

Press Release

27 November 2016

Gut Feelings- How our gut regulates our brain & behaviour

- **Public lecture in Gut Instinct Science Series**

Excitement has been generated in mental health research by recent findings from animal and clinical studies demonstrating an important role for gut bacteria in brain function and behaviour. This emerging area of research has researchers and the public starting to take notice of microbes and the mind. Scientists have established a link between gut bacteria and anxiety-like behaviours in animal models and with emotional brain regions in healthy people.

A Public Lecture, *“Gut Feelings – How Our Gut Regulates Our Brain And Behaviour”*, will be given by Professor Jane Foster from McMaster University in Canada in UCC on Wednesday 30th November. The seminar, the first in the Gut Instinct Science Series, is being held in association with the *“Gut Instinct: art, food and feeling”* exhibition at the Glucksman Gallery and the Science Foundation Ireland-funded APC Microbiome Institute at UCC.

Dr Foster will highlight some of the advances in the field of microbiota-brain research that relate to neuroscience and psychiatry and consider whether probiotics have potential in treatment of psychiatric illnesses.

Dr. Jane Foster is Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario Canada. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 1996. Dr. Foster joined the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University in Hamilton, ON in 2003 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2008. She also holds a research appointment as a Scientific Associate with the University Health Network (since 2013) and as a Scientist at St. Michael’s Hospital (since 2016) in Toronto, ON. Dr. Foster is an active researcher in two large translational networks - the Province of Ontario Neurodevelopmental Disorders Network (POND) and the Canadian Biomarkers in Depression (CAN-BIND). Prof. Foster’s research focuses on the role of immune-brain and gut-brain interactions on

neurodevelopment, behaviour, and brain function and is funded by NSERC, CIHR, Brain Canada, and the Ontario Brain Institute. Prof. Foster is the past-president of the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology. Dr. Foster hopes that her research accomplishments lead to a better understanding of how these relationships contribute to psychiatric disorders such as neurodevelopmental disorders, anxiety and depression.

The Seminar will take place at 1pm on Wednesday 30th November in the Glucksman Gallery, UCC. All are welcome and admission is free.

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