

**PRESS RELEASE**

**UK wide multi-centre liver study:  
Beta Blockers Or Placebo for Primary Prophylaxis of oesophageal varices  
(BOPPPP Trial).**

**Funded by the NIHR HTA Programme**

Liver disease is the fifth commonest cause of death in the developed world and is rising in incidence, with liver failure a common mode of death. In England and Wales, it is estimated that 60,000 people have cirrhosis with approximately 11,000 attributable deaths each year. In many cases patients present with internal bleeding from oesophageal varices, which occurs unpredictably requiring emergency treatment, and leading to the need for intensive care admission and may be life-ending if not stoppable.

The National Institute of Health Research Health Technology Assessment (NIHR: HTA) programme commissioned this research and has confirmed that it will fund £2.3 million to consent, treat and follow up 1,200 patients at 25 different hospitals across the UK. The trial will take 6 years to complete aiming to assess whether the risk of bleeding can be reduced. It has been met with great support from liver specialists across the UK as well as being endorsed by the British Liver Trust, the national body representing patients with cirrhosis.

This study will address whether primary prophylaxis against future variceal haemorrhage with non-selective beta blockers (NSBB) is clinically and economically effective in patients with cirrhosis and small varices. Patients will be given a beta blocker (carvedilol) or placebo and followed for three years.

Dr. Vishal Patel and Dr. Mark McPhail from the Institute of Liver Sciences, King's College Hospital jointly led the application in conjunction with the King's College London Clinical Trials Unit (PI Dr. Ben Carter). Dr. Patel states "This is a huge opportunity for a potentially landmark study, and if effective could benefit the lives for '000's of patients with cirrhosis in the UK. We are looking forward to working with our colleagues across the UK to successfully deliver this trial".

Dr. McPhail states "We predict a reduction in liver bleeding by almost 50% after three years of follow up with less hospital admissions".

Our study will not only investigate if NSBB are effective, but how this can be managed effectively within the primary care setting. Dr. Harry Ahmed, an academic GP at Cardiff University states "I am delighted that this important trial is collaborating with primary care from the outset, to understand how NSBB can be safely titrated and managed in the community".



## About King's College London

King's College London is one of the top 25 universities in the world (2016/17 QS World University Rankings) and among the oldest in England. King's has more than 26,500 students (of whom nearly 10,400 are graduate students) from some 150 countries worldwide, and nearly 6,900 staff. The university is in the second phase of a £1 billion redevelopment programme which is transforming its estate.

King's has an outstanding reputation for world-class teaching and cutting-edge research. In the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) King's was ranked 6th nationally in the 'power' ranking, which takes into account both the quality and quantity of research activity, and 7th for quality according to Times Higher Education rankings. Eighty-four per cent of research at King's was deemed 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' (3\* and 4\*). The university is in the top seven UK universities for research earnings and has an overall annual income of more than £600 million.

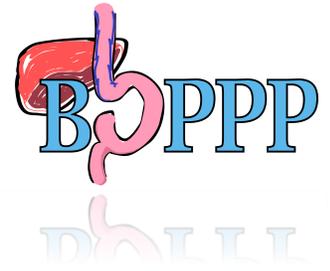
King's has a particularly distinguished reputation in the humanities, law, the sciences (including a wide range of health areas such as psychiatry, medicine, nursing and dentistry) and social sciences including international affairs. It has played a major role in many of the advances that have shaped modern life, such as the discovery of the structure of DNA and research that led to the development of radio, television, mobile phones and radar.

## About King's College Hospital

The Liver Unit at King's College Hospital has a world class reputation for the treatment of liver related disorders with an extremely comprehensive set of services for the management of patients with liver failure, cirrhosis, liver cancer and portal hypertension. It also has one of the highest throughput of acute hepatology and liver transplants in Europe. Linked to this impressive clinical service is and one of the most active research environments in clinical trials, translational and basic science studies related to liver disease.

## About King's Health Partners

King's College London and Guy's and St Thomas', King's College Hospital and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trusts are part of King's Health Partners. King's Health Partners Academic Health Sciences Centre (AHSC) is a pioneering global collaboration between one of the world's leading research-led universities and three of London's most successful NHS Foundation Trusts, including leading teaching hospitals and comprehensive mental health services. For more information, visit: [www.kingshealthpartners.org](http://www.kingshealthpartners.org).



## About the National Institute for Health Research

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR): improving the health and wealth of the nation through research. Established by the Department of Health and Social Care, the NIHR:

- funds high quality research to improve health
- trains and supports health researchers
- provides world-class research facilities
- works with the life sciences industry and charities to benefit all
- involves patients and the public at every step

For further information, visit the NIHR website [www.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.nihr.ac.uk)

## About the use of patient data

This work uses data provided by patients and collected by the NHS as part of their care and support and would not have been possible without access to this data. The NIHR recognises and values the role of patient data, securely accessed and stored, both in underpinning and leading to improvements in research and care. **Read more**