

# UiO : PROMENTA

## Opening Conference

November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Auditorium 4, Harald Schjelderups Hus, Forskningsveien 3A, Oslo

10:00 – 10:15 Welcome and opening remarks

**Per Morten Sandset** – Vice Rector for Research and Innovation, University of Oslo  
**Espen Røysamb** – Director of PROMENTA

10:15 – 11:30 Keynote lecture

**Terrie Moffitt and Avshalom Caspi, Duke University**

### **Mental disorders from childhood to midlife**

Mental-health professionals typically encounter a patient at one point in his or her life. This cross-sectional view fosters a focus on the current presenting disorder(s). But what happens outside the clinic, and what happens across development? Moffitt and Caspi present new data from the longest longitudinal study of mental health to show how mental disorders ebb and flow over the life course, from childhood to midlife. Surprises emerge regarding when mental disorders develop, how common they are, and how they diversify with time. They present evidence of potent risk factors and health-damaging sequelae and discuss why life-course health policy needs to promote the mental health of children not only for intrinsic reasons, but because doing so may improve the health of the population.

11:30 – 12:00 Lunch

12:00 – 13:15 Understanding mental health – Perspectives from genes to society

**Ted Barker, King's College London**

### **Early adversity and child and adolescent psychopathology – the role of epigenetics**

How does adversity associate with long-term mental health problems? DNA methylation (DNAm) - an epigenetic process that can regulate gene expression - has emerged as a potential mechanism through which the genome can capture the effects of early adversity and propagate their influence. The ideas of “capturing” and “propagating” summarize a mediational hypothesis: that early adversity can have long-term mental health effects via changes in the regulation of gene expression. However, at present, very few existing studies have adopted longitudinal designs capable of testing mediation (i.e., adversity → DNAm → mental health). Dr Barker will review research - including his own - and discuss the current degree of support for the mediational hypothesis of DNAm.

**Berna Güroglu, Leiden University**

**Adolescent brain in a world of friends and foes**

Adolescence is a period of growing focus on social interactions and relationships, as well as substantial changes in brain function and structure. Güroglu will focus on research showing how the peer context can shape social behavior and related neural processes, and claims that a social cognitive neuroscience perspective is critical for our understanding of the links between peer relationships and developmental outcomes.

**Willy Pedersen, University of Oslo**

**Policy matters for health: The coming decriminalization of drug use in Norway**

The so-called "war on drugs" was initiated in USA in the late 1960s, but was rapidly imported to Norway. Large groups of drug users were met with criminal sanctions. However, a decade ago, new perspectives and models started to develop. Minister of Health, Bent Høie has taken the lead, arguing that the health care system, not the judicial system, should take care of the drug problems. Pedersen argues this is one of the largest welfare state reforms ever in Norway and will explore the likely consequences of the reform for drug users and society at large, as well as the challenges the political system will encounter.

**Dina von Heimburg, Levanger Municipality**

**Promoting well-being for all through a whole-of-society approach**

The primary mission of public sector organizations is to build public value. However, approaches to public value creation is constantly evolving. Von Heimburg will discuss "co-creation" and "relational welfare" as forms of governance that can save public welfare systems under the pressure of scarce resources and increasingly complex challenges such as health inequities. The focus will be on community rather than institutions, with citizenship, relationships, community resources and social justice as pivotal values. Approaching well-being for all through a "whole-of-society approach" is about creating the conditions to promote flourishing life courses for all, now and in the future.

13:15 – 13:30 Short coffee break

13:30 – 14:30 Panel discussion

**The future of mental health and wellbeing**

**Terrie Moffitt**, Duke University

**Avshalom Caspi**, Duke University

**Ted Barker**, King's College London

**Berna Güroglu**, Leiden University

**Willy Pedersen**, University of Oslo

**Dina von Heimburg**, Levanger Municipality

Register for free by November 1<sup>st</sup> at <https://nettskjema.no/a/124871>

Lunch and coffee will be served.

