

The Liver Group Charity

Chairman's Statement for the year ending 31 December 2022

Despite a continually difficult fundraising environment for both the charity and the research sectors it has been another year of significant progress for the project which the Charity funds. Professor Clare Selden and her team at University College London (UCL) have advanced HepatiCan™ on all fronts.

The Academic group applied for a Commercialisation of Research Award from the Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult (CGTC) for £50,000 in kind support, which involved significant levels of due diligence and peer review, as well as a request for the commercial potential for the project. An outcome is expected in early 2023.

On the technical front, the workstation is now complete and despite some electronic glitches has achieved good success on its tests to date. Work continues on cell recovery rates after cryopreservation, but progress is being made. The same is true of stability and sterility studies. The team under Professor Selden should be congratulated on this progress over the year.

Looking ahead, the Charity is committed to helping in the translation of liver research to the patient, and its primary and sole focus at present (as peer reviewed) is to continue to support the artificial liver project at UCL. As the project morphs from a research project to a development one this changes the landscape of available sources of funding for the project, from academic grants and charitable donations to more commercial sources such as venture capital and other forms of investment which seeks a financial return.

Accordingly, Professor Selden has given notice to the Charity, that in Sept 2023 she will own the intellectual property relating to the project by way of an assignment agreement with UCLB and intends to commercialise HepatiCan™ through a company vehicle. Negotiations will take place at arm's length with Professor Selden to ensure that the Charity receives a fair apportionment of any commercial upside which could possibly ensue from the commercialisation of the intellectual property which the Charity – along with other bodies – has helped to fund, according to the agreements that existed with UCLB and which will now be amended to refer to any new entity formed

In all these matters the Trustees are mindful to manage any possible conflicts of interest between Professor Selden in her capacity as an academic receiving funding from the Charity, a founder of a spin-out company established to commercialise HepatiCan™, and as a Trustee of the Charity.

Finally special thanks are due to all the volunteers, fundraisers, Trustees and scientific and support staff who make this Charity possible. This year, special thanks are due to the research team of Eloy Erro, Tom Brookshaw and Sherri Chalmers and our completed apprentice Rosa French who we wish well for the future. My board of Trustees have as ever been a great help and special thanks go to Dr. Martin Giles for his key input in keeping the Charity's investments effective and to Sue Eggleton and Martin for their work on financial and risk management matters.

Dr. David Holbrook, Chairman