Psychiatric diagnosis is a critical function of the mental health professions. In the U.S., criteria for psychiatric diagnosis are determined by the DSM, published by the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Many clinicians, however, are unaware of the changes in the way DSM categories will be revised and the role that they can play in the process. The purpose of this presentation is to review the APA’s vision for the future of the DSM, and the process that has been created to consider iterative changes to the DSM-5. The new process involves making changes on a rolling basis, as warranted by advances in the science of mental disorders. This approach differs from the previous mechanism for making changes to the DSM, which was to revise the manual in its entirety at variable intervals. Although the older approach had the advantage of facilitating standardized communication among users of the classification, it slowed the incorporation of new scientific knowledge into the manual as it emerged. This presentation will review the criteria by which proposed revisions will be judged, and the process that interested clinicians and researchers can follow to submit and respond to proposals for revisions.

Learning objectives:
1. Recognize the vision for the future revisions of the DSM.
2. Describe the criteria that must be met for changes to be made to the classification.
3. Evaluate the process by which revisions will be undertaken.

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