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For immediate release:

First National Study to Assess the Prevalence of NAFLD to be Conducted by Federal Government

American Liver Foundation grateful to our Congressional Champions and Advocates

New York, NY—April 25, 2024—A first-ever national study to assess the prevalence of [nonalcoholic fatty liver disease](#) (NAFLD)* will be conducted by the [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality](#) (AHRQ)**, in collaboration with other federal agency stakeholders, to evaluate the prevalence, diagnoses, treatments and complications associated with NAFLD.

“We are so grateful to Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) for his leadership in championing this effort on Capitol Hill. A nationwide study to assess the true prevalence of NAFLD and address barriers to preventing, diagnosing, and treating the disease is the first step towards developing a comprehensive plan to combat this looming public health crisis,” said Lorraine Stiehl, CEO, [American Liver Foundation](#). “We are incredibly thankful for our advocates who have been meeting with, and writing to, their Members of Congress over the past year to support this critical study, and to the [American Society of Transplantation](#) for their partnership on this important initiative.”

Specifically, the study will: 1) Assess the prevalence of NAFLD in the United States; 2) Assess the costs associated with individuals diagnosed with NAFLD, including the costs to patients, families, and government programs; 3) Assess the costs and impact on patients and the healthcare system if NAFLD is unaddressed and progresses to nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH)*, liver failure, poor liver function, or liver transplant; 4) Identify and address barriers to preventing, diagnosing, and treating NAFLD and NASH; and 5) Include an analysis of any disparities in access to care and other outcomes, such as health status, among minority populations.

It is estimated that [80-100 million Americans are affected by NAFLD](#), most are unaware they even have the disease. NAFLD is present in 75% of people who are overweight and in 90% of those who are severely obese. It is the most common form of childhood liver disease in the U.S., rising by more than 100% over the past 20 years, partly because of the increase in childhood obesity. NASH, a dangerous and progressive form of NAFLD, will become the leading cause of liver transplantation in the U.S. by 2025.

“On behalf of the American Society of Transplantation, I was thrilled to learn that NAFLD study language was included in the final Labor HHS Appropriations bill and proud to support these efforts. Data emanating from this critical research will ultimately help us prioritize and guide strategies to diagnose, treat and prevent progression of the most common liver disease in America,” said [Josh Levitsky, MD, MS, FAST, FAASLD](#), President, American Society of Transplantation.

Populations at the greatest risk for NAFLD include those with diabetes, obesity, and metabolic syndrome and people from diverse backgrounds including Hispanic and Asian communities. Preliminary data already show a potential high prevalence of NAFLD amongst the U.S. population. In an ongoing American Liver Foundation public health initiative to screen at-risk individuals, [Think Liver Think Life®](#), preliminary data show **64% of those screened were found to have some indication of fatty liver disease***. In an online liver health quiz to assess risk factors, **93% of respondents received a positive result for being at risk for NAFLD**. The quiz is available in English at thinkliverthinklife.org/quiz and in Spanish at thinkliverthinklife.org/prueba. Learn more about liver disease at liverfoundation.org.

About the American Liver Foundation

American Liver Foundation (ALF) is a national community of patients, caregivers and medical professionals dedicated to helping people improve their liver health. Providing guidance and life-saving resources, we are a beacon for the 100 million Americans affected by liver disease. We advocate for patients and families, fund medical research and educate the public about liver wellness and disease prevention. We bring people together through our educational programs and events and create a network of support that lasts a lifetime. ALF is the largest organization focused on all liver diseases and the trusted voice for patients and families living with liver disease. For more information visit www.liverfoundation.org or call: 1 800 GO LIVER (800-465-4837).

*The nomenclature for nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) has recently changed to metabolic dysfunction associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD). Nonalcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) has been renamed to metabolic dysfunction associated steatohepatitis (MASH). Fatty liver disease is now called steatotic liver disease. Learn more about the nomenclature changes in this video: <https://liverfoundation.org/resource-center/videos/new-nomenclature-for-fatty-liver-disease/>.

** View the NAFLD study language included in the [Senate Appropriations 118-84 Report](#), and the final FY24 L-HHS bill [clause](#) indicating its inclusion.

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