Translational research in psychiatric neuroscience: selected examples from the NCCR project

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Progress in the treatment of psychiatric disorders are hampered by two important problems. First, psychiatric diagnoses and treatments are based on relatively imprecise clinical evaluations; the variability in patients' response to treatments is probably linked to this problem and to the fact that current syndromes regroup patients suffering from distinct pathologies linked to distinct mechanisms. Secondly, the implementation of early intervention strategies is hindered by the difficulty to reliably detect patients in the early phase of disorders, detection which is also based on clinical scales with limited validity. It is therefore necessary to promote a closer collaboration between clinicians and neuroscientific researchers in order to identify reliable biomarkers which would allow a better stratification of patients, the definition of relevant targets for treatment and an earlier detection of patients, at a stage where the impact of treatment might be greater. This strategy has progressively become central to the SYNAPSy project, in particular in the domain of early psychosis which will be at the center of this presentation and discussion.

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