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Summary

People, patients, steatotic liver disease and the liver cancer movement

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Primary Care

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A patient advocate from the International Liver Cancer Movement presented the case for integrating liver health into national policy, highlighting that at least 60% of liver cancers are preventable and calling for systematic early detection programmes modelled on high-surveillance systems.

KEY POINTS

- The speaker stated that annual liver cancer cases are projected to rise from 870,000 in 2022 to nearly 1.5 million by 2050, with deaths increasing from 670,000 to almost 1.4 million, according to the Lancet Commission.
- Metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease is the fastest growing driver of liver cancer, accounting for 8% of cases in 2022 and projected to reach nearly 11% by 2050, with an estimated 1.3 billion adults living with the condition in 2023.
- The speaker stated that in Japan around 80% of liver cancers are diagnosed through routine surveillance compared to only 15% in the UK, attributing the gap to system design rather than lack of clinical effort.
- The World Health Assembly adopted its first resolution on steatotic liver disease on May 21st, providing a policy mandate to integrate the condition into national health strategies.
- The speaker emphasized that stigma remains a major barrier to care, as patients who feel blamed for their weight or drinking behaviour are less likely to return for follow-up appointments.
- The International Liver Cancer Movement, founded in 2021, launched the HCC Patient Charter in 2022 with endorsement from over 40 organisations, advocating for early diagnostics and stigma-free access to care.

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