Falk Foundation/Guts UK Awards 2025

SPR TRAINEE AUDIT/QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AWARD WINNER:
Dr Munir Tarazi

Improving Long-term Symptom Management in Oesophagogastric Cancer: Mapping Clinical Pathways and Exploring New Interventions

Dr Munir Tarazi is an Upper GI/General Surgery trainee in the North West deanery, rotating between two regional specialist Upper GI units at the Royal Preston Hospital and Salford Royal Hospital. He is an honorary clinical research fellow undertaking his academic research with the Department of Surgery and Cancer at Imperial College London.

Dr Tarazi explains:

'The rising number of oesophageal and gastric cancer survivors presents new challenges in long-term care. Despite improved survival rates, the clinical journey often results in substantial physical, social, and emotional challenges. A significant proportion of survivors continue to experience long-term symptoms that significantly impact their quality of life. Traditional follow-up care, often resource-intensive and anxiety-provoking, has shown limited effectiveness, prompting a need for more personalised, patient-centred solutions. Self-care strategies and patient-initiated follow-up, supported by modern technologies such as machine learning to create tailored mobile applications, may offer a more sustainable, successful, and cost-effective solution to improving cancer survivorship while conserving healthcare resources.

'This project, which will begin in July and run for one year, aims to map the current clinical care pathway for oesophagogastric cancer survivors to identify gaps in care and areas for improvement. Researchers will work closely with patients, doctors, and other healthcare professionals to understand how follow-up care is delivered and where changes could enhance symptom management and recovery. By conducting in-depth interviews and workshops, the study will explore potential new approaches, including more personalised and patient-led follow-up strategies. Additionally, the RECapp platform, designed to help patients self-monitor symptoms, will be tested to assess its acceptability and usability.

'The project has four main components: (1) a stakeholder analysis to identify key stakeholder groups involved across the care pathway; (2) clinical pathway mapping through semi-structured interviews to identify gaps and barriers in the current management pathway and its impact on patients; (3) explore potential interventions for improving long-term symptom management including barriers with implementation in the UK healthcare system; and (4) assess the acceptability, applicability, and usability of the RECapp platform.

'Ultimately, the project aims to support the implementation of personalised digital tools in cancer survivorship care. By enabling smarter follow-up and symptom management, this project could transform long-term care for oesophagogastric cancer survivors in a sustainable and scalable way.'

Dr Tarazi's Project Supervisor, Professor George Hanna, Head of Department of Surgery and Cancer, Imperial College London comments:

'I am delighted that Munir has won the 2025 Dr. Falk Guts UK SpR Audit Award. By focusing on personalised follow-up care and integrating innovative platforms like RECapp, this project could improve long-term symptom management and enhance quality of life for oesophagogastric cancer survivors. Through stakeholder engagement and clinical pathway mapping, it supports a more focussed approach to cancer survivorship in the UK. Overall, he is an exceptional researcher with a deep understanding of the value of patient-centred research in driving meaningful improvements in care.'

Dr Tarazi states of winning the award:

'I am incredibly grateful to receive the Dr. Falk/Guts UK Award, a deeply meaningful recognition of our commitment to improving the lives of cancer survivors through innovative, patient-centred research. It reinforces the value of addressing real-world challenges in survivorship care and motivates me to continue pursuing impactful, translational research.

'Personally, it's a moment of pride that strengthens my confidence as an early-career researcher. Professionally, it opens valuable opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and visibility within the academic and clinical communities, helping to shape a future career dedicated to advancing personalised healthcare solutions and improving quality of life for patients.'

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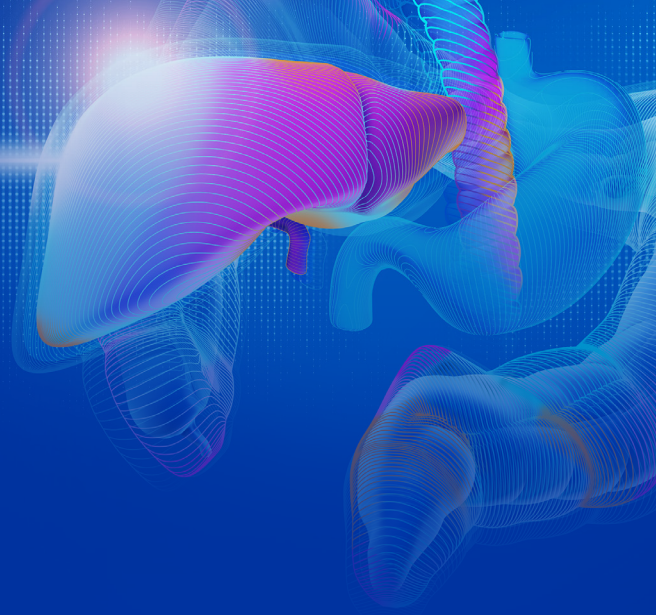

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