

## HONOURS/MSc PROGRAM PROJECT 2019

**Project title:** Exploring predictors of the treatment resistant schizophrenia phenotype

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Project description:

The developmental pathways contributing to the symptom profile of treatment resistant patients are not well understood, and the question of whether such patients are fundamentally different to non-treatment resistant patients is not clear. The aim of this project is to characterize the profile of treatment resistant psychosis patients by comparing them to non-treatment resistant psychosis patients and controls on several measures that could putatively speak to differential environmental and developmental influences leading to the treatment resistant phenotype. Comparable data from a treatment resistant cohort and a low-symptom cohort will be integrated into a single database. Treatment resistant patients will be compared to the non-treatment resistant psychosis group and controls on several measures including cognitive performance, functional outcomes, developmental factors. Characterization of treatment resistant psychosis in comparison to non-treatment resistant psychosis is important in determining factors that fundamentally differ between patients falling into each of these groups. This project will thus provide insight into whether treatment resistant patients represent a distinct subtype of schizophrenia with a separate neurobiology and clinical course.

The student will be responsible for conducting a literature review of the area, the development of the proposal and generation of specific study hypotheses, as well as data processing, integration of the two databases, and statistical analyses. Publication of results is expected at the end of the project.

**Department:** Psychiatry, Melbourne Neuropsychiatry Centre, University of Melbourne

**Research themes:** Neuropsychiatry