What is in a gene?

A research study into the genetics of Bipolar Affective Disorder and Schizophrenia by University College London and the Mental Health Research Network DPIM: DNA Polymorphisms in Mental Illness

A BIG THANK YOU to those who have already helped because the more people involved, the more powerful our results are. With this in mind we are already collaborating with a number of other research centres in the UK and Worldwide and we have successfully identified genes that increase risk to mental illness.

At this stage, regretfully, we are concentrating on those of English, Irish, Scottish or Welsh ancestry. This is in no way meant to be discriminatory but is necessary due to the method of searching for genes, which are ancestrally inherited.

Or even if you just want some more information, send us an email: saying, “I would like to get involved” to research@kmpt.nhs.uk OR you can call us on 01622 723 100 x212 / 214

OR fill in this form and return it to our address: KMPT Research and Development Office, Trevor Gibbens Unit, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone, ME169PL

Please follow us on Twitter @BipolarUCL

Name: ________________________________
Address: ______________________________
____________________________________
____________________________________
____________________________________
Tel: _________________________________
Email: ______________________________

DPIM: DNA Polymorphisms in Mental Illness

KMPT Principal Investigator
Professor Hana Soliman
Consultant Psychiatrist
Dartford Community Mental Health Team
01322 622 230
## Can you help us find out?

We are calling on all people with Bipolar Affective Disorder or Schizophrenia to help us to develop a better understanding of the genetics behind these disorders!

Research suggests that genetics has a major role to play in susceptibility to Bipolar Affective Disorder and Schizophrenia. The aim is to develop more personalised treatments. We are not aiming to develop predictive tests but we hope to minimise side effects of mood stabilising drugs.

Our research, and others like it, has already begun to pave the way for new treatments and preventative strategies by increasing knowledge and understanding of the role of genetic polymorphisms in these disorders!

We strongly believe that learning more about the genetics will begin to make a practical difference for creating new treatments for people with Bipolar Affective Disorder and Schizophrenia. Please remember that your participation entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any stage.

## How to help

If you would like to support us, all you would have to do is:

- Have a short interview about your experiences of Bipolar Affective Disorder or Schizophrenia.
- Have a blood sample taken – don’t worry, our research team are fully trained, you will be in safe hands! ... In some cases, we may ask you for a saliva sample instead.
- Finally, the research team would like look at your case notes to fill in any gaps.

Then our team of laboratory researchers will take over from there to look for new genetic associations. The interview is strictly confidential. We have full national ethical approval and operate in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

## Where?

You can be interviewed by one of our local researchers at a place convenient to you.

## A little bit of science...

The UCL Molecular Psychiatry laboratory has been conducting studies in bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, alcoholism and Alzheimer’s disease for more than twenty years.

Recent developments in the genetic techniques have allowed us to scan the human genome of thousands of individuals both with bipolar disorder and without, looking for genetic variation using what are known as genome wide association studies (GWAS). We have recently been involved in large scale GWAS collaborating with other laboratories worldwide which have implicated several genes, one of which may explain a beneficial treatment response with Lamotrigine (Ferreira Nature Genetics 2008 40 (9):1056-8).

Research indicates that there are a number of genes involved in bipolar rather than just one gene. So there has been a move in the genetics field towards a more targeted approach with gene association studies, by sequencing DNA to screen specific genes of interest, to identify rare genetic variants.

Thank you for your continuing support.