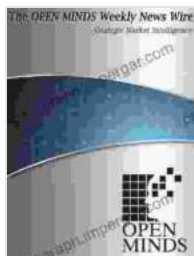


# DSM-5 Updates: APA Agrees to Replace "Mental Retardation" with "Intellectual Disability"

The American Psychiatric Association (APA) has announced a significant change in the upcoming fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). The term "mental retardation" will be replaced with "intellectual disability," a move that has been met with praise from the disability rights community.

## Why the Change?

The decision to change the terminology was based on several factors, including:



## APA Agrees To Change 'Mental Retardation' To 'Intellectual Disability' In DSM-V (OPEN MINDS Weekly News Wire Book 2024)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 3 pages
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\* **Stigma:** The term "mental retardation" carries a significant stigma, leading to negative attitudes and discrimination against people with intellectual disabilities. \* **Outdated Language:** The term "mental retardation" is outdated and no longer reflects the current understanding of intellectual disabilities. \* **Person-First Language:** The new term "intellectual disability" puts the individual first, emphasizing their abilities and potential rather than their limitations.

## **Definition of Intellectual Disability**

According to the DSM-5, intellectual disability is characterized by:

\* **Intellectual functioning below average:** An IQ score of approximately 70 or below. \* **Significant limitations in adaptive functioning:** Difficulty in daily activities such as self-care, work, and social interaction. \* **Onset during developmental period:** Before the age of 18.

## **Impact on Diagnosis and Treatment**

The change in terminology is expected to have a positive impact on the diagnosis and treatment of intellectual disabilities. By reducing the stigma associated with the condition, it may encourage more individuals to seek help and receive appropriate services.

The DSM-5 criteria also provide more specific guidelines for diagnosing intellectual disability, which may lead to more accurate assessments. Additionally, the emphasis on adaptive functioning will help clinicians focus on the individual's strengths and develop individualized treatment plans.

## **Implications for Education and Society**

The change in terminology also has implications for education and society. By using person-first language, the DSM-5 promotes respectful and inclusive attitudes towards individuals with intellectual disabilities.

In educational settings, the move away from the label "mental retardation" may help create a more supportive and equitable environment for students with intellectual disabilities. It can also encourage educators to focus on their students' strengths and abilities rather than their limitations.

### **Criticisms and Considerations**

While the change in terminology has been widely praised, some have raised concerns about the potential impact on legal and policy matters. For example, there is some debate over whether the new term will still qualify individuals for certain services and benefits.

It is important to note that the change in terminology is only one aspect of a larger effort to improve the lives of people with intellectual disabilities. Ongoing efforts to reduce stigma, increase access to services, and promote inclusive policies are equally crucial.

The APA's decision to replace "mental retardation" with "intellectual disability" in the DSM-5 is a significant step towards reducing stigma and promoting a more inclusive society for individuals with intellectual disabilities. The new terminology reflects a shift in attitudes and understanding, and is expected to have a positive impact on diagnosis, treatment, education, and advocacy efforts.

By using person-first language and focusing on the individual's strengths and potential, the DSM-5 helps create a more respectful and equitable

environment for all.



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