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press release

Echosens and Novo Nordisk announce partnership to increase awareness and advance early diagnosis of NASH

Paris, France and Bagsværd, Denmark, 22 June 2022 – Echosens, a high-technology company offering liver diagnostic solutions, and Novo Nordisk A/S, a leading global healthcare company, today announced a partnership to advance early diagnosis of non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) and increase awareness of the disease among patients, healthcare providers and other stakeholders.

NASH is a chronic metabolic liver disease that affects more than 115 million people worldwide¹. The condition is caused by build-up of fat and inflammation in the liver. This causes progressive damage to the liver and can lead to end-stage liver disease and death.

NASH is a 'silent' disease due to lack of symptoms in the early stages and, as a result, it is estimated that nine out of 10 people living with NASH go undiagnosed². To significantly increase early diagnosis, broadly accepted non-invasive tests for diagnosing people living with NASH are needed, as confirmatory diagnosis currently relies on an invasive procedure known as a liver biopsy.

Echosens and Novo Nordisk will collaborate to support additional clinical validation, generation of real-world evidence and adoption of non-invasive diagnostic tests for NASH and work together to increase awareness of the disease and the importance of early diagnosis and management. The companies have a shared ambition of doubling diagnostic rates for people living with advanced to severe NASH by 2025.

“NASH is the more severe form of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). It has few non-specific or no symptoms in its early stage, leading to inappropriate referrals to secondary care and patients often remaining undiagnosed until irreversible complications occur,” said Dominique Legros, CEO at Echosens. “There is a pressing need for a broader adoption of our non-invasive liver tests to improve the diagnosis of people living with NASH, and we are proud to partner with Novo Nordisk to combine our strengths and shared mission to empower medical professionals with improved ways to assess, diagnose and manage the condition.”

NASH is more common in people living with obesity (82% of people with NASH are living with obesity) and conditions related to obesity, such as type 2 diabetes (44% of people with NASH are living with type 2 diabetes)³. The low diagnosis rate for NASH is partly caused by a lack of awareness of the condition and associated risk factors among at-risk patients, healthcare providers, payers and policymakers.

“At Novo Nordisk we are committed to driving change in NASH, to develop new treatment options and advance care for this serious, chronic disease. An important step towards realizing that ambition is to ensure that we can identify the people in need of care,” said Camilla Sylvest, executive vice president for Commercial Strategy & Corporate Affairs at Novo Nordisk. “But we cannot solve this challenge alone and through our partnership with Echosens, we hope to leverage our complementary skills to meet the needs of patients, healthcare providers and other stakeholders striving to address this ‘silent’ epidemic.”

About NASH

Non-alcoholic steatohepatitis (NASH) is the most severe form of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD). It is a progressive metabolic liver disease characterised by fat accumulation and inflammation in the liver, which can lead to scarring, or fibrosis, and eventually end-stage liver disease and death. The risk of progression to advanced liver disease, including liver cancer, is higher in people with NASH than in the general population, and NASH is predicted to be the leading cause of liver transplantation by 2030. Moreover, NASH increases the risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Currently, no treatment is globally approved for the treatment of NASH, and people with NASH are left with very few management options.

About Echosens

Pioneer in its field, Echosens significantly changed the practice of liver assessment with FibroScan®, the non-invasive solution for comprehensive management of liver health. FibroScan® is recognized worldwide and validated by over 3,500 peer reviewed publications and 160 international guidelines. Echosens has made FibroScan® available in over 100+ countries enabling millions of liver examinations worldwide. <https://www.echosens.com/>

About Novo Nordisk

Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, founded in 1923 and headquartered in Denmark. Our purpose is to drive change to defeat diabetes and other serious chronic diseases such as obesity and rare blood and endocrine disorders. We do so by pioneering scientific breakthroughs, expanding access to our medicines, and working to prevent and ultimately cure disease. Novo Nordisk employs about 49,300 people in 80 countries and markets its products in around 170 countries. For more information, visit [novonordisk.com](https://www.novonordisk.com), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#).

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¹ Chalasani N et al. The diagnosis and management of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease: Practice guidance from the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases. *Hepatology*. 2018 Jan;67(1):328-357. doi: 10.1002/hep.29367. doi: 10.1002/hep.29367

² Schattenberg JM, et al., Disease burden and economic impact of diagnosed non-alcoholic steatohepatitis in five European countries in 2018: A cost-of-illness analysis. *Liver Int*. 2021 Jun;41(6):1227-1242. doi: 10.1111/liv.14825

³ Younossi et al.. Global epidemiology of nonalcoholic fatty liver disease-Meta-analytic assessment of prevalence, incidence, and outcomes. *Hepatology*. 2016 Jul;64(1):73-84. doi: 10.1002/hep.28431. Doi: 10.1002/hep.28431