Highlights of Changes from DSM-IV-TR to DSM-5

Changes made to the DSM-5 diagnostic criteria and texts are outlined in this chapter in the same order in which they appear in the DSM-5 classification. This is not an exhaustive guide; minor changes in text or wording made for clarity are not described here. It should also be noted that Section I of DSM-5 contains a description of changes pertaining to the chapter organization in DSM-5, the multiaxial system, and the introduction of dimensional assessments (in Section III).

Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Intellectual Disability (Intellectual Developmental Disorder)

Diagnostic criteria for intellectual disability (intellectual developmental disorder) emphasize the need for an assessment of both cognitive capacity (IQ) and adaptive functioning. Severity is determined by adaptive functioning rather than IQ score. The term mental retardation was used in DSM-IV. However, intellectual disability is the term that has come into common use over the past two decades among medical, educational, and other professionals, and by the lay public and advocacy groups. Moreover, a federal statute in the United States (Public Law 111-256, Rosa’s Law) replaces the term “mental retardation with intellectual disability. Despite the name change, the deficits in cognitive capacity beginning in the developmental period, with the accompanying diagnostic criteria, are considered to constitute a mental disorder. The term intellectual developmental disorder was placed in parentheses to reflect the World Health Organization’s classification system, which lists “disorders” in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD; ICD-11 to be released in 2015) and bases all “disabilities” on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF). Because the ICD-11 will not be adopted for several years, intellectual disability was chosen as the current preferred term with the bridge term for the future in parentheses.

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Autism spectrum disorder is a new DSM-5 name that reflects a scientific consensus that four previously separate disorders are actually a single condition with different levels of symptom severity in two core domains. ASD now encompasses the previous DSM-IV autistic disorder (autism), Asperger’s disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified. ASD is characterized by 1) deficits in social communication and social interaction and 2) restricted repetitive behaviors, interests, and activities (RRBs). Because both components are required for diagnosis of ASD, social communication disorder is diagnosed if no RRBs are present.
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

The diagnostic criteria for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in DSM-5 are similar to those in DSM-IV. The same 18 symptoms are used as in DSM-IV, and continue to be divided into two symptom domains (inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity), of which at least six symptoms in one domain are required for diagnosis. However, several changes have been made in DSM-5: 1) examples have been added to the criterion items to facilitate application across the life span; 2) the cross-situational requirement has been strengthened to “several” symptoms in each setting; 3) the onset criterion has been changed from “symptoms that caused impairment were present before age 7 years” to “several inattentive or hyperactive-impulsive symptoms were present prior to age 12”; 4) subtypes have been replaced with presentation specifiers that map directly to the prior subtypes; 5) a comorbid diagnosis with autism spectrum disorder is now allowed; and 6) a symptom threshold change has been made for adults, to reflect their substantial evidence of clinically significant ADHD impairment, with the cutoff of ADHD of five symptoms, instead of six required for younger persons, both for inattention and for hyperactivity and impulsivity. Finally, ADHD was placed in the neurodevelopmental disorders chapter to reflect brain developmental correlates with ADHD and the DSM-5 decision to eliminate the DSM-IV chapter that includes all diagnoses usually first made in infancy, childhood, or adolescence.

Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders

The chapter on disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders is new to DSM-5. It brings together disorders that were previously included in the chapter “Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood, or Adolescence” (i.e., oppositional defiant disorder; conduct disorder; and disruptive behavior disorder not otherwise specified, now categorized as other specified and unspecified disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders) and the chapter “Impulse-Control Disorders Not Otherwise Specified” (i.e., intermittent explosive disorder, pyromania, and kleptomania). These disorders are all characterized by problems in emotional and behavioral self-control. Because of its close association with conduct disorder, antisocial personality disorder has dual listing in this chapter and in the chapter on personality disorders. Of note, ADHD is frequently comorbid with the disorders in this chapter but is listed with the neurodevelopmental disorders.

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Four refinements have been made to the criteria for oppositional defiant disorder. First, symptoms are now grouped into three types: angry/irritable mood, argumentative/defiant behavior, and vindictiveness. This change highlights that the disorder reflects both emotional and behavioral symptomatology. Second, the exclusion criterion for conduct disorder has been removed. Third, given that many behaviors associated with symptoms of oppositional defiant disorder occur commonly in normally
developing children and adolescents, a note has been added to the criteria to provide guidance on the frequency typically needed for a behavior to be considered symptomatic of the disorder. Fourth, a severity rating has been added to the criteria to reflect research showing that the degree of pervasiveness of symptoms across settings is an important indicator of severity.

Conduct Disorder

The criteria for conduct disorder are largely unchanged from DSM-IV. A descriptive features specifier has been added for individuals who meet full criteria for the disorder but also present with limited prosocial emotions. This specifier applies to those with conduct disorder who show a callous and unemotional interpersonal style across multiple settings and relationships. The specifier is based on research showing that individuals with conduct disorder who meet criteria for the specifier tend to have a relatively more severe form of the disorder and a different treatment response.

Intermittent Explosive Disorder

The primary change in DSM-5 intermittent explosive disorder is the type of aggressive outbursts that should be considered: physical aggression was required in DSM-IV, whereas verbal aggression and nondestructive/noninjurious physical aggression also meet criteria in DSM-5. DSM-5 also provides more specific criteria defining frequency needed to meet criteria and specifies that the aggressive outbursts are impulsive and/or anger based in nature, and must cause marked distress, cause impairment in occupational or interpersonal functioning, or be associated with negative financial or legal consequences. Furthermore, because of the paucity of research on this disorder in young children and the potential difficulty of distinguishing these outbursts from normal temper tantrums in young children, a minimum age of 6 years (or equivalent developmental level) is now required. Finally, especially for youth, the relationship of this disorder to other disorders (e.g., ADHD, disruptive mood dysregulation disorder) has been further clarified.

Neurocognitive Disorders

Delirium

The criteria for delirium have been updated and clarified on the basis of currently available evidence.

Major and Mild Neurocognitive Disorder

The DSM-IV diagnoses of dementia and amnestic disorder are subsumed under the newly named entity major neurocognitive disorder (NCD). The term dementia is not precluded from use in the etiological subtypes where that term is standard.

Furthermore, DSM-5 now recognizes a less severe level of cognitive
impairment, mild NCD, which is a new disorder that permits the diagnosis of less disabling syndromes that may nonetheless be the focus of concern and treatment. Diagnostic criteria are provided for both major NCD and mild NCD, followed by diagnostic criteria for the different etiological subtypes. An updated listing of neurocognitive domains is also provided in DSM-5, as these are necessary for establishing the presence of NCD, distinguishing between the major and mild levels of impairment, and differentiating among etiological subtypes.

Although the threshold between mild NCD and major NCD is inherently arbitrary, there are important reasons to consider these two levels of impairment separately. The major NCD syndrome provides consistency with the rest of medicine and with prior DSM editions and necessarily remains distinct to capture the care needs for this group. Although the mild NCD syndrome is new to DSM-5, its presence is consistent with its use in other fields of medicine, where it is a significant focus of care and research, notably in individuals with Alzheimer’s disease, cerebrovascular disorders, HIV, and traumatic brain injury.

Etiological Subtypes

In DSM-IV, individual criteria sets were designated for dementia of the Alzheimer’s type, vascular dementia, and substance-induced dementia, whereas the other neurodegenerative disorders were classified as dementia due to another medical condition, with HIV, head trauma, Parkinson’s disease, Huntington’s disease, Pick’s disease, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease, and other medical conditions specified. In DSM-5, major or mild vascular NCD and major or mild NCD due to Alzheimer’s disease have been retained, whereas new separate criteria are now presented for major or mild NCD due to Frontotemporal NCD, Lewy bodies, traumatic brain injury, Parkinson’s disease, HIV infection, Huntington’s disease, prion disease, another medical condition, and multiple etiologies. Substance/medication-induced NCD and unspecified NCD are also included as diagnoses.

DSM is the manual used by clinicians and researchers to diagnose and classify mental disorders. The American Psychiatric Association (APA) will publish DSM-5 in 2013, culminating a 14-year revision process. For more information, go to www.DSM5.org.

APA is a national medical specialty society whose more than 36,000 physician members specialize in the diagnosis, treatment, prevention and research of mental illnesses, including substance use disorders. Visit the APA at www.psychiatry.org. For more information, please contact Eve Herold at 703-907-8640 or press@psych.org.

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