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Opinions

Global multi-societies endorsement of the MAFLD definition



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We, the undersigned, are a group of over 80 professional societies representing multiple stakeholders from more than 75 countries; we hereby reaffirm our endorsement of the name metabolic (dysfunction)- associated fatty liver disease (MAFLD) as an appropriate term and its corresponding definition for fatty liver diseases associated with metabolic dysregulation [1-3].

This open letter represents the views of individuals and societies across the global liver health community. We are putting

forth this letter in response to the overwhelming evidence that supports the practicality and usefulness of the MAFLD definition for patient awareness and management, with several studies indicating that it achieves an optimal balance between sensitivity and specificity when compared to other proposed definitions [4]. This aspect is supposed to have substantial implications beyond the change of nomenclature, including cost-effectiveness and health policy.

Additionally, the term MAFLD strikes the right balance between lack of stigma and easy communication without medicalizing the disease names. It takes into account the global perspective, aligning it well with other diseases across the metabolic dysregulation spectrum. The name is easier to communicate with various stakeholders, including non-hepatology healthcare providers, primary care providers, patients, and policymakers [5-9]. In fact, studies have demonstrated that the transition to MAFLD has positive consequences in raising awareness about this condition among patients and their health-care professionals. It also increases attention and flow of knowledge about disease among health systems in various regions of the world [10].

By avoiding unjustified abrupt changes in the nomenclature and definition of fatty liver disease, we can achieve greater standardization across the spectrum of disease and move towards a more coherent, logical, and cogent framework to understand, diagnose, and treat this prevalent disease.

Authors contributions

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Declaration of interests

None.

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