

APA Approves DSM-5: Final Stages Under Way

December 06, 2012 | [DSM-5](#) [1]

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The American Psychiatric Association Board of Trustees announced that it has approved the final diagnostic criteria for the DSM-5. According to the board, the APA has passed a “major milestone” on the way to its publication slated for May 2013.

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In a press release issued December 1, the American Psychiatric Association (APA) Board of Trustees announced that it has approved the final diagnostic criteria for the DSM-5 (for a pdf of the release, [please click here](#)). According to the board, the APA has passed a “major milestone” on the way to its publication slated for May 2013.

As a decade-long comprehensive revision process comes to a close, the approval action is noteworthy. The effort was ambitious—a massive compilation of information gathered from over 1500 professionals in varying specialties and sub-specialties, with Work Groups composed of experts in psychiatry, psychology, social work, psychiatric nursing, pediatrics, neurology, and other related fields from 39 countries.

Having spent a tremendous amount of time and detail looking at the literature and trying to test out concepts to ensure accurate diagnoses, the work that the DSM committee has done is laudable. Critics, of course, believe [more time is needed](#) to meet the treating clinician’s never-ending quest to diagnose correctly, treat effectively, prevent mental illness successfully, and—most importantly—do no harm.

At a national as well as organizational level, the APA hopes their work will prove fruitful in helping patients and families. It is hoped that the new DSM will act as an aid to specialists and primary care physicians treating patients needing mental health care.

“The Board of Trustees’ approval of the criteria is a vote of confidence for DSM-5,” says APA President Dilip Jeste, MD. The DSM-5 will include approximately the same number of disorders as DSM-IV, with the goal of classifying mental disorders succinctly as a guidebook for clinicians. David J. Kupfer, MD, chair of the DSM-5 Task Force, notes, “We have sought to be conservative in our approach to revising DSM-5. Our work has been aimed at more accurately defining mental disorders that have a real impact on people’s lives, not expanding the scope of psychiatry . . . I’m thrilled to have the Board of Trustees’ support for the revisions and for us to move forward toward the publication.”

The next step will include finalizing disorder descriptions, further editing, and then publication by the APA in the spring of 2013.

For the press release and a full outline and summary of decisions for DSM-5, [please click here \[pdf\]](#).

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