**Category**  
Mental Health  

**Project title**  
Where do symptoms come from?  

**Associated Researcher(s)**  
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**Project details**  
Our subjective experience of a symptom arises from a combination of physiological signals in the body and neurocognitive processes in the brain. Unexplained physical (‘somatic’) symptoms are common, disabling, and costly, accounting for 10% of NHS expenditure for the working-age population. This PhD will focus on building an experimental model investigating neurocognitive influences on somatic symptoms, which could include one or more of the following approaches: (1) computational learning models of somatic symptom experience; (2) cognitive or imaging studies of the placebo/nocebo effect or side-effects of common drugs; (3) brain stimulation of regions involved in bodily perception/experience; (all the above in collaboration with Prof Tamar Makin); and/or (4) data science of so-called “sociogenic” symptoms, investigating whether symptoms can actually be spread via social media (in collaboration with Dr Amy Orben).