestyle advice on MASH in order to increase the number of people diagnosed and aware of the lifestyle changes needed and thus decreasing the number of people with MASH and liver cancer.

The project is coordinated by the UMC Utrecht and Julius Clinical in the Netherlands.

Learn more about GRIPonMASH and contributing partners through www.griponmash.eu

For questions, please contact:

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