



British Association for Psychopharmacology

36 Cambridge Place • Hills Road • Cambridge • CB2 1NS
Tel: 01223 358 395 • Fax: 01223 321 268 • www.bap.org.uk

Executive Officer Mrs Susan Chandler • Tel: 01223 358 428 • susan@bap.org.uk

Assistant to the Executive Officer Mrs Lynne Harmer • Tel: 01223 358 421 • lynne@bap.org.uk

Education Development and Delivery Co-ordinator Dr Katie Hewitt • Tel: 01223 358 396 • katie@bap.org.uk

Cheltenham Science Festival June 2010

The BAP were pleased to sponsor an event entitled 'BIPOLAR' at this year's Cheltenham Science Festival.

Despite clashing with the first England World Cup game, the event was sold out. The Festival tent venue was full to capacity with over 250 members of the public who had turned up to find out more about this debilitating and generally little understood illness.

Festival Director Prof Kathy Sykes, also known for her popular science broadcasting, chaired the evening session, introducing BAP members Prof Nicol Ferrier (Newcastle) and Dr Rebecca Elliott (Manchester) who were also joined on stage by author Katy Sara Culling. The panel discussed clinical impact, genetic vulnerability, treatment, side effects, psychoeducation and neuroimaging (MRI), in particular its potential for predicting treatment response and evaluating new treatments for bipolar disorder. Katy Sara Culling shared an emotional account of her experience living with the illness, reading a section from one of her books.

Following the event and an overwhelming number of questions from the audience, the discussions continued in an informal manner in The Times café tent. Here interested members of the public, including sufferers and their relatives, were able to ask more questions and put their experiences to the panel.

The general feedback from the audience and participants was that this was an important session and it was agreed that more such public events should be held in which to inform, educate and remove the stigma associated with mental illnesses.

Else where at the festival, other events included BAP members Dr Hamish McAllister Williams (How to Treat Depression, chaired by Robert Winston) and Prof David Nutt (The Decadent use of Drugs). These were equally well attended, informative and provoked mixed and interesting discussions.

**Dr Katie Hewitt
June 2010**