

New blood-test to aid in Schizophrenia Diagnosis

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A new blood-test resulting from research at Cambridge University could aid in the early diagnosis of recent-onset schizophrenia - complementing the traditional patient interview-based diagnosis.

VeriPsych, developed by Professor Sabine Bahn, Director of the Cambridge Centre for Neuropsychiatric Research, and collaborators at Psynova Neurotech and Rules-Based Medicine, is based upon a blood-based biomarker test - where characteristics are objectively measured and evaluated as an indicator of the presence of disease.

Professor Sabine Bahn, said: "Schizophrenia is a complicated and challenging disease, yet current diagnostic approaches continue to be

based on patient interviews and a subjective assessment of clinical symptoms. We expect VeriPsych to be used as an aid to this current process, and we hope it will provide the psychiatrist with additional confidence in their evaluation, as well as speed up the process."

Schizophrenia is a disease that typically begins in early adulthood; between the ages of 15 and 25, affecting 51 million people worldwide with more than 250,000 cases in Britain. Current diagnosis of Schizophrenia is conducted through interviews by a psychiatrist, who follows structured guidelines such as The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, a process that can take several months.

During VeriPsych's developmental stage, researchers analysed 200 biomarker candidates individually and in combination to assess their connection to schizophrenia. They discovered a set of 51 biomarkers with linkages to schizophrenia and to various [biochemical pathways](#), including inflammation, metabolism and cell-to-cell signaling.

In a subsequent study, the 51 [biomarkers](#) were validated in combination with a mathematical process to separate [schizophrenia](#) patients from normal controls. The study included analysis of more than 800 well-characterised blood samples collected by leading psychiatric hospitals.

The research was published in the online journal *Biomarker Insights*. Commercial rights resulting from this research are held by Psynova Neurotech Ltd., which was launched by Cambridge Enterprise in 2005 and is now majority-owned by Rules-Based Medicine, Inc. Professor Bahn is the Co-Founder, Director, and Chief Scientific Officer of Psynova.

Provided by University of Cambridge

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