

The ICD-11 developmental field study of reliability of diagnoses of high-burden mental disorders: results among adult patients in mental health settings of 13 countries

Geoffrey M. Reed^{1,2*}, Pratap Sharan^{3*}, Tahilia J. Rebello^{1,4}, Jared W. Keeley⁵, María Elena Medina-Mora², Oye Gureje⁶, José Luis Ayuso-Mateos⁷, Shigenobu Kanba⁸, Brigitte Khoury⁹, Cary S. Kogan¹⁰, Valery N. Krasnov¹¹, Mario Maj¹², Jair de Jesus Mari¹³, Dan J. Stein¹⁴, Min Zhao¹⁵, Tsuyoshi Akiyama¹⁶, Howard F. Andrews^{4,17}, Elson Asevedo¹³, Majda Cheour¹⁸, Tecelli Domínguez-Martínez^{2,19}, Joseph El-Khoury⁹, Andrea Fiorillo¹², Jean Grenier²⁰, Nitin Gupta²¹, Lola Kola⁶, Maya Kulygina¹¹, Itziar Leal-Leturia², Mario Luciano¹², Bulumko Lusu¹⁴, J. Nicolas I. Martínez-López², Chihiro Matsumoto²², Lucky Umukoro Onofa²³, Sabrina Paterniti²⁴, Shivani Purnima³, Rebeca Robles², Manoj K. Sahu²⁵, Goodman Sibeko¹⁴, Na Zhong¹⁵, Michael B. First^{1,4}, Wolfgang Gaebel²⁶, Anne M. Lovell²⁷, Toshimasa Maruta²⁸, Michael C. Roberts²⁹, Kathleen M. Pike¹

¹Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, NY, USA; ²National Institute of Psychiatry Ramón de la Fuente Muñiz, Mexico City, Mexico; ³Department of Psychiatry, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India; ⁴New York State Psychiatric Institute, New York, NY, USA; ⁵Department of Psychology, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA, USA; ⁶Department of Psychiatry, University of Ibadan, Nigeria; ⁷Department of Psychiatry, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, IIS-P and Instituto de Salud Carlos III, Centro de Investigación Biomédica en Red de Salud Mental (CIBERSAM), Madrid, Spain; ⁸Department of Neuropsychiatry, Kyushu University, Fukuoka City, Japan; ⁹Department of Psychiatry, American University of Beirut Medical Center, Beirut, Lebanon; ¹⁰School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; ¹¹Moscow Research Institute of Psychiatry, National Medical Research Centre for Psychiatry and Narcology, Moscow, Russian Federation; ¹²Department of Psychiatry, University of Campania "L. Vanvitelli", Naples, Italy; ¹³Department of Psychiatry, Universidade Federal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; ¹⁴Department of Psychiatry, University of Cape Town and South African Medical Research Council Unit on Risk and Resilience in Mental Disorders, Cape Town, South Africa; ¹⁵Shanghai Mental Health Center and Department of Psychiatry, Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine, Shanghai, People's Republic of China; ¹⁶NTT Medical Center Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan; ¹⁷Departments of Biostatistics and Psychiatry, Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, NY, USA; ¹⁸Department of Psychiatry, Tunis Al Manar University and Al Razi Hospital, Tunis, Tunisia; ¹⁹Cátedras CONACYT, National Council for Science and Technology, Mexico City, Mexico; ²⁰Institut du Savoir Montfort - Hôpital Montfort & Université d'Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; ²¹Department of Psychiatry, Government Medical College and Hospital, Chandigarh, India; ²²Japanese Society of Psychiatry and Neurology, Tokyo, Japan; ²³Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital Aro, Abeokuta, Nigeria; ²⁴Institute of Mental Health Research, Royal Ottawa Mental Health Centre, and Department of Psychiatry, University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada; ²⁵Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru Memorial Medical College, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India; ²⁶Department of Psychiatry and Psychotherapy, Medical Faculty, Heinrich-Heine University, Düsseldorf, Germany; ²⁷Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale U988, Paris, France; ²⁸Health Management Center, Seitoku University, Matsudo City, Japan; ²⁹Office of Graduate Studies and Clinical Child Psychology Program, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, USA

*Joint first authors

Reliable, clinically useful, and globally applicable diagnostic classification of mental disorders is an essential foundation for global mental health. The World Health Organization (WHO) is nearing completion of the 11th revision of the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-11). The present study assessed inter-diagnostician reliability of mental disorders accounting for the greatest proportion of global disease burden and the highest levels of service utilization – schizophrenia and other primary psychotic disorders, mood disorders, anxiety and fear-related disorders, and disorders specifically associated with stress – among adult patients presenting for treatment at 28 participating centers in 13 countries. A concurrent joint-rater design was used, focusing specifically on whether two clinicians, relying on the same clinical information, agreed on the diagnosis when separately applying the ICD-11 diagnostic guidelines. A total of 1,806 patients were assessed by 339 clinicians in the local language. Intraclass kappa coefficients for diagnoses weighted by site and study prevalence ranged from 0.45 (dysthymic disorder) to 0.88 (social anxiety disorder) and would be considered moderate to almost perfect for all diagnoses. Overall, the reliability of the ICD-11 diagnostic guidelines was superior to that previously reported for equivalent ICD-10 guidelines. These data provide support for the suitability of the ICD-11 diagnostic guidelines for implementation at a global level. The findings will inform further revision of the ICD-11 diagnostic guidelines prior to their publication and the development of programs to support professional training and implementation of the ICD-11 by WHO member states.

Key words: International Classification of Diseases, ICD-11, diagnosis, mental disorders, reliability, schizophrenia, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, disorders specifically associated with stress

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