



Cross-Party Group
on Liver Disease
and Liver Cancer

Cross Party Group on Liver Disease and Liver Cancer

Annual Report and Financial Statement 2022-2023

Cross Party Group Title	Cross-Party Group on Liver Disease and Liver Cancer
Name of Group Chair	Joel James MS
Name of other Members of the Senedd	Jane Dodds MS Sarah Murphy MS Mabon ap Gwynfor MS Altaf Hussain MS Mike Hedges MS
Name of Secretary and Organisation	Paul McGlinchey British Liver Trust
Names of external members and organisations represented	Dr Andrew Yeoman (clinical lead for Liver Disease Implementation Network) William Williams (patient advocate)

Foreword by Joel James MS (Chair):

Since our last AGM, our Secretariat have hosted 2 Love Your Liver roadshows at the Senedd ([March 2022](#) and [March 2023](#)) to help raise public awareness of the risk factors for liver disease. We've tabled over 50 Parliamentary Questions and secured the [first ever debate on liver disease and liver cancer at the Senedd](#) in January 2023 which secured significant media engagement and helped to move liver health up the political agenda.

With continuing support from parliamentarians across the political spectrum, we've helped to move the dial on public awareness of the rising scale of the liver disease public health emergency in Wales. Patient voices have been central to our work and we've taken evidence from 3 patients who spoke powerfully about the vital importance of tackling inequalities in liver disease outcomes and care.

Sadly liver disease deaths have surged by 23% in the last 2 years alone and almost 9 in 10 people with liver cancer die within 5 years of being diagnosed. This has been driven by alcohol misuse, viral hepatitis and significantly by obesity.

Following sustained advocacy led by patients, clinicians, parliamentarians and the third sector, Wales has broken ground through the publication of the [Quality Statement on Liver Disease](#) in November 2022, and through the nationwide rollout of the [All-Wales Abnormal Liver Blood Test Pathway](#) the previous year.

However, it's critical we bridge the implementation gap to improve survival and health outcomes for liver disease and liver cancer patients across Wales. More can and must be done and it our ambition to accelerate earlier diagnosis, tackle chronic workforce shortages and reduce severe health inequalities and unwarranted variation in care for patients across Wales.

We believe this can only be achieved through improved oversight and accountability through a robust and resourced Liver Disease Implementation Network.

Previous Group Meetings Since Last AGM

Meeting 1	
Date of meeting	Thursday 6 th October (virtual) 2022
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joel James MS (Chair) • Huw Irranca-Davies MS • Altaf Hussain MS • Mike Hedges MS (represented by Ryland Doyle support staff) • Lee Gonzalez • Richard Daniels (British Liver Trust) • Paul McGlinchey (British Liver Trust) • Sarah Lowther (British Liver Trust) • William Williams (patient advocate) • Andrew Yeoman (clinical lead, LDIG) • Kate Pronger (Lead Nurse Specialist Alcohol Care Team) • John Bell (patient advocate) • Felicity Oppe (patient advocate) • Phil Murrey (patient advocate)
Summary of issues discussed	<p><u>Summary:</u> On Thursday 6th October, the Cross Party Group on Liver Disease and Liver Cancer held a meeting to take evidence from patients and clinicians on what's needed in the Welsh government's forthcoming Quality Statement on Liver Disease in order to tackle huge variation in treatment outcomes and care for liver disease patients across Wales. We heard from 3 liver disease patient advocates Felicity, John and Phil who shared powerful testimonies with Members of the Senedd. Their stories highlighted the impact of delayed diagnosis and stigma on worsening liver disease outcomes.</p> <p>Dr Andrew Yeoman (Clinical Lead, Liver Disease Implementation Group) spotlighted the latest innovations and emerging good practice in early diagnosis of liver disease in Wales including the national roll out of the new All Wales Liver Blood Tests Pathway. Kate Pronger (Lead Alcohol Liaison Practitioner ABUHB) focused on the vital role of seven day alcohol support services in tackling harmful drinking behaviours, reducing admissions and improving health outcomes.</p> <p><u>Call for action:</u> The event was closed by the Chair of the CPG, Joel James MS, with a call to action. Members of the Senedd were urged to sign a cross party letter requesting</p>

	<p>a meeting with Baroness Morgan (Health Minister) to discuss priorities for action in the forthcoming Quality Statement on Liver Disease in order to tackle variation in early diagnosis, treatment outcomes and care across Wales. Joel also galvanised support for a forthcoming debate on the liver disease public health emergency in the Senedd.</p>
<p>AGM postponed from March 2023 to November 2023</p>	<p><i>Please note the AGM was previously booked for Wednesday 15th March 2023 but regrettably had to be cancelled due to unforeseen strike action and the closure of the Senedd.</i></p>
<p>Meeting 2</p>	<p>Evidence session with patients and clinicians on what’s needed in the Welsh government’s forthcoming Quality Statement on Liver Disease</p>
<p>Date of meeting</p>	<p>Tuesday 7th November 2023 (conference room A, Senedd) with hybrid set up</p>
<p>Attendees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joel James MS (Chair) • Russell George MS • Jenny Rathbone MS • Sarah Murphy MS + aide • Julie Morgan MS aide • Heledd Morgan MS • Dr Lee Gonzalez • Mathew Norman (Diabetes UK Cymru) • Richard Daniels (British Liver Trust) • Paul McGlinchey (British Liver Trust) • Julie Adams (British Liver Trust) • William Williams (patient advocate) • Andrew Yeoman (clinical lead, LDIG) • Claire Willams (Diabetes UK) • Julie Harrington (Guts UK)
<p>Summary of issues discussed</p>	<p>On Tuesday 7th November, the Cross-Party Group on Liver Disease and Liver Cancer held an AGM and high level panel discussion on policy solutions to tackle the obesity and fatty liver disease crisis in Wales. Keynote speakers included Joel James MS (Chair), Health and Social Care Committee Chair, Russell George MS, Equality and Social Justice Committee Chair Jenny Rathbone MS and Mathew Norman (Deputy Director, Diabetes UK Cymru). Joel James MS (Chair) thanked panellists and attendees for taking time to support this important event on tackling rising obesity and fatty liver disease in Wales; provided introductory remarks for</p>

the AGM highlighting recent progress with the Cross-Party Group on Liver Disease and Liver Cancer in raising the profile of the liver disease public health crisis in Wales. Health and Social Care Committee Chair, Russell George MS, opened the panel discussion by highlighting the significant burden of obesity related ill health in Wales with two thirds of the population overweight or obese and fatty liver disease diagnoses increasing 20-fold over 2 decades. Obesity Alliance Cymru representative, Mathew Norman (Deputy Director, Diabetes UK Cymru), highlighted the Welsh Government's recent projections for the NHS in 10+ years which recognises the growing prevalence of non-communicable diseases (e.g. cardiovascular disease, liver disease, diabetes) which are linked to modifiable risk factors (alcohol, smoking, HFSS foods), noting the impact of long term conditions and multimorbidity on huge avoidable pressures on the NHS. Equality and Social Justice Committee Chair, Jenny Rathbone MS, highlighted the severe impact of ultra-processed food (UPF) on widening the gap in healthy life expectancy including within her own constituency; noting that UPF is poorly regulated and has particular penetration in the UK and US which is driving population obesity and preventable conditions such as heart disease and diabetes. Cross-Party Group on Eating Disorders Chair, Sarah Murphy MS (CPG member), noted that it was great to see one of her constituents from Bridgend was attending remotely (William) as he is a passionate advocate for improving outcomes for liver disease patients in Wales; noted the complexity around implementing Healthy Weight Healthy Wales in schools and ensuring sensitivity to vulnerable categories children, particularly those with learning needs who are more likely to develop eating disorders; emphasised the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on poorest households with food banks noting that fuel poverty is hampering families from being able to cook even pasta or rice; further highlighting local innovation and good practice within her own constituency (e.g. Slade Farm Veg Bag Scheme).



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	<p><u>Call for action:</u> The event was closed by the Chair of the CPG, Joel James MS, with a call to action. Members of the Senedd were urged to table bespoke PQs and sign a cross party letter to Baroness Morgan (Health Minister) on strengthening oversight for prevention and earlier diagnosis of liver disease in Wales. It was also agreed that the CPG would publish a 'state of the nation' report on liver disease and liver cancer in Wales in 2024.</p>
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Professional lobbyists, voluntary organisations and charities the group have met during the previous year.

Name of organisation	Name of group
Crohns & Colitis UK (Aug 2023)	Obesity Alliance Cymru (Oct 2023)
British Heart Foundation (Oct 2023)	LSCT Wales Sub Group (Sept 2023)
Diabetes UK Cymru (Oct 2023)	Welsh Cancer Alliance (Jan and July 2022, Jan, March, July and Sept 2023)

Annual Financial Statement

Name of Chair: Joel James MS

Name of Secretary and Organisation: Paul McGlinchey, British Liver Trust

Title	Description	Amount
Groups expenses	None.	£0.00
Benefits received by the group or individual members from external bodies	No good purchased.	£0.00
Any financial support or other support	No benefits received.	£0.00
Total	NA	£0.00

Services provided to the Group, such as hospitality.

All hospitality paid for by the British Liver Trust

Date	Name and description of provider	Costs
Tuesday 7th November 2023 (Conference room A, Senedd)	Refreshments (tea, coffee, bottled water) organised through Senedd Hospitality Manager.	£52.65 (excluding VAT)
Total cost		£63.18 (including VAT)