Francis J. McMahon, MD

Dr. McMahon received a B.A. in Biology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1982 and an M.D. from Johns Hopkins in 1987, where he also completed a medical internship, a residency in adult psychiatry, and a post-doctoral fellowship in genetics. In 1998, he moved to the University of Chicago, where he continued his research into the genetics of bipolar disorder while serving as Medical Director of the electroconvulsive therapy clinic. In 2002, he joined the Mood and Anxiety Disorders Program of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Intramural Research Program as Chief of its genetics unit. In 2010, he was promoted to Senior Investigator and Chief of the Human Genetics Branch. He is also a visiting Professor of Psychiatry at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Dr. McMahon's research is aimed at discovering and characterizing genes involved in mood and anxiety disorders, such as bipolar disorder, major depression, and panic disorder. In addition to genome wide association and next generation sequencing studies, his laboratory is involved in functional genomics studies using RNA-seq and induced pluripotent stem cell-based models. The long-term objective of his research is to develop a complete picture of the genetic architecture of mood and anxiety disorders, so that better methods of diagnosis and treatment can be developed.

Dr. McMahon is also active outside of NIMH. He is President of the International Society of Psychiatric Genetics, and a member of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, the Society of Biological Psychiatry, and the American Society of Human Genetics. He serves on the editorial boards of Biological Psychiatry and International Review of Psychiatry. He serves as a scientific advisor for the American Society for the Prevention of Suicide, and the Rutgers University Cell & DNA Repository. He has authored over 175 scientific reports and textbook chapters.

Dr. McMahon has received awards for his work from the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression (NARSAD), the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, NIMH, and The Edward F. Mallinckrodt Foundation. His work in genome wide association studies has been recognized with the NIH Director's Award for Significant Achievement.