

Tayside liver testing project presented with Healthcare Excellence Award



l-r Clinical lead for National Laboratories Programme Dr Bill Bartlett, Michael Hugh Miller, Professor John Dillon, Dr Elizabeth Furrie and Dr Ellie Dow (holding awards) from the iLFT team, NHS Tayside Chair Lorna Birse-Stewart and President of IFCC Maurizio Ferrari.

An innovative project which saw a new type of test for liver disease has been presented with an inaugural UNIVANTS for Healthcare Excellence Award.

The intelligent liver function testing (iLFT) project, which makes it easier to identify liver disease at an early stage, potentially saving thousands of lives, was one of three winners of the 2019 Award.

Consultant gastroenterologist and hepatologist Professor John Dillon and consultant in biochemical medicine Dr Ellie Dow worked with colleagues from NHS Tayside and the University of Dundee to develop the intelligent liver function tests (iLFTs) using the automated Blood Sciences laboratory infrastructure at Ninewells Hospital.

Initial results from the iLFT trial showed a 44% increase in diagnosis of liver disease, giving patients earlier access to treatment.

Professor Dillon said, “By working with the existing IT systems in the lab, we were able to develop a system that detects the early warning signs of liver disease and which can then give GPs the tools they need to make a solid diagnosis and begin treatment plans.

“More importantly, our modification allows us to immediately differentiate between alcoholic or non-alcoholic fatty liver disease and the more rare diseases such as autoimmune liver diseases Hepatitis C or metabolic diseases, meaning those who need immediate assistance receive it faster.”

The [UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence Award](#) recognises teams around the world which collaborate across disciplines and transform healthcare delivery, and ultimately patient lives.

The award is one of several prestigious accolades given to the iLFT project in 2019 including Innovation in Practice Gold award at NHS Tayside STAR Awards; Innovation award at Royal College of Physicians’ Excellence in Patient Care Awards; Frontline Gastroenterology Prize for the ‘Best patient benefit in gastroenterology and hepatology’; Innovation Award at the Royal College of Pathology Excellence Awards; and Highly Commended in the Digital Innovation category of the BMJ Awards.