

DSM-5.1: Perspectives on Continuous Improvement in Psychiatric Diagnosis

The Meyerhoff Lecture: A special complimentary lecture hosted by Sheppard Pratt Health System and University of Maryland

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The Conference Center at Sheppard Pratt

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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.

Paul S. Appelbaum, M.D. is the Elizabeth K. Dollard Professor of Psychiatry, Medicine, and Law, and Director, Center for Law, Ethics, and Psychiatry, Department of Psychiatry, College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. Dr. Appelbaum directs Columbia's Center for Research on Ethical, Legal, and Social Implications of Psychiatric, Neurologic, and Behavioral Genetics. The author of many articles and books on law and ethics in clinical practice and research, Dr. Appelbaum is a Past President of the American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, and now chairs the APA's DSM Steering Committee and co-chairs the Standing Committee on Ethics of the World Psychiatric Association. He has been elected to the National Academy of Medicine. Dr. Appelbaum is a graduate of Columbia College, received his MD from Harvard Medical School, and completed his psychiatry residency at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center/Harvard Medical School.

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