

Reply from Author: Is It Time to Revise the Definition of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?

Dear Editor,

We would like to thank the author for suggesting that the definition of ADHD should be revised. This is an important consideration in the light of some of the points raised such as frequent comorbidities that occur with ADHD as is the case of Autistic disorder and other conditions in this spectrum. Changes are likely to occur in the development of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual¹ and the International Classification of Diseases.² In fact this is consistent with the development of any classification system. However, such change must be done when there is enough evidence for it and there is a meaningful reason for changes, either in terms of clinical practice or the improvement of research methodologies.³ The authors suggest development of specific tests that help identify ADHD but the evidence for these neurobiological tests are still controversial and therefore it may be too early to consider. There is some indication that the DSM V Task Force is looking at radical changes⁴ but there are also proponents that feel such dramatic changes should be discussed more openly before implementation.⁵ The changes being considered in DSM V have been placed on a new website since February 2010.⁶

Our main point in our commentary is that ADHD, whatever its causative agent(s) is a condition that may have a long-term consequence and how clinicians should approach it, from a lifelong perspective.

REFERENCES

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