Dr Alastair McKinlay trained in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, and is a retired Consultant Gastroenterologist at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. His special interests include coeliac disease, nutrition, and eating disorders.

He was President of the British Society of Gastroenterology from 2020 to 2022, has been Secretary and President of the Scottish Society of Gastroenterology, Chair of the British Society for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN) in Scotland, and Chair of the Scottish Government's Nutritional Care Advisory Group. He is a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, and the Royal Colleges of Physicians of London and Edinburgh.

He is co-editor, with Dr Jane Morris of the textbook, Multidisciplinary Management of Eating Disorders, published by Springer in 2018.

His hobbies include photography, singing and playing the violin.