

Stephen Lawrie

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Winner of the BAP Public Communication Prize

My principal research achievements include identifying brain imaging abnormalities which pre-date and predict schizophrenia, contributing to the development of multi-centre brain imaging and establishing the effects of genetic and environmental risk factors for schizophrenia on the brain. I supervised the structural and functional MRI components of the Edinburgh High Risk Study which established, among other things, that relatives of people with schizophrenia have reduced medial temporal lobe volumes, that these volumes reduce further as people develop psychosis, that these reductions are more powerful predictors of schizophrenia than clinical examinations, and that novel analyses of these structural MRI data can also distinguish relatives at high genetic risk who will and will not develop schizophrenia from one baseline scan with high predictive power.



Through the CSO funded CaliBrain study and the MRC NeuroPsyGRID consortium, I contributed to the emerging capability for multi-centre brain imaging studies across the UK and to clinical trials and other studies which use that technology. My principal research goal now is to build on these findings and developments so that we can reliably detect psychosis at an early stage, differentiate sub-types, intervene helpfully and potentially even prevent psychosis.

I have published more than 300 papers in peer reviewed journals, with an h-index of 60 and >14,000 citations, and edited six books, and currently PI or Co-I on >£20M of research and training grants from MRF/MRC, MRC NIHR, Wellcome Trust and the EU.

As Head of Psychiatry in Edinburgh since 2010, I am pleased that we have more Professors, PIs and other staff and students than ever before, and that we were ranked 3rd in the UK on overall QI power (QI x FTE) in the 'Psychology, Psychiatry and Neuroscience' panel for the UK-wide Research Excellence framework (REF 2014). Through PsySTAR and other initiatives, we have 12 trainee academic psychiatrists doing PhDs, which is the largest cohort of such talent I am aware of outside the USA, and I am currently supervising my 27th PhD student.

Recently, I was awarded a Beltane Public Engagement Fellowship which has led to four shows on the Edinburgh Fringe, two prizes (including this one!), a profile in Lancet Psychiatry and an imminent stand-up comedy show.