

Curriculum vitae (December 2018)

Sarah Tosato, MD, PhD

Associate Professor of Psychiatry, University of Verona

CURRENT POSITIONS:

Since December 2014 Professor Tosato has been Associate Professor of Psychiatry, at the University of Verona, Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences

From October 2006 to December 2014 Professor Tosato was lecturer in Psychiatry at the University of Verona

Since March 2018, Secretary of the School of Specialization in Psychiatry, University of Verona

Since 2012, member of the Schizophrenia Working Group of the Psychiatric Genomics Consortium

Since 2017, member of the Cross-cultural Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry (CLP) group of the European Association of Psychosomatic Medicine (EAPM)

Since 2007, Professor Tosato has been taking part in the clinical activities of the Unit of Psychiatry (Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Integrata of Verona) and at the South-Verona Community-based Mental Health Service.

EDUCATION PROFILE:

She is a PhD in Psychological and Psychiatric Sciences, University of Verona, since 2010.

She is specialist in Psychiatry; specialized with full marks and honors at the University of Verona in 2005.

She is Doctor in Medicine; graduated with full marks and honors at the University of Insubria (Varese) in 2001.

STAGES:

Visiting Research Associate (Tutor: Professor Robin M Murray), Division of Psychological Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, London, UK, 2006-2009

Honorary Research Worker, (Tutor: Professor Robin M Murray), Division of Psychological Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, University of London, April-October 2004

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES:

Professor Tosato's current fields of interest deal with the assessment of outcome for psychiatric disorders and with studying the genetics of mental disorders, in particular of psychosis. Professor Tosato is involved in the research activities performed at the Section of Psychiatry, Department of Neurosciences, Biomedicine and Movement Sciences, University of Verona.

From 2004 to 2007 she was involved in the follow-up of EPSILON (European Psychiatric Services: Inputs Linked to Outcome Domains and Needs) study, a comparative cross-national and cross sectional study of the characteristics, needs, quality of life, pattern of care, associated costs and satisfaction levels of people with schizophrenia in five European countries. Professor Tosato coordinates the collection of blood sample of patients and control groups for the genetic analysis and the choice of polymorphisms within candidate genes for the genetic analysis of schizophrenia susceptibility.

From April to October 2004, she worked, as Honorary Research Worker, at the Division of Psychological Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, University of London, under the supervision of Professor Robin Murray and Professor David Collier. In this occasion she was involved in the follow-up of AESOP (Aetiology and Ethnicity in Schizophrenia and Other Psychoses) study under the supervision of Professor Paola Dazzan.

From 2005 to 2014, Professor Tosato has been coordinated the genetic module of the PICOS (Psychosis Incident Cohort Outcome) study, a multisite collaborative research project on 1-year incident cases of psychoses attending community mental health services in Veneto Region, Italy. This project aims to characterize, in terms of genetic, clinical and social perspectives, new cases of psychoses at onset and follow them up for at least 5 years, to explore the possible mutual interactions between genetic and psychosocial factor, and to develop a predictive model of "good" and "poor" outcomes for psychoses. Professor Tosato has taken care of the characterization of candidate genes and risk factors in psychoses susceptibility and has acknowledged some statistical softwares for genetic analyses. Moreover, she has been involved in the study of a specific endophenotype for psychoses, represented by NSS (Neurological Soft Signs).

From 2007 to 2010, Professor Tosato was the Co-PI of the Joint Project "Toward a new definition of schizophrenia: the biological basis of a core phenotype", in partnership with GlaxoSmithKline and co-funded by the University of Verona. This project aims at identifying whether, in a group of chronic schizophrenic patients, a genetic component might be responsible for the clinical and neuro-psychological phenotypes observed.

From 2007 to 2010, Professor Tosato has been collaborated in the European SGENE project (PI: professor D. Collier), a large scale genome-wide association study on schizophrenia addressing variation in expressivity and contribution from environmental factors.

From 2008 to 2011, Professor Tosato was part of the coordination board of the Research Program GET UP (Genetics, Endophenotypes and Treatment: Understanding early Psychosis, PI: Professor M. Ruggeri), which has been funded by the Italian Ministry of Health.

Since 2009, Professor Tosato implemented a Genetic Bio-Bank. This structure has permitted the collection of DNA from over 500 cases of psychosis and 270 of age- and sex-matched controls; PaxGene for transcriptomics, Salivettes for salivary cortisol, plasma and serum from both patients and healthy controls. Several projects are ongoing aiming at exploring the possible mutual interactions between genetic and environmental factor (ie childhood trauma, life evnts, cannabis use, obstetric complications) on vulnerability, and to develop a predictive model of "good" and "poor" outcomes for psychoses and depression.

From 2011 to 2015, professor Tosato has been collaborated in the European Network of National Networks studying Gene-Environment Interactions in Schizophrenia (EU GEI) Programme Work Package 2 (Functional Enviromics).

The "Functional Enviromics" WP (PI Professor Craig Morgan, Professor Robin Murray) has developed and applied methods for the detailed assessment of candidate, individual- and area-level environmental exposures of public health relevance, taking account of potential confounding by direct and indirect measures of genetic risk. In doing so, "Functional Enviromics" aims to investigate the impact of hypothesized individual- and area-level environmental exposures on risk of first episode psychosis and to identify proximal explanatory factors that account for high rates of psychotic disorder in urban areas and in migrant and ethnic minority groups. In the framework of the "Functional Enviromics" Professor Tosato coordinated the recruitment and the assessment of the control group for the Verona Centre, in line with inclusion and exclusion criteria and quota sampling strategy used in all sites. Moreover, Professor Tosato coordinated the DNA sample collection for both first episode patients and control groups. She provided DNA storage and transport of DNA sample to Cardiff University.

From 2011 to 2014, she has been coordinated the genetic module of the project "Disabilità cognitiva e comportamentale nelle demenze e nelle psicosi. Sotto-obiettivo A.). basi morfofunzionali cognitive e genetiche delle psicosi maggiori: uno studio integrato longitudinale", funded by the Fondazione CariVerona

Since 2013, she is the PI of the project "Inflammation and depression in chronic HCV infection", aiming at evaluating a large sample of subjects taking INF- α and ribavirin treatment for chronic HCV infection, in order to identify clinically relevant predictors of INF- α induced depression as well as to understand the molecular mechanisms underlying these predictive factors.

Since 2016, she is a Co-PI of the study "Prevalence, clinical and biological correlates of depression in a cohort of patients affected by Rheumatoid Arthritis" (PI: A. Carletto), aiming at collecting, in a large sample of patients affected by chronic inflammatory diseases, data on both inflammatory system and on depression, anxiety, maladaptive coping style in order to verify if individuals who develop depression have a different clinical and biological patterns with the respect to those not.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES:

Professor Tosato has regular teaching activities, including the lecture course "Psychiatry" for students in Bachelor's + Master's degree in Medicine and Surgery, University of Verona; the lecture course "Psychiatry" for students in Nursing at the Medical School, University of Verona; the lecture course "Psychiatry" for students in Bachelor's degree in Obstetrics, University of Verona; the lecture course "Psychotherapy" for students in Bachelor's degree in Psychiatric Rehabilitation Techniques, University of Verona.

Moreover she has regular teaching activities at the Specialisation Schools, including the lecture course "Psychiatric Genetics" for postgraduate students in Psychiatry, University of Verona; the lecture courses "Psychotherapy" for post graduate students in NeuroPsychiatry; the lecture course "Psychiatry" for postgraduate students in Gynecology, University of Verona.

She is a tutor for the course "Psychiatry" for undergraduate medical students.

Since 2011, Dr. Tosato is member of the Teaching Staff Body for the Doctorate (PhD) in the Psychological and Psychiatric Sciences, University of Verona.

She is a supervisor of several thesis.

EDITORIAL BOARDS:

Associated Editor di BMC Psychiatry, Section of Psychotic disorders
Member of the Editorial Board of Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences

AWARDS:

Best poster "Positive symptoms in first-episode psychosis patients experiencing low maternal care and stressful life events: the role of the COMT gene", Xth ENMESH International Conference, Verona (Italy), 3-5/10/2013

Best poster "The Impact of Cannabis Use on Age of Onset in First Episode Psychotic Patients: data from the Psychosis Incident Cohort Outcome Study (PICOS-Veneto)" . VIII Brixia International Conference Open issues in the clinical and therapeutic management of major psychiatric disorders, Brescia, 12-14/06/2014

Best poster "Traumi infantili e psicosi all'esordio: quale effetto sulla diagnosi e sull'uso di sostanze? Dati dal GET UP Trial in un territorio di 10 milioni di abitanti" al XX congresso nazionale SOPSI; Milano, 23-26/2/2016

Prize "Finanziamento delle attività base di ricerca" di cui all'art. 1, commi 295 e seguenti, della legge 11 dicembre 2016 n. 232, per l'anno 2017 (avviso pubblico di ANVUR n 20/2017 del 15/6/17)

Prize “Incentivo una tantum professori e ricercatori”, Università di Verona, Macroarea Scienze della Vita e della Salute, anno 2011

Prize “Incentivo una tantum professori e ricercatori”, Università di Verona, Macroarea Scienze della Vita e della Salute, anno 2013

PUBLICATIONS:

Professor Tosato has so far published 70 full papers on international peer reviewed journals.

Papers published on international journals have been cited 9749 times in the international literature (Citation Index) according to ISI Web of Science(h-index = 29) and 9299 times according to SCOPUS (h-index = 26).

Moreover, Professor Tosato has presented several papers at International and National Congresses.