

Uncovering the Genetic Cause of Bipolar Disorder



John Kelsoe
Professor of Psychiatry

CURRENT RESEARCH

Better Treatments by Uncovering Causes

Bipolar Disorder affects 5.7 million American adults, is the sixth leading cause of disability in the world, and if untreated up to one in five cases results in death. Moreover, it's not going anywhere. Children with a parent who has bipolar disorder are 10 times more likely to develop it themselves. As genetics explains as much as 80% of the cause of bipolar disorder, studies of genetics are the key to understanding the illness. John Kelsoe wants a brighter future for patients suffering from bipolar disorder and their children, and has devoted over 30 years to the study of genetic causal factors for bipolar disorder.

Bipolar Disorder affects 2.6% of the U.S. adult population, and results in suicide with alarming frequency. Patients with bipolar disorder find it extremely difficult to lead normal lives, and as a result bipolar disorder is the sixth leading cause of disability in the world.

The challenges on the path to improving care of patients with bipolar disorder exist mainly on two fronts. Firstly, it is difficult to diagnose what causes bipolar disorder. Many patients have to suffer with the illness for 10+ years without getting an accurate diagnosis, and since the effects of bipolar disorder are so severe, some won't make it that far.

In addition to the diagnosis challenge, treatment is also difficult. Patients respond differently to the many medications used to treat the illness, which include mood stabilizers, antipsychotics, antidepressants and anti-anxiety medications. Some of the above medications can have severe side effects, so selecting the correct medication is key to therapy.

John Kelsoe,...

AFFILIATION

 University of California, San Diego

EDUCATION

- University of Alabama Birmingham School of Medicine

RESEARCH AREAS

Life Science, Mental Health, Depression Research

FUNDING REQUEST

Dr. Kelsoe is requesting \$2.5M to cover costs of research for the next five years.

The breakdown:

- Two researchers are required to grow the stem cells at about \$70,000/yr each
- Stem cell reagents are expected to cost approximately \$80,000/yr
- Whole genome sequencing is expected to cost \$600,000 or \$120,000/yr
- Two additional personnel are required for coordinating and analyzing the sequence data (~\$140,000/yr)
- \$100,000 for equipment or \$20,000/yr

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